



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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A Group Therapy Program for Knee Osteoarthritis to Reduce the Waiting Time for Out-patient Physiotherapy and Improve Patients' Self-management Knowledge

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Introduction

Owing to the manpower shortage and increasing number of patients suffering from chronic pain, long waiting time for out-patient physiotherapy is needed for patients with knee osteoarthritis (OA knee). An early and systematic Group Therapy Program for OA Knee patients was implemented since June 2015.

Objectives

(1) To reduce the waiting time of OA knee patients for out-patient physiotherapy
(2) To empower OA knee patients in self-management by improving their knowledge, skills and exercise compliance
(3) To reduce the pain level of OA knee patients and improve them physically and functionally

Methodology

Patients diagnosed with OA knee or knee pain were screened and recruited in the Program. All recruited patients underwent 3 sessions of therapy, including individual assessment and re-evaluation, education talk, pain management strategies and home exercise program. Specially-designed education pamphlet and exercise logbook were prescribed to enhance their self-management knowledge and exercise compliance. Range of motion (ROM), strength, and outcome measures included Oxford Knee Score and newly-designed Mini-Quiz were used to evaluate patients' function and self-management knowledge respectively. The waiting time for out-patient physiotherapy of each patient was also retrieved.

Result

After the commencement of the Program, the average waiting time of OA knee patients for out-patient physiotherapy was reduced from around 90 to 15.0 weeks. Regarding to the 49 patients who had completed the Program, their average Numeric Pain Rating Scale of the affected knee has reduced 1.04 (20.4%) points significantly

out of 10 ($p=0.001$). Patients were also found to have improved self-management knowledge to their OA knees as the average mini-quiz score was increased by 1.40 (47.0%) points out of 5 ($p<0.001$). The affected knee flexion ROM was improved significantly from 120.43 ± 15.99 to 127.64 ± 12.59 degrees ($p<0.001$). The affected knee extension ROM was improved significantly from -3.86 ± 7.13 to -2.79 ± 4.63 degrees ($p=0.024$). A decreasing trend of Oxford Knee Score by 1.27 out of 60 was also found ($p=0.127$). The Group Therapy Program for OA knee could largely reduce the waiting time of OA knee patients for out-patient physiotherapy. It also reduced the pain level, improved the ROM and enhanced their self-management knowledge.