

A Partnership Program to Enhance Continuity of Community Health Care

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Introduction:

Every year, there are over a hundred new cases reported in suffering from Pneumoconiosis in Hong Kong. There are more than a thousand persons suffered from this occupational disease while working in quarrying, tunneling and building construction etc. Similar to other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, there is no medical treatment to cure the illness of pneumoconiosis. It is important to provide with the patients pulmonary rehabilitation program so as control the deterioration of the physical health, improve their physical function and quality of life.

Purpose of the Project:

In 2003, the Hong Kong Workers' Health Centre and Pneumoconiosis Mutual Aid Association jointly launched a community based pulmonary rehabilitation program for persons suffering from pneumoconiosis under the funding support from Pneumoconiosis Fund Board. The program was a shared care program jointly supported by a multi-disciplinary team of nurse, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and social workers, to maintain the patient's maximum level of functioning in the community with a productive and fulfilling life, increase the psychosocial well-being of patients. Case management approach has been used to coordinate the rehabilitation program.

Material & Methods:

Case managers from HKWHC were responsible to recruit the potential candidates, conduct the pre and post assessment, coordinate the program and following up the participants. At the same time, nurses and physiotherapists from two hospitals, would conduct the pre and post assessment, also have group discussions, talk and exercise sessions to our clients in order to enhance their understanding on pneumoconiosis, capabilities of their function and general health knowledge. Case conference with nurses and physiotherapist from hospital would be held monthly or bi-monthly to discuss our clients' performance, team strategy and program evaluation.

Results:

There were more than 200 pneumoconiosis patients joining this rehabilitation program and enhance their understanding on pneumoconiosis, capabilities of their function, self management skills and general health knowledge.

Conclusions:

It is found that this rehabilitation project is an in-expensive community based and home-based case management service by using the multi-disciplinary team of specialists.