**UNDERSTANDING (THE EXPERIENCES OF) HOW MINDFULNESS IS USED BY PEOPLE WITH CYSTIC FIBROSIS: BARRIERS AND ENABLERS**

**Sophia Kauser1, Rebecca Keyte1, Michail Mantzios1, Helen Egan1**

1. **Dept. of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, Birmingham City University, Birmingham, UK**

**Objectives:** Mindfulness and mindfulness-based practices are exponentially being recognised as beneficial in reducing distress and improving clinical outcomes. Within the vast literature there is limited evidence of how mindfulness is used within the Cystic Fibrosis (CF) population. In order to effectively inform the development of future psychological interventions focusing upon mindfulness-based practices, it is imperative to first understand how individuals with CF are currently engaging with mindfulness.

**Method:** Internet-mediated research (IMR) was used to explore direct thoughts and experiences regarding the use of mindfulness and mindfulness-based practices across a CF population. IMR allowed for an unobtrusive method of data collection where publicly available posts were collected in Microsoft Word from two global online CF forums between 2005-2019. Key words including ‘mindfulness’ ‘meditat-ion/e/ing’ ‘yoga’ and ‘cope’ were used, and data was analysed manually.

**Results:** The positive psychological effects of mindfulness upon stress, anxiety and depression were explicit within the data, highlighting improvements to physical health with a focus on breathing and pain relief. Data showed that difficulties with focus, breath-work and exercise positions associated with CF symptoms, led to a negative experience of mindfulness and reduced psychological wellbeing.

**Conclusion:** These findings inform both the CF population and healthcare professionals of ways that mindfulness can be particularly beneficial for improving health and wellbeing for adults with CF. Future research is needed to examine the effectiveness of different mindfulness practices, specifically between breath-based and other meditation practices, to understand how mindfulness meditation may need to be adapted for people with CF. The efficacy of novel therapies, such as Kaftrio, open up possibilities of informing new psychological interventions focusing on positive lifestyle choices and holistic health gains.