Occupational Therapists in handling patients facing Health and Aging related Stress in Integrate Mental Health Program (IMHP) in KCC

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Introduction
Facing the growing aging population in Hong Kong, Health and Aging related stress becomes one of the top three critical life events affecting one's mental health in our previous study on clients attended IMHP in 2013. Clients with chronic illness like diabetes, heart disease, hypertension or pain together with mood issue increasing the challenge to the health care system. In order to promote healthy aging in primary healthcare settings, occupational therapists integrate new ideas of restructuring lifestyle to promote clients' self-control to cope with changing health condition.

Objectives
To explore the occurrence and nature of chronic disease among patient attended IMHP. To analyze the treatment approach and the effectiveness of occupational therapists' interventions in handling IMHP patients facing aging and health related issue.

Methodology
This is a descriptive study conducted in YMTGOPC IMHP patients who were under care of occupational therapists. The occurrences and the nature of chronic disease were reviewed through medical notes in clinical management systems (CMS). Out of 988 clients who attended IMHP Occupational Therapy session from May 2013 to July 2014, 97 of them presented mood problem in reacted to health and aging issue were recruited for the study. Outcomes were measured by the Personal Health Questionnaire (PHQ9) and General Anxiety Disorder Assessment (GAD7). Pre-and post-treatment symptom levels were compared by pair-t test.
Result
Among 97 clients, 72% of patients were female and mean age was 61. 65% of them were suffered one chronic disease, 35% were suffered from 2 types or above chronic disease. Concerning presenting psychological reaction, 27% was presented with sleep problem, 18% was anxiety and 13% was low mood. In reviewing occurrence and the nature of chronic disease, 28% of clients was suffered from pain included back, knee or hip with average onset of 10 weeks, 24% of clients were those who newly diagnosis with hypertension with average onset 9 weeks, 12% of clients were suffered from heart related disease with average onset for 9 weeks and 10% of clients with generalized weakness in related to aging with average onset 3 weeks. In addition, the mood state of clients suffered from two or more types of chronic diseases (Mean score of PHQ=4.8 and GAD=4.8) was higher from those suffered from one type of disease. (Mean score of PHQ=3.3 and GAD=3.6). 88% of them were managed by occupational therapist with average of 3 sessions in 10 weeks to promote the adjustment to health and aging issue. The mean PHQ9 score decreased from 5.5 to 3.2 (t=6.337; p<0.001) and mean GAD scores decreased 5.5 to 3.4 (t=6.765, p<0.001). 12% of our clients were referred to IMHP doctors for medication and 4% of them required further management in psychiatric SOPD. In conclusion, successful aging with healthy body and mind becomes the interest of occupational therapist in primary healthcare. Early Occupational Therapy interventions on redesigning the life pattern and promote control in healthy aging through coaching and psycho-education helps to reduce or prevent further mood problem in the clients with chronic illness in the community.