

Climate Change & Mental Health in Preclinical Psychiatry Curriculum: Community Panel Implementation and Assessment

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INTRO

- WHO/Lancet: Climate change greatest threat to global health in the 21st century^{1,2}
- Mental health effects³
 - Trauma after extreme weather
 - Stress from displacement
 - Anxiety, Depression, Suicidality
- Unequal impacts: disproportionately affects communities who have been historically and currently oppressed
 - e.g. East Palo Alto experienced redlining and is vulnerable to sea level rise⁴
- Med School Curriculum lacking: How might we incorporate?



METHODS

- 45 min session for MD/PA students in psychiatry
- Co-designed with community partner, Violet Saena (CRC), who reached out to community members in East Palo Alto and Belle Haven (in Menlo Park)
- Panelists financially compensated at co-determined rate
- Pre-post survey on student attitudes re: climate change and mental health

Example:

Q1. How would you rate your own knowledge of ways that climate change does or will: Affect incidence of adverse mental health events?

5. Very High 4. High 3. Moderate 2. Low 1. Very Low

RESULTS

Community Panel: Climate Change, Mental Health

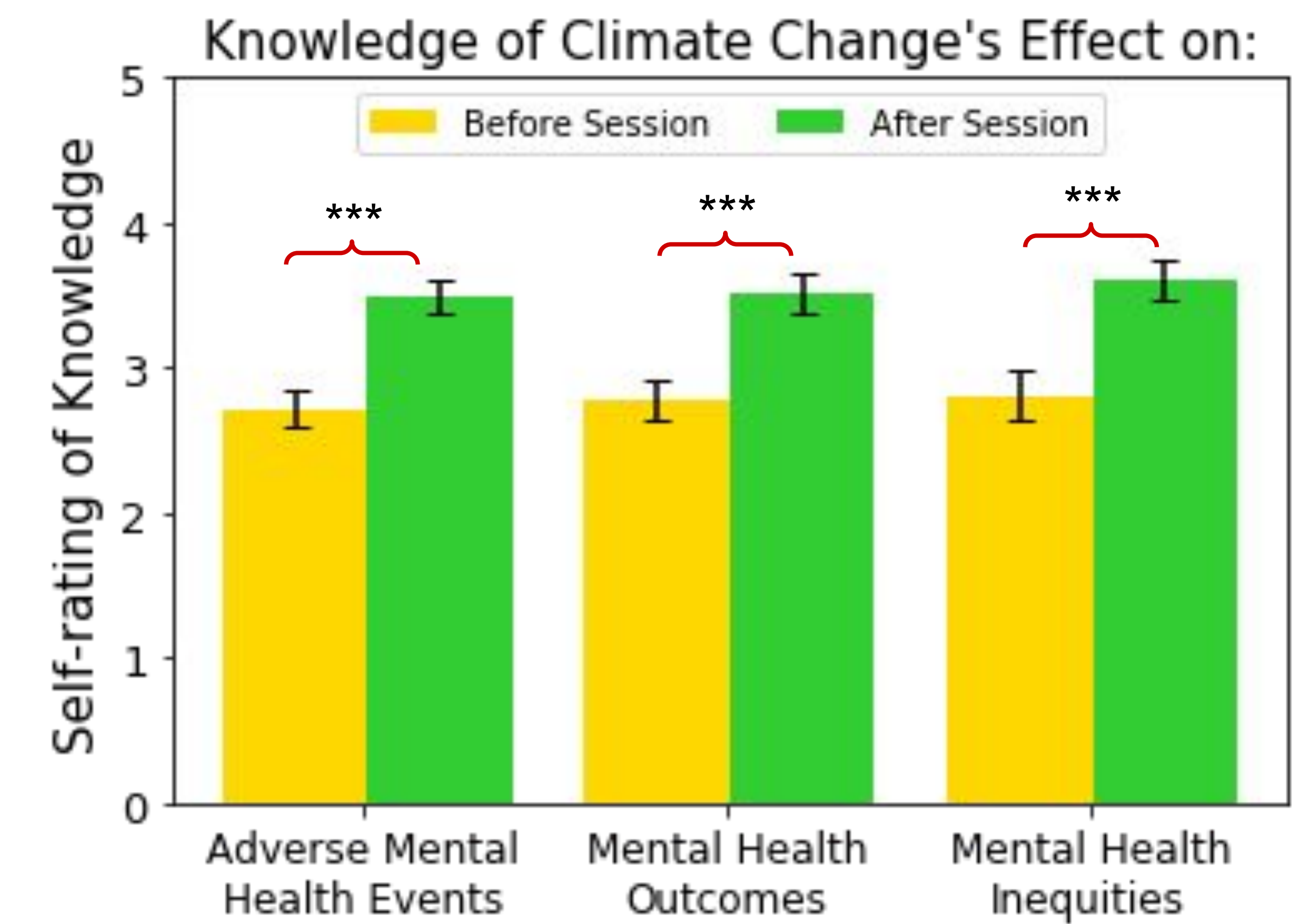


- Climate Change's impact on East Palo Alto and Belle Haven communities
- Burden of Mental illness
- Lack of Culturally Responsive Mental Healthcare
- Policy to Ensure Accessible Resources and Communication during Emergencies

Table 1: Demographics of Student Respondents

No sig. differences between pre-survey, post-survey population

	All pre-survey respondents (n=60)	Matched pre-post survey respondents (n=36)	P-value
Gender			0.79
Female	38 (63.3)	21 (58.3)	
Male	21 (35.0)	15 (41.7)	
Non-binary	1 (1.7)	0 (0.0)	
Race			0.93
White	20 (33.3)	12 (33.3)	
Asian	15 (25.1)	12 (33.3)	
Black	12 (20)	7 (19.5)	
MENA	5 (8.4)	4 (11.1)	
Ethnicity			0.45
Hispanic	6 (10.0)	2 (5.6)	
Non-Hispanic	54 (90.0)	34 (94.4)	
URiM	27 (45.0)	15 (41.7)	0.95



*** p < 0.001

- Students reported sig. increases in preparation to engage a patient who asked "How can climate change affect my mental health?" (3.7 after vs 2.6 before, p < 0.001)
- No change in support for "MDs/PAs should know about climate change & mental health effects for clinical practice." (4.71 after vs 4.69 before, p = 0.77)

CONCLUSION

- Community partner panels, when co-designed & built on trusting relationship, are powerful ways to teach students about health effects of climate change & structural racism

References at tinyurl.com/2023-cc-mh