



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

# Postsecondary Students' Information Needs and Pathways for Help with Stress, Anxiety and Depression

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**MOBILIZING MINDS**  
pathways to young adult mental health

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# Outline

- Background
- Research Questions
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions



# Background

- Anxiety & depressive disorders = most common mental health problems
- Frequent onset in adolescence & early adulthood
- Help-seeking among young adults?



# Background

- Treatment often inconsistent with evidence based practice & consumer preference for care
- Advantages of early interventions
- Availability and accessibility of treatment decision-making?



# Educational Settings

- Young adults involvement in post-secondary education
- Advantages for prevention and early intervention services



# Research Questions

- WHERE would they look for information?
- WHAT information would they use?
- WHAT types of services would be helpful to them?
- HOW would they prefer to receive information?



# Methods

- Health Information Survey
  - Sociodemographic information
  - Internet use
  - Social networks
  - Emotional distress
  - Information preferences
  - Coping techniques

# Methods

- Participants
  - n = 145 young adults ages 18-25
- Recruitment Settings
  - University Health Services
  - Student Counselling and Career Centre
- Participant Payment
  - \$10.00 gift card - University of Manitoba Food Services

## **Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents**

**Participants (n = 145)**

Mean age 21.4 years

% Female 72%

% Male 28%

Recruitment location

University Health Services 28%

School Counselling and Career Centre 72%

Participants' mean # years education 15.8 years

Mothers' mean # years education 15.4 years

Fathers' mean # years education 15.1 years

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21

Depression mean score 7.6

Anxiety mean score 5.9

Stress mean score 8.4

Kessler-10-item distress scale mean score 14.7



# Results

# Familiarity With Help for Stress, Anxiety or Depression

<b>Familiarity With Types of Help Available</b>		
Low%	Medium%	High%
19	50	31



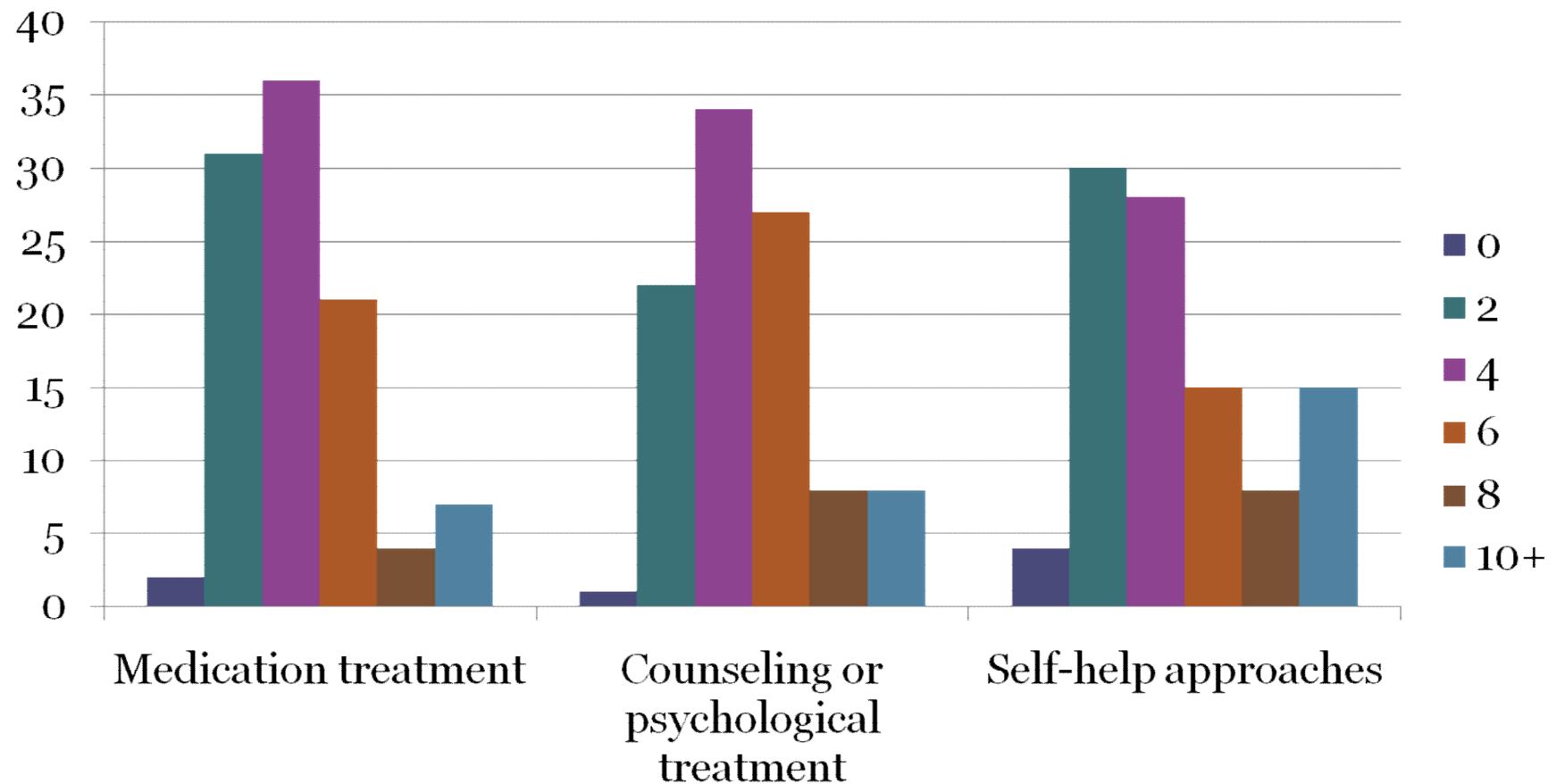
# Importance of Information About Help Available for Stress, Anxiety or Depression

<b>Information Type</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>High Importance</b>
Effectiveness or success of the treatment	7.1	39%
Counseling or psychological treatments	6.4	75%
What you do in the treatments	6.3	76%
Various types of treatments available	5.8	64%
Cost of treatment to you (if any)	5.3	57%
Medication treatments	4.7	40%
Cost of the treatment to the health care system	3.4	31%

<b>Information Type</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>High Importance</b>
Goal of the treatment	7.1	88%
How the treatment works	6.8	80%
Common side effects of treatment	6.8	82%
What happens when treatment stops	6.5	79%
How long the treatment continues	6.4	74%
How long it takes for the treatment to produce results	6.4	76%
Uncommon but serious side effects	6.2	69%

<b>Importance of Information</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>High Importance</b>
Advantages and disadvantages of each type of treatment	6.8	86%
Training and profession of treatment provider	6.6	77%
Health-care provider's experience in treating these problems	6.5	80%
Treatment option recommended for the situation and reasons why	6.3	73%
Waiting period before starting treatment	5.9	64%
Amount of time required to take treatment	5.7	58%
Where treatment will take place	5.1	48%
Time of day appointment would be scheduled	5.0	45%

# Amount of Pages of Information Preferred by Young Adults





# How Would Young Adults Prefer to Receive Information?

<b>Preferred Form of Information</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>Highly Preferred</b>
Discussion with health care provider	6.1	67%
Recommended website accessed from home	5.7	60%
Written form	5.5	60%
Website accessed in health-care provider's office	4.9	44%
Videotape or DVD	3.9	29%

<b>Source of Advice Preference</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>Highly Likely</b>
Close friend	5.7	63%
Romantic partner	5.6	65%
Parent	4.9	51%
Counselor at school	4.7	52%
Family doctor	4.5	51%
Brother or sister	4.1	42%
Teacher or instructor at school	2.4	19%
Phone-in counseling or health line	2.3	16%

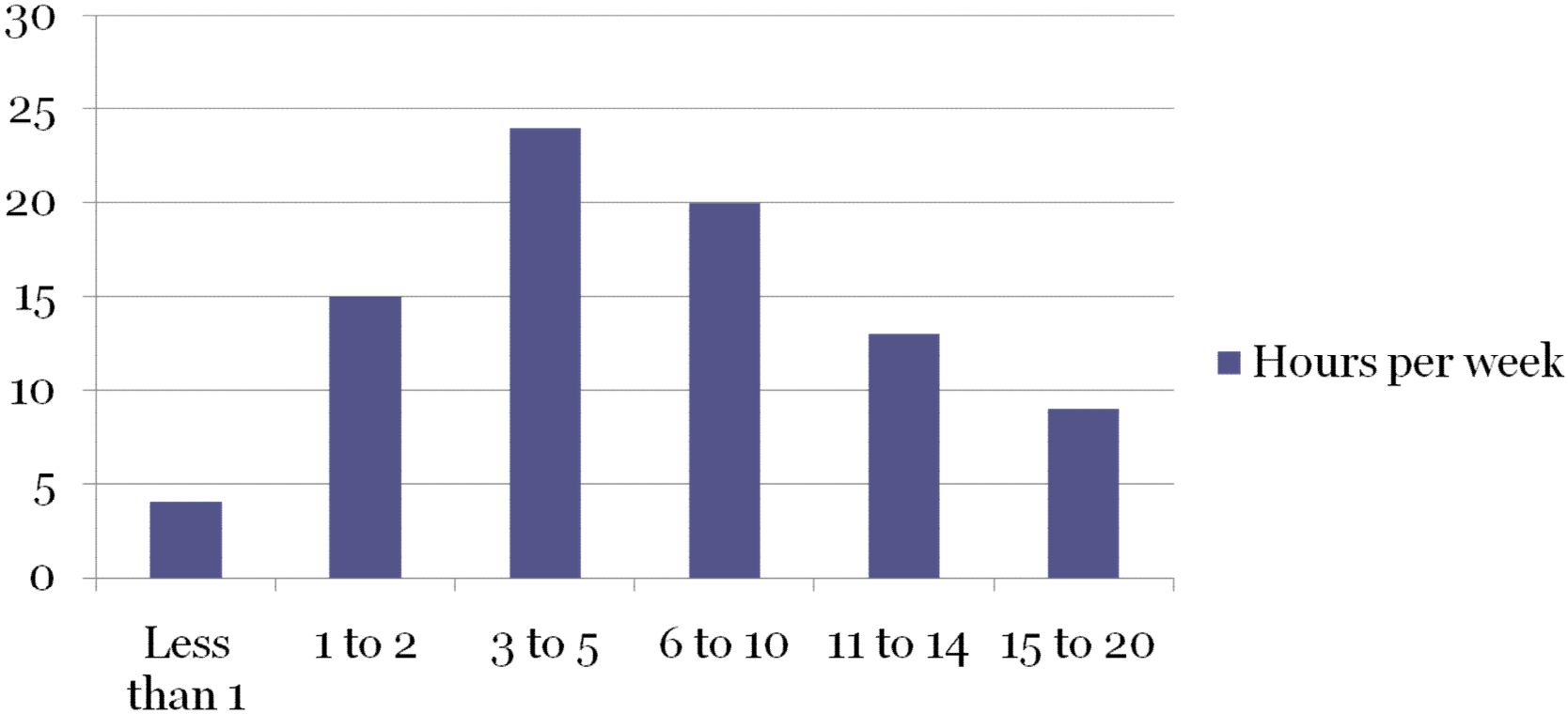


# Helpfulness of Available Services

<b>Ratings of Helpfulness of Services</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>	<b>Highly Helpful</b>
In person meetings with a counselor	6.0	69%
Recommended self-help website	4.8	48%
Medication recommended by a specialist in psychiatry	4.6	45%
Recommended self-help book	4.6	47%
Medication recommended by your family doctor	4.2	41%
Educational meeting (about 2 hours with 20-30 people)	3.5	22%
Telephone meetings with a counselor	3.4	23%
Internet discussion group led by a person who has coped with the problem themselves	3.4	23%
Internet discussion group led by a professional	3.3	26%
Educational workshop (about 6 hours with 20-30 people)	3.2	24%

# Internet Use

## Young Adult Internet Use (# Hours Per Week)

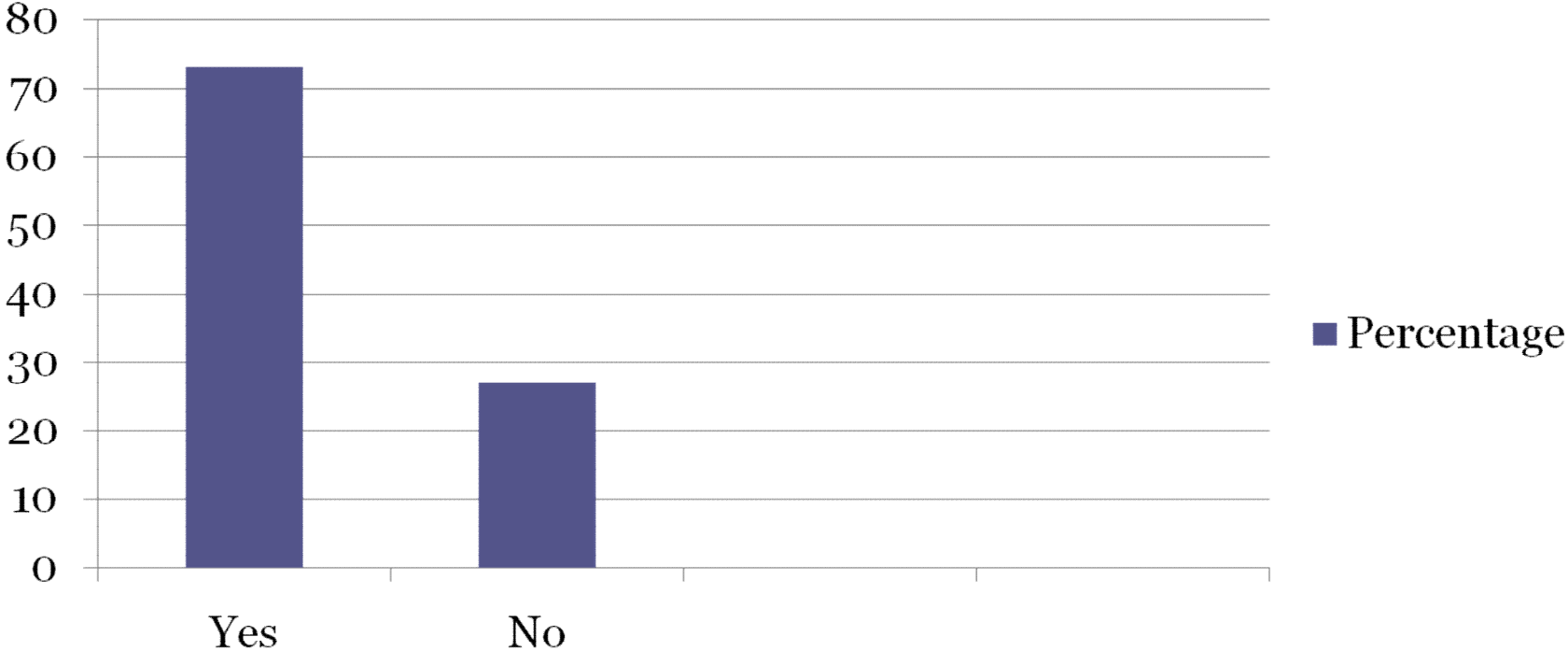


# Purpose of Internet Use

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>% of Use</b>
Email	98%
For education, training or school work	96%
Instant messenger (e.g., MSN, ICQ)	90%
Electronic banking	81%
To obtain or save music (free or paid downloads)	75%
To view the news or sports	63%
To download or watch a movie on the Internet	55%
To download or watch TV on the Internet	52%
To play games	50%
To contribute to content or to participate in discussion groups (blogging, message boards, posting images)	23%

# Internet Use for Health Information

**Percentage of Young Adults Using the Internet for Health Information**



# Kinds of Health Information Searched For

<b>Kind of Information</b>	<b>% of Young Adults</b>
Lifestyle	78%
Analysis for specific symptoms	61%
Specific diseases	54%
Drugs or medication	37%
Health care system or delivery	19%
Alternative therapy	16%
Surgeries	14%
Other	19%

# Search Methods for Health Information

<b>Website</b>	<b>% of Young Adults</b>
Google	96%
Wikipedia	62%
Wiki Answers	13%
Yahoo Answers	12%
Yahoo	8%
Ask.com	7%
Other	7%
MSN	5%

# Websites Used to Search for Health Information

<b>Website</b>	<b>% of Young Adults</b>
Wikipedia	60%
Health Canada	40%
Mayo Clinic	22%
WebMD	19%
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority	13%
YouTube	13%
RateMyDoctor.com	12%
Medline Plus Medical Encyclopedia	10%
Others	8%

# Web Activities to Search for Health Information

<b>Activity</b>	<b>% of Young Adults</b>
Reading discussion groups	25%
Blogs	9%
Posting questions to discussion groups	8%
Chats	6%
Other activities	4%

# Use of Telephone Information Lines for Health Information

<b>Method</b>	<b>% of Young Adults</b>
Health Links	14%
Klinic Crisis Line	4%
Others	3%



# Conclusions

- **WHO:**
  - Informal: romantic partner or close friends
  - Formal: family doctor or school counsellor
- **WHAT:**
  - Wide variety of information
- **WHERE/HOW:**
  - Internet



# Challenges

- Important questions not addressed, answers not widely available
- Focus on marketing specific products



# Discussion / Questions