



## How Can the Breast Cancer Survivors' Support Group Help to Improve the Quality of Lives of the Newly Operated Mastectomy Patients

Chan C S A, Yu W K, Chan W C, Leong H T

### Background

Women will be shocked after receiving the bad news and are depressed if they are having the surgery in a short period of time. Most of them feel helplessness and want someone who had gone through the process to be the "model" and share with them their own experience. Breast cancer patients expressed their concern of their psychological change and support in order to adapt the "new images" and "new lives".

### Introduction

Ho Chi Club is a volunteer patient support group which is formed by the breast cancer survivors who have had operation done in NDH. They will have regular meeting with social activity and educational talk. Through this gathering, they gain mutual support and facilitate them to go back to normal life. Group members are empowered as such they are able to support the future patients.



### Sharing sessions



No. of session held: 11  
No. of volunteers involved: 15  
No. of participants: 102

### Ward visits

No. of session held: 38  
No. of volunteers involved: 15



### Method

From January 2010, a navigator program was implemented. We provided a short training session on counseling skill and brief talk concerning the current treatment plan of the breast cancer disease. Afterwards, the support group members started a monthly sharing talk at the first Saturday of each month. Patients who have completed surgical treatment will be invited to join the sessions.

### Navigator Program

Gather Breast Cancer Survivors whose operation done in NDH

Educational Talk

Infection Control & hospital volunteer training

Counseling skill

Brief information about current breast cancer treatment



Provide ward visit on every Saturday morning / sharing groups on every first Saturday morning

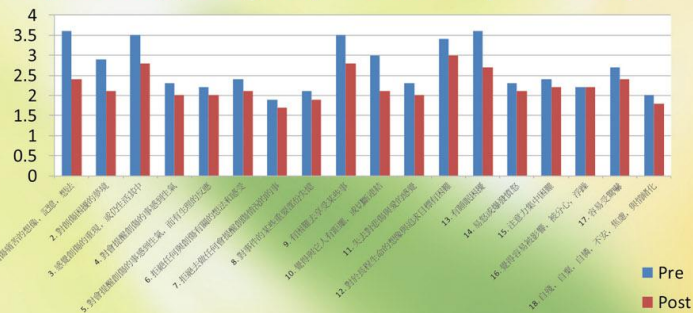
### Result

Until the end of 2010, Ho Chi Club held 11 meetings and invited about 102 patients (44.3% of operated breast cancer patients) to come and share. We conducted an survey to document patient's trauma symptoms; emotional change; knowledge towards their treatment plan. Most of the patients was found to have improvement. The satisfaction level of the support group members was also increased. The increase of the personal well-being can be found in both groups.

### Conclusion

The result of observation indicates that peer navigation can help in avoiding a decline in quality of life that is commonly seen in the newly operated breast cancer patients. It can be concluded that navigator program is beneficial provided that good support, careful training and supervision are given to the survivor volunteers. Further clinical trials should be done to demonstrate the level of effectiveness and the efficiency of the program.

### Questionnaire on trauma symptoms and emotional change pre & post support group activities (-1 month)



Questionnaire adopted from Davidson (1996) PTSD assessment

### Satisfaction survey (patients)

Target informants: participants of monthly sharing group  
Total no. of informants: 91 (89.2%)

	完全同意	同意	一般	不同意	完全不同意
支援小組能為你提供有用的資料及指導	22	55	14	0	0
支援小組能令你增加對手術的認知,在日常生活處理及日後面對輔助治療的知識上有一定的幫助	20	59	12	0	0
支援小組能帶給你身心靈上的支持	12	62	17	0	0
支援小組會讓你有一個舒發內心的情感	19	60	12	0	0
支援小組能帶給你正面思想	24	60	7	0	0
你會繼續參與支援小組所舉辦之活動	29	38	24	0	0
你會將支援小組介紹給在病歷上有相同需要的朋友	43	48	0	0	0
你會考慮日後回來參與支援小組作義工分享	7	41	38	5	0

### Satisfaction survey (survivors volunteers)

Target informants: volunteers of monthly sharing group  
Total no. of informants: 15

	完全同意	同意	一般	不同意	完全不同意
透過支援小組,你能為病友提供有用的資料及指導	2	12	1	0	0
透過支援小組,你能帶給病友身心靈上的支持	10	4	1	0	0
支援小組會也能讓你有機會舒發內心的情感	12	3	0	0	0
在支援小組內,你能感受到大家是互相支持,互相鼓勵	12	3	0	0	0
你覺得醫護人員給你們支援	15	0	0	0	0
你會繼續回來參與支援小組作義工分享	15	0	0	0	0

