



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
**Electronic Presentations**

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**Pioneering A Non-Pharmacological Based Fatigue Management Program for Patients with Advanced Chronic Illness**

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**Introduction**

Patient with advanced chronic illnesses including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart failure, renal failure and motor neuron disease are suffering from various distressing symptoms. Fatigue is one of the common symptoms encountered by them. Their physical functioning and quality of life are significantly affected by the fatigue symptom.

**Objectives**

(1) To develop a non-pharmacological based physiotherapy out-patient program in order to assist patients to relieve their distressful symptoms and to gain the sense of control; (2) To support carers and patients for better quality of life through optimizing physical functions.

**Methodology**

All cases were referred by the medical palliative medicine (MPM) clinic. We provided multi-faceted symptom-control management, including: - fatigue symptom controlled management with manual therapy and electrotherapy on acupoints - fatigue control through mobilization exercises - carer support using palliative empowerment pamphlet

**Result**

Pilot program was run from January 2012 to January 2013. Eighteen patients together with 18 carers attended the weekly physiotherapy out-patient fatigue management program. There were total of 145 attendances for manual and electrotherapy, mobilizing therapy and carer training on fatigue symptom-control management captured. Palliative empowerment pamphlet for advanced chronic illness was introduced with good feedbacks. Encouraging feedbacks and comments from patients and their relatives were received: "We never think that we can cope with fatigue caused by advanced illness." "Symptom was relieved and move as we wished." "Less

illness and we can enjoy our precious moment.” “She is more cheerful and energetic now.” When the fatigue symptom is better control, patients can cope with their terminal illness more easily. Carers are empowered with better caring skills support. Patient’s fatigue symptom can be lessened and alleviated with this program.