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## Stress Management & Resiliency Training (SMART) for Nursing Students

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# Stress Management & Resiliency Training (SMART) for Nursing Students

Lili Martin, MSN, RN, PCCN, DNP(c)

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## Background

- Mental health issues among nursing students is on the rise. Stress, anxiety, & depression contribute to increased risk of impaired physical well-being, burnout, increased dropout rates, & suicide (Chernomas & Shapiro, 2013; Jimenez et al., 2010).
- Benson Henry Institute's Stress Management & Resiliency Training (SMART) program reduces anxiety & stress levels in healthcare practitioners but has not been tested with nursing students (Nathan et al. 2017).

## Objectives

- Establish baseline **stress, anxiety & depression** levels for 4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S nursing students
- Evaluate effectiveness of implementing the BHI Stress Management & Resiliency Training (SMART) program with 4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S nursing students

## Methods

- 4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S nursing students self-selected into either the control (n=18) or SMART group (n=14)
- Pre-post assessment of **stress, anxiety, & depression** completed with both groups
- Implemented 8-weekly, 1.5-hour SMART sessions w/4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S. nursing students (n=14) over Zoom during the 2020 fall semester
- IRB determination of "not research" via exemption category 2 – "exempt from IRB review"

## Results

Figure 1. Pre to Post Changes in Nursing student Perceived Stress

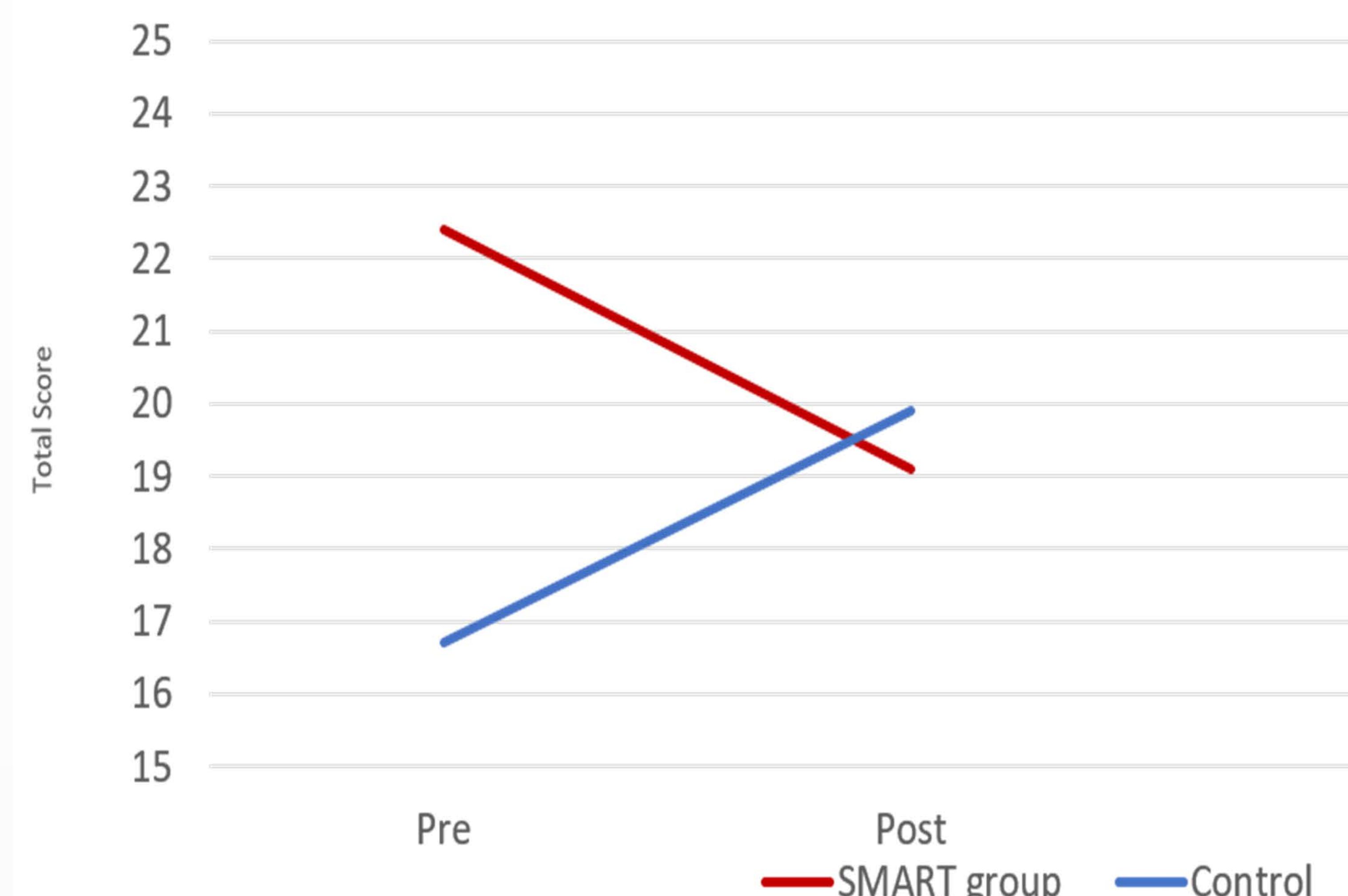


Table 1. Summary of Pre-Post Totals and \*t-tests by group

Survey	Norm/Range	Subjects	Pre	Post	Significance (p<.05)
Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)	Range 0-40 14 to 26 = moderate 27 to 40 = high	SMART	22.4	19.1	.05
		Control	16.7	19.9	.01
PROMIS-29 Anxiety	Range 2-10 Higher score = greater anxiety symptoms	SMART	6.3	5.3	.05
		Control	5.2	5.7	.11
PHQ-Depressive Symptoms	Range 0-6 Higher score = greater depressive symptoms	SMART	1.8	1.0	.05
		Control	1.1	1.3	.30

\*p values reported 1 tail (t-test) given known direction of effect and small n (SMART n=14; Control n=18)

### SMART Participants:

- 100% recommended the SMART training
- 80% felt all nursing students should be required to take SMART
- 50% preferred Zoom & 50% would have preferred in-person

## Discussion

- 4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S. nursing students *are stressed, anxious, & depressed*
- SMART was effective in decreasing stress, anxiety, & depression in 4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S. nursing students
  - "If you treat your body right, you'll feel better. To take care of yourself so you can take care of others"
- 4<sup>th</sup>-year B.S. nursing students were satisfied with & recommended the SMART program
  - "This jumpstarted my journey to creating a healthier lifestyle mentally & physically. I now have the tools"

## Future Research

- Identify methods that address causes of nursing student stress
- Determine efficacy of virtual vs. in-person SMART trainings & financial sustainability of offering SMART to undergraduate nursing students
- Follow project participants longitudinally to assess impacts of SMART program over time as compared to control group

## Acknowledgements

- Funding through UVM Frymoyer Scholarship

## References



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