

## 2. Evidence-based Psychosocial Service for People with Chronic Illness and Their Families: Outcomes on Mental Health and Wellness

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### Introduction:

In addition to deleterious effects of the disease on the physical body, people with chronic illness and their families have to face different psychosocial challenges. These include emotional distress; loss of control and independence; as well as change of roles. With all these variables, health care professionals may find the helping relationship and treatment process more complicated and difficult.

### Purposes of the Project:

Role of CRN in psychosocial care

In the past decade, psychosocial care has become more and more significant in chronic disease management. Many studies have shown that it is related to positive health outcomes and well-being. Community Rehabilitation Network (CRN) is a government-subsidized service which places great emphasis on psychosocial care for people with chronic illness and their families. CRN has established comprehensive and evidence-based psychosocial services to improve mental health and well-being of patients and caregivers.

### Materials & Methods:

Psychosocial services in CRN

Psychosocial service provided by CRN is theoretical-based, it covers three major areas: 1) emotion management and positive living (Beck's Cognitive Therapy, Art Therapy), 2) family and interpersonal relationship (Satir Model), and 3) life meaning reconstruction and death preparation (Life Celebration and Empowerment Approach). Group counseling is the main program means, but other formats such as workshop, day camp have also been used. Existing service collaborators include hospitals, academic institutes, external experts and private corporate.

### Results:

With the leading and support from The University of Hong Kong, several research studies were conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the above mentioned programs. Significant improvements were noted in the following areas:

- (1) Improved overall mental health;
- (2) Decreased negative thoughts and negative emotions;
- (3) Enhanced interpersonal relationship;
- (4) More competent in facing death, particular in reduced death avoidance, enhanced death acceptance, life appreciation and tranquility.

### Conclusions:

Psychosocial services provided by CRN have shown some demonstrable evidences in improving mental health and well-being of patients and their families. In the future, CRN will develop more "preventative" psychosocial services and invite more collaborators to be our service partners, so that more patients and caregivers in the community will benefit from our services.