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An innovative Sitting Pilates Program for improving physical and psychological outcomes in people with depression and mood disorders

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Introduction

Elderly Depressive Disorders are prevalent in Hong Kong (11% in female and 7.2% in male) causing detrimental motivation reduction and physical decline. Pilates exercise is well known as body-mind wellness booster. However, conventional mat work method may not be feasible for elderly. An innovative Sitting Pilates Program was developed to make a mission possible for the elderly.

Objectives

To investigate the effects of a Sitting Pilates Program on physical and psychological outcomes in elders with depressive disorders.

Methodology

A quasi-experimental pilot with single-group Pretest-Posttest design was conducted. Elders attending Psychogeriatric Day Hospital of Kowloon Hospital with diagnosis of depression and mood disorders were recruited. The 40-minute Sitting Pilates Program consisted of 5-minute warm-up, 30-minute of eight kinds of Pilates exercises in sitting and followed by 5-minute of cool-down, delivered at once per week over 12-week duration. Physical outcomes included Elderly Mobility Scale (EMS) for functional mobility; Functional Reach Test (FRT) for balance; 30-s Chair-Stand Test (30-STST) for endurance and Sit & Reach Flexibility Test (S&RT) for flexibility. Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) was employed to evaluate depression level. Paired t-test was used to analyze the treatment effect. A self-administered evaluation questionnaire was conducted to assess the perceived impact and program evaluation.

Result

Twenty-night elders were recruited (mean age of 76.2 ± 7.2). There were significant improvements in all outcomes post-intervention. Significant improvement in physical outcomes after program completion were detected with functional mobility-EMS from

16.9±4.5 to 17.6±3.8, p=0.009; balance-FRT from 17.5±8.4 to 18.9±8.4, p=0.013; endurance-30-STS from 7.2±4.8 to 8.9±4.7, p<0.001; flexibility-S&RT from -6.1±10.2 to -4.0±9.4, p<0.001. Elders also demonstrated a reduction in GDS from 4.8±2.6 to 3.2±2.5 (p<0.001) and reported mood improvement, improved quality of life and were motivated to participate in social activities after the programme (mean rating 8.82-9.47 out of 10).

The results suggested that Sitting Pilates Program was effective and feasible in enhancing clinical outcomes in elders with depressive/mood disorders and poor mobility. Frail elders were empowered to promote their own wellness and enjoyed the fun of popular exercise