

## 7. An Evaluation on “Mutual Support Platform of Caregivers Platform”

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### Introduction:

The project has been launched for three years. It aims at training up chronic disease persons and caregivers, enabling them to provide support to other needy chronic disease families. So that the caregivers can have a better support both in tangible and psychosocial aspects. The training offered is disease knowledge, interpersonal relationship skills and tangible caring skills. Support services provided to needy families include home accompany, ascot service and peer support as well as simple personal care. A low rated service fee is charged to the needy families so as to generate the families' commitment and at the same time the volunteers can have an honorarium. The project was initiated and is now managed by a steering committee which is composed of social workers of Community Rehabilitation Network and patient group leaders of five chronic disease persons self help groups.

### Purposes of the Project:

The evaluation aims at measuring the improvement of the quality of life, self esteem, self efficacy and social support network among the volunteering chronic disease persons or their caregivers. It also aims at measuring the improvement of the quality of life, relieve of the care strain and improvement of the social support network of the case families.

### Materials & Methods:

Single subject Multiple waves design is used in the study. Quota Convenience Sampling Method has been used to collect data from volunteering persons, case clients and cases' caregivers for about 12 months. On the period when and every three months after they entered into the service. Data is collected by 2 sets of self administrated questionnaire, in which General Health Questionnaire-12, Medical Outcome Study Social Support Survey, Caregiver Strain Index and General Self-esteem Scale are used for the measurement of the changes in volunteers and case families.

### Results:

All the measurement showed significant positive changes. Measurement for all volunteers, case clients and caregivers showed great improvement.

### Conclusions:

Including the steering committee members' participation, the project is a big highlight in self help mutual aid and users' participation. Chronic disease persons, with special training and service matching, can be a big social capital in the community.