



## Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

**Convention ID:** 1065

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### **A Pilot Study to Explore the Effectiveness of a Stigma Reduction Program in Enhancing Recovery for People with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)**

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#### **Keywords:**

Music

Occupational Therapy

Stigma Reduction

Social inclusion

Recovery

Recovery

#### **Introduction**

In Hong Kong, stigma and discrimination on severe mental illness (SMI) constitutes a major barrier to early detection and treatment of illness (Ling et al., 2014). It may interfere with social activities and undermine community engagement, leading to increased social isolation (Morgan et al., 2012) and uncertain future (Glynn S. & Lui A., 2007) that curtails recovery (Elisha et al., 2006). Stigma reduction program including psycho-education was proved to be effective to reduce stigma in Hong Kong (Ling et al., 2014). Moreover, there is evidence showing music therapy is an effective therapeutic way to address social isolation and enhance formation of relationships (Davis WB, 2008). It also provides an outlet for self-expression other than words.

#### **Objectives**

To reveal the effectiveness of a stigma reduction program to facilitate social inclusion and reducing self-stigmatization among the service-user in Psychiatric Day Hospital

#### **Methodology**

A single group pre-test and post-test design to evaluate changes on 1) Quality of life and 2) Internalized stigma after participated the program. Quality of life Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF-HK) and Internalized Stigma of Mental Illness (ISMI) scale were used.

#### **Result**

A total of 8 service-users were recruited. 7 sessions of psycho-education and music improvisation was conducted by the Occupational Therapist and Music Therapist. A song with lyrics was produced and participants had joined in a community performance at the International Day of Disabled Persons ceremony to share about their thoughts toward social stigmatization by singing this song to the public. First outcome by the WHOQOL-BREF-HK had shown improvement over subjective QOL, self-acceptance and awareness on stigma issue aspect. Second outcome by the ISMI

had shown improvement over stereotype endorsement and stigma resistance aspect. Qualitative feedback was collected by the satisfaction questionnaire which reflected that the program was useful to 1) empower them to step out and 2) enhance their self-image. In conclusion, preliminary results support the positive impact of stigma reduction program towards recovery and self-stigma for service-user with SMI. Further research with larger sample size and control group was recommended.