

Kelsey Ellis – University of Calgary

Project: *Exploring children, parent, healthcare providers and instructors' experiences with an individualized yoga intervention for hospitalized children receiving intensive treatments*



Biography

Kelsey is originally from Ottawa and completed her BSc in Human Kinetics at St Francis Xavier University. With a paid internship from the RBC Foundation, she accomplished her undergraduate honours thesis research examining the design and implementation of community-based aquatic programs for children with autism.

This study supported the sustainability and growth of evidence-based physical activity for diverse populations and inspired her to strive to continue to participate in patient-oriented research.

Her volunteer experiences have focused on physical activity provision for various marginalized populations who may not have access to community-based physical activity programs, including adults with intellectual disabilities, a child with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, an aquatic rehabilitation intervention for an adult with a recently acquired physical disability, and cancer survivors and their support persons through the Thrive Center. Kelsey's volunteer and research experiences have contributed significantly to her interest in discovery in the field of integrative oncology.

Currently, Kelsey is a first-year MSc Student in Kinesiology at the University of Calgary, working under the supervision of Dr. Nicole Culos-Reed. She is an advocate for using exercise in the rehabilitation process as well to mitigate secondary conditions associated with cancer treatments and is looking forward to engaging in meaningful research through her graduate work that will aim to enhance the quality of life of cancer survivors by increasing physical activity provision.

Working with Dr. Culos-Reed and her team provides numerous opportunities for engagement in patient-oriented research, integrated knowledge translation, and a team environment that

supports collaboration and impactful research.

Project Summary

Yoga is a safe and feasible way to counteract many of the adverse effects faced by hospitalized children undergoing intensive treatments, including hematopoietic stem cell transplants (HSCT) and chemotherapy. Research has shown that yoga may help to reduce fatigue and improve quality of life for children hospitalized due to treatment. However, little is known about participants and families' experience in yoga, nor the perspective from either health care providers (HCPs) or yoga instructors.

This proposed research activity will use qualitative inquiry to explore childhood cancer in-patients and their caregivers' experiences within a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of a yoga/iPad intervention for fatigue. In addition, HCP and yoga instructor perspectives of yoga offered in-hospital for pediatric patients will be gathered. The larger multi-site RCT is comparing a 3-week individualized yoga program to an iPad control group for fatigue.

Participants are in-patients 8-18 years of age, receiving intensive chemotherapy for cancer or HSCT recipients who are expected to remain in hospital for at least 3 weeks, and their families. Interviews will be conducted with patients/families 2 weeks post-intervention and at 3-month follow-up; and with HCPs and yoga instructors at the end of the 12-month recruitment period. Interviews with patients/family will examine the yoga experience, barriers and facilitators, and whether they noticed any changes in health-related outcomes as a result of the intervention. HCP and yoga instructor interviews will examine the perceptions of the value of such a program, barriers and facilitators, beneficial features, and implications of yoga programs for future in-hospital practice.