



Service Priorities and Programmes

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Submitting author: Mr Siu Pak CHAN

Post title: Registered Nurse, Shatin Hospital, NTEC

Enhance Social Skills through Drama Elements

Chan S.P., Wong M.K., Ng Y.M., Lau C.S.

Department of Psychiatry, Shatin Hospital.

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Introduction

In Psychiatric Day Hospital (PDH), most of the service users have just returned to community. However, owing to the nature of illness and the side effect of medication, impairments of social skills and social interactions are commonly encountered by service users with mental illness. They have difficulties in dealing with social interactions, which significantly impair them to acquire quality of life and utilization of resources in the community. Drama is a means of self-expression, the actors share a story conveyed with emotions, symbolisms, and meanings. Participation in creative activities is life-enhancing and can promote well-being. It also contributes to enhance the health environment, helps promote recovery and rehabilitation in health settings. Moreover, the creative activities involved artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, reduce stress, increase self-esteem, self-awareness, and achieve insight.

Objectives

To increase service user's self-awareness To enhance service user's social skills To improve service user's quality of life To enhance service user's community living skills

Methodology

Subjects were service users of PDH with social skills deficits. Pre and post assessment were measured before and after 8 structured close-group workshops with drama element respectively. Interviews of service users, families and staffs were included in the assessment as well as the questionnaires. Each workshop included relaxation exercise, purposeful drama game & exercise, evaluation and homework. Workshops were held in drama approach that drama elements like observation, self-awareness, emotions, self-expressions, creative activities, imagination, verbal and non-verbal interactions were included in the drama game and exercise. Booster sessions were given for the service user being absent.

Result

In over all, the results were positive; all service users reflected having certain degree of improvement of quality of life by WHOQOL-Brief. Five out of eight service users have reduced anxiety of social interaction by Interaction Anxiousness Scale. Also, all of them showed reduction of psychiatric symptoms by using Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale. Feedbacks from service users, staffs and care giver reflected that the interventions were interesting and beneficial by enhancing their social skills, increasing confident in social interaction, more social inclusions in the community and more empathy were shown.