



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

Convention ID: 67

Submitting author: Dr SHUI KWAN CHU

Post title: Resident, Kwai Chung Hospital, KWC

Youth-Elderly Inter-Generational Ambassador Volunteer Program - The Application of Social Inclusion Principles in Recovery-Oriented Practice to Promote Positive Psychological Experience

Leung CO(1), Chu SSK(1), Lo WL(1), Chan PS(1), Wong SM(1), Ho WS(1), Wat HY(1)

(1)Psychogeriatric Team, Kwai Chung Hospital

Keywords:

recovery

person-centred care

stigma reduction

Introduction

Old age and mental illness were associated with significant stigma in the Chinese society. Negative attitudes towards these conditions could lead to worse psychological wellbeing and hinder recovery. Volunteer programs with direct in-person contact were reported as effective strategies for stigma reduction.

Objectives

To induce positive changes in elderly with mental illness by patient empowerment, and promote acceptance and reduce stigma towards these patients among youth in Hong Kong.

Methodology

The current program served as the second phase to a pioneer project (Life Story Work – A Recovery-Oriented Practice in the Care of Psychogeriatric Clients) launched by the Psychogeriatric Team of Kwai Chung Hospital in 2014. Life story work (LSW) adopted a person-centred approach to review a patient's life experiences. The current phase involved the shared preparation of digitalized formats of LSW between the elderly, youth volunteers and nurses. A health talk on mental illness was held in a local secondary school before the volunteer recruitment process. Recruited student volunteers received training before taking part in the nurse-led therapeutic program from October 2015 to January 2016. The Mini-Mental State Examination, Geriatric Depressive Scale and World Health Organization-Quality of Life Questionnaire were administered. Each patient's qualitative accounts were recorded. The Dementia Attitude Scale were administered to all students during the health talk, and repeated in student volunteers upon completion of the program.

Result

Twenty-six student volunteers were recruited. Therapeutic interventions were provided to 12 elderly patients residing in old age homes in Kwai Chung district. Patients demonstrated improvement in depressive symptoms and quality of life. A

greater sense of pride and increased self-worth were reported. The results from the current program were comparable to those observed in the pilot project. In addition, patients reported feelings of being 'more confident' and 'socially recognized' through facilitated communication with the youth. A reduction in inaccurate stereotypes and increase in affirming attitude towards mentally ill elderly were found among students who took part in the program. Conclusion: LSW is a recovery-oriented practice that promotes person-centred care. The involvement of youth volunteers in the model of practice acts to overcome discrimination, increase acceptance, and facilitate the creation of a supportive and friendly community to elderly with mental illness.