



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Carer Empowerment Programme for carers of mental patient

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Introduction

The rehabilitation of psychiatric patients in the community instead of hospitalized environment is being increasingly emphasized over the past decades. The responsibility of taking care of patient in the community have shifted from the medical professionals to patient's family caregivers. As the caregivers are not equipped with adequate knowledge on coping with the daily life and symptoms of their mentally ill relatives, they are found experiencing huge stress, resulting in massive psychological burdens and undesirable emotional reactions. Carer Support Group is increasing in popularity as an effective intervention for the caregivers. Yet there is limited information on details of Carer Support Programme organized in Asian countries as well as in Hong Kong.

Objectives

The objectives of this project was to evaluate the effectiveness of carer empowerment programme for the carers of mental patient and identified the essential components of an effective carer empowerment programme.

Methodology

Two 2-3 days workshops on multidisciplinary collaboration were organized for carers of newly admitted psychiatric patient and carers of patient with repeated admissions. Contents including knowledge on relative caring, sufficient peer support in supporting carer's emotion and share experience on caring, supportive counseling and cognitive behavioral therapy on self-help basis, and repite care for carers to participate in social activities and leisure were offered. Self-administrated questionnaires were applied to evaluate the pre- and post- outcome differences on carers' knowledge, expectation and stress.

Result

14 carers had completed the workshop for carers of newly admitted patient and 13 for the carers of repeated admission patient. The result indicated that the carer empowerment programme was effective in enhancing carers' knowledge and skills on caring their mentally ill relatives, and also relieved their caring stress and provide support for them.