

Evaluating the benefits and experiences of a Mindfulness Based Intervention for hospital staff

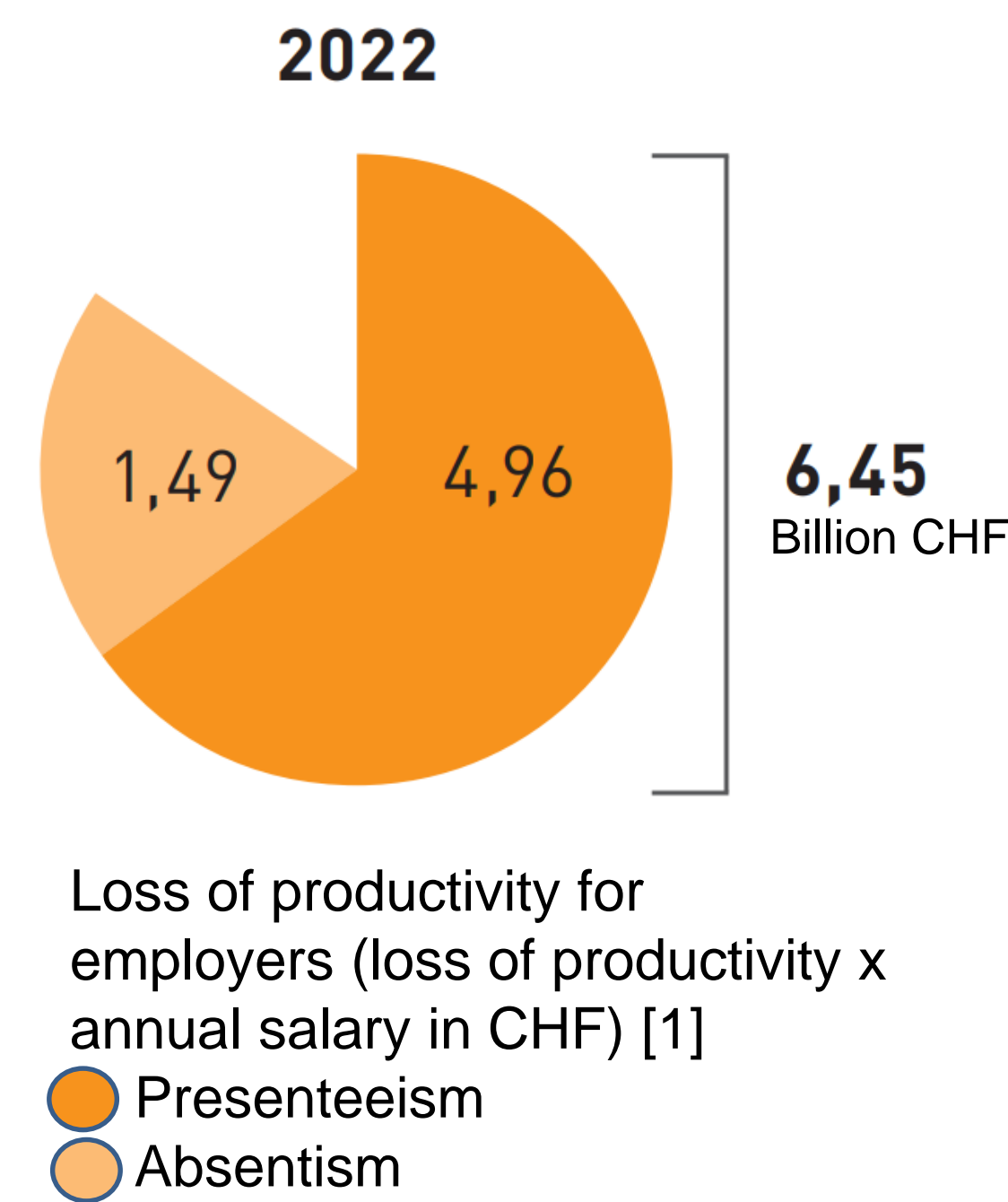


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Introduction

Workplace challenges can produce stress and burnout. Over 30% of employed people feel emotionally exhausted (1), reporting feelings of excessive strain, loss of energy and 'emptiness', which can compromise health and well-being (2). High levels of stress in the workplace have been linked to reduced productivity (3), and in Switzerland in 2022, work-related stress cost around 6.5 billion CHF (1). Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBI) in workplace settings can reduce stress, anxiety, psychological distress and enhance well-being (4). An MBI for hospital staff was implemented in the Regional Hospital of Bellinzona and Valli in 2020.

The aim of this study was to evaluate MBI effectiveness.



Methods

A mixed methods study:

Quantitative pre-post MBI evaluation

- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) 10 items
- Facet Five Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) 39 items



Qualitative evaluation post MBI

- focus groups with MBI participants – thematic analysis (5)

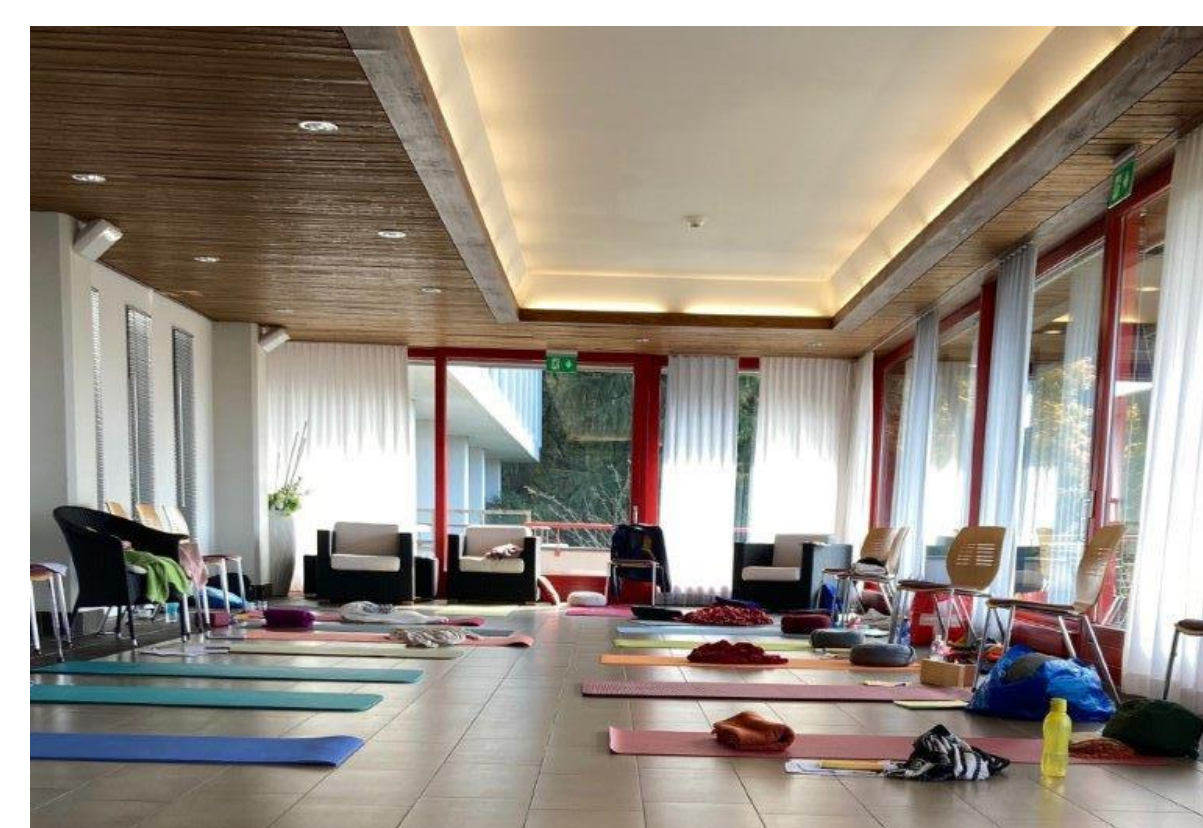
Results: quantitative data

3 MBI courses held between 2020-2022.
 56 participants completed the course.

PRE-POST FIVE FACET MINDFULNESS QUESTIONNAIRE (FFMQ)			
Dimension	Pre MBI score (median [Q1-Q3])	Post MBI score (median [Q1-Q3])	p-value
Observing	25.5 [23-28]	29 [28-31]	<.001
Describing	26 [25-29]	30 [29-32]	<.001
Awareness	26 [24-28]	29 [27-31]	<.001
Non-judgemental	26 [25-30]	31 [30-35]	0.002
Non-reactivity	19 [17-21]	24.5 [22-26]	<.001
Overall mindfulness score	124.5 [119-131]	146 [137-152]	<.001

46 participants completed all scales

- 38 Female, 8 Male
- 34 (34.8%) aged 40-49 yrs



Results of the FFMQ showed **greater mindfulness practice after the MBI.**

PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE

Pre MBI score (mean [SD])	Post MBI score (mean [SD])	p-value
20 [7.3]	12.6 [5.9]	<.001

Stress level scores

- 0 - 13 – low
- 14 - 26 – moderate
- 27 - 40 – high

A statistically significant reduction in perceived stress was observed between pre and post PSS scores. The number of people reporting lower levels of stress increased after the MBI, while the number of people reporting moderate/high levels of stress reduced after the MBI.

Time	Low level of stress	Moderate + High level of stress	p-value
Pre MBI	9 ♂ (19.6%)	37 ♂ (80.4%)	<.001
Post MBI	26 ♂ (56.5%)	20 ♂ (43.5%)	

Results: qualitative data

- 14 participants, 2 focus groups
- 9 Female, 5 Male
 - 6 (42.8%) aged 50-59 yrs

Themes

1. Benefits of mindfulness training

- 1.1 Benefits for self and self-care
 1.2 Interpersonal relationships and sharing
 1.3 Work in progress

2. Facilitators to participation in mindfulness

- 2.1 Opportunities and expectations
 2.2 Mindfulness sessions
 2.3 Continued opportunity to practice

3. Challenges to practicing mindfulness

- 3.1 Finding time and space
 3.2 An organization that supports mindfulness practice

Sub-themes

"...from the point of view of the ability to organize and concentrate, there's been an improvement... during work there's a continuous need to reorganize on the basis of what arrives in that moment, very unpredictable, so this causes a lot of stress. And I have to say that yes... it is more difficult for me to go into crisis or... there is more capacity just to take distance from the situation..." P1

"...the very fact of having it here in-house... of having had the opportunity to discuss it with other people... convinced me of the goodness or the desire to do it and if there hadn't been this opportunity it would have passed me by just like that, I would never have done it..." P5

"on the one hand, there is this willingness on the part of the organization to give the possibility of finding a safety valve, but if, on the other hand, we have departments that... where the pressure is high... it's clear that all our efforts make no difference, because we are also people, if we receive pressure, we're squeezed, somewhere it has to come out..." P8

Conclusions

Results suggest MBI participation can contribute to stress reduction and improve mindfulness practices. Participants reported personal benefits and improved relations at home and in the workplace. Mindfulness events offered outside of the MBI were appreciated, however ensuring time and support to implement mindfulness practices require further investigation. MBI is not the only initiative and the only tool for staff well-being, in this sense the Regional Hospital of Bellinzona and Valli is examining the meaning of well-being in the workplace for its employees in order to expand and target interventions to the differing needs of staff.

For further information

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