Title of Project: The role of St John’s wort and exercise with the management of depression

(FOR Code/s): 1104

Supervisor: Caroline Smith
Contact: caroline.smith@uws.edu.au
Co-supervisor: John MacDonald
Contact: J.MacDonald@uws.edu.au
Co-supervisor: Bobby Cheema
Contact: B.Cheema@uws.edu.au

Location of Project: Campbelltown campus

Project Background

Mental illness is one of the most important health issues facing young Australians. The prevalence of mental health disorders in 18-24 year olds is 26% (ABS 2007). Young men are least likely to access formal professional help for mental health conditions, and their reluctance to seek assistance can lead to further psychological distress. New strategies that are attractive, accessible and increase mental health support to young men are urgently needed.

Australians are high users of complementary medicines (CM) (Xue, Zhang et al. 2007). High quality evidence demonstrates St Johns Wort has been shown to be superior to placebo and equivalent with tricyclic antidepressants for mild to moderate depression (Linde, Ramirez et al. 1996). Research has identified CM and self-help strategies such as exercise are preferable by many people living with depression to pharmacological treatment for depression (Highet, Hickie et al. 2002). However, it is unclear whether young men with depression are interested to use these particular modalities.

Aim of Study:

To evaluate the acceptability of exercise and St John’s Wort to support the mental health needs of young men in our local community.

Methods:

We will administer a questionnaire and interview with men aged 18-25 years. Participants will be recruited from the community in the vicinity of University of Western Sydney campuses. Participant’s views towards management strategies for depression will be explored, this will involve qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.

Ethics Application Requirements:

Ethics approval will be sought.

Key References: