



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Early Occupational Therapy (OT) Program Assisted by Peer Support Worker (PSW) Makes Psychiatric Admission a Better Experience

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Introduction

Admission to psychiatric wards could be traumatizing, distressing and disempowering. Early activity engagement, forming healing connections with people, and seeing hope in recovery journey are beneficial for clients admitted to psychiatric wards. However, some clients might not be motivated or are unsafe to leave ward in the initial stage of admission. To provide early intervention to them, a ward-based Occupational Therapy (OT) program, conducted by occupational therapist and facilitated by Peer Support Worker (PSW), has been implemented in adult psychiatric wards in QMH since October 2015. The program aimed to empower them and embrace engagement through building trusting and respectful relationships. It consisted of individual and group sessions of illness management and wellness-enhancing activities, and provided timely individual assessment and treatment. A preliminary statistical analysis was conducted to investigate the program effectiveness.

Objectives

To investigate the effectiveness of the early OT intervention program in QMH.

Methodology

A sample of 126 clients was recruited from QMH adult psychiatric wards during the period October 2015 to July 2016. Subjects received individual assessment and treatment from the case OT and were encouraged to join OT groups twice a week. Individual's mood was measured at the beginning and completion of each group using the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS). Moreover, each individual was measured at baseline and a two-week-interval, with the Chinese version of the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (C-SWEMWBS). Upon the two-week-interval, clients were invited to fill in a satisfaction survey.

Result

Paired sample t-tests showed significant improvement in clients' mood ($p = .000$) and mental well-being ($p = .003$), in particular feeling useful, relaxed, connected and capable to make decision. Results of the satisfaction survey showed an average rating of 7.9/10 (10 being very satisfied) towards the service and an average score of 3.1/4 (4 being very helpful) on various recovery elements, including hope, positive relationship, peer support and respect. Moreover, there are positive feedbacks from clients showing hopefulness, sense of empowerment and acceptance. Getting familiar with the case OT and PSW in advance, many clients expressed higher readiness in engaging in subsequent main OT programs.

The results support effectiveness of the program in improving client's mood, enhancing well-being and facilitating their recovery journey. Further improvements would include increasing variety of activities and enhancing the role of PSW.