WHAT CAN THE PROGRAMME ACTIVITY WORKERS CONtribute to persons with cognitive impairment in hong kong?

- an exploratory approach

Presenters:

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1. Conventional Approach: medical model
2. Psychosocial Approach: Reminiscence, life story, and Person-centered
3. Training oriented: memory, ADL or IADL
4. Use of Multisensory Approach: Art, Music, Body movement, Drama, Aromatic therapy
THE REALITY

- Escalating cost for developing a service center in community
- High cost on staffing - professionals vs non-professionals
- Professional training might not prepare the graduates with multiple skills
- Management concern over the cost effectiveness for keeping a full team in a day care centre
NATURE OF THE CLIENTELE

1. Most of the people with Cognitive Impairment are mobile and physically fit
2. They need regular social stimulations in a group setting
3. They rely on center staff motivate them with appropriate programme activity
4. Their psychosocial needs can be met by planned activity
SOME CHANGES ON THE POST

1. Added a new post of programme activity worker (PAW) for Kin Chi and Kin I day care centres since 2011
2. Promote existing non-professional staff with potential to take up the job as a programme activity worker (PAW)
REASONS FOR THE TRIAL

1. The new post is expected to focus on design and planning of activity programmes for clients attending both centers
2. The new post intends to attract young and enthusiastic adults to join the team
3. The new post will provide the ground for personal development such as creativity and skills on programme planning and interpersonal skill
4. It is believed that the PAW will help People with Cognitive Impairment find their own personal interests with the help of structured activity programme
PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

1. To understand the reasons for applying to the post as a programme activity worker (PAW)

2. To find out their perceptions toward caring for people with cognitive impairment

3. To explore their thoughts and feelings of the PAW in working with people with cognitive impairment

4. To identify their concerns over their jobs
METHODOLOGY FOR DATA COLLECTION

1. Two focus groups were held at the two units (Kin Chi and Kin I)

2. Questions were developed to guide the focus group interview

3. Staff was briefed about the study prior to the interview and they all gave verbal consent

4. One observer was responsible for taking note

5. The meeting was lasted for 1.5 hours
1. Knowledge on Cognitive Impairment (Dementia)
2. Their reasons for applying for the job
3. Their perceived roles as PAW
4. Their thoughts and feelings towards the clients with CI
5. Their concerns over the job as PAWs
1. Gender: Male = 4 ; Female = 3
2. Age range: 20s - 50s
3. Education background: Secondary level (n=5), Tertiary level (n=2)
4. Professional Qualification: AD in Social Work (n= 1), Health Care Workers (n= 2), Personal Care worker (n=2); none (n=2)
5. Years of work experiences: 2 months to 6 years
6. Other work experiences: Child care, technical support, general clerk, salesman
1. Informant S: male and has served the center for over 5 years

2. Informant F: male with no former experience in elder care setting except being a volunteer to visit elderly people at their home; has applied twice to the job in the past

3. Informant C: the oldest female staff with child care experiences, chose to do the job because the center is close to her home and she wanted to have a change

4. Informant A1: the youngest female staff but with a high qualification and her reason for applying to the job was to improve her communication skill and she wanted to serve for the older people
5. Informant D: male with some work experiences in other category and did not complete his diploma in Social Work

6. Informant A2: male with less than 3 months and wanted to give a try though has never worked in social care setting or in elder care before; his previous work experience was a sale person

7. Informant (WF): took an early retirement as a home helper but was asked to join the team; she is the only person with elder care experiences
Informant C: “I did not have any idea what CI is about” or “I have never come across with people with memory problem and thus I have no idea how to take care of them…..”

Informant F: “I have gained my understanding on the condition after working here..” (laughing).
Informant S: “I have no knowledge on CI too...”

Informant A1: “I studies AD in Social Welfare...lacked of caring skills.....and no expectation from the job....”

Informant A2: “I have never done this type of job before..”
1. None of them has ever attended any professional course on care of people with cognitive impairment (Dementia) or in elder care
2. They do not have any family member with memory problem
3. One claimed to improve her caring skills or communication skills with clients
4. All of them wanted to find out by entering into the workforce
1. Informant A1: “I found the work here is interesting...” (smiling)

2. Informant S: “I also found the work is interesting......”

3. Informant A2: “I have changed my attitudes and thought to the post after working here.....”
   “I have gained a lot by working here...”

5. Informant WF: “So do I and I enjoy working here”

So new staff without any previous experiences would find the job interesting and meaning too.
1. Informant C: “the clients have no confidence to themselves and so we need to boost up their confidence…..”
2. Informant S: “Ah,…yes….the clients need our encouragement to participate…..”
3. Informant WF: “The nature of care needs one to one….”
4. Informant A1: “I need to provide a comprehensive service apart from conducting activities..........”
5. Informant F: “we have to do quite a lot…..taking them to toilet or looking after them..”
As a helper....

They see their jobs, apart from organizing an activity programme, is also to take care of personal needs....
1. Informant F: “...to facilitate the clients participate to the game.....they need us to help with the game or to motivate them...”

2. Informant WF: “Helping others.....”

3. Informant A2: “To enhance clients’ socialization or participation to games...” or “....help them by.. showing them how and what to do with the game...”

4. Informant A1: “we need to do planning, knowing their level of ability or learning about the game before introducing to them....It is important staff should know how to play with the game...(laughing)...”
Majority of them agreed that they are there to help with social participation and game playing. They see their job involves with planning and playing with the clients etc.

But they did not mention about setting up monitoring system to evaluate their cognition and emotion since participation to game or activity programme is only a mean for monitoring and assessing clients’ physical, psychological and social aspects.
**THEIR CONCERNS**

1. **Informant A1:** “I felt we should have support from professional staff....” “I felt stressed if I am left alone to complete the activity by myself....”

2. **Informant S:** “I agreed that we need to have professional support or supervision.........it was quite demanding and stressful if you have no professional staff to seek for help or advice....”

3. **Informant C:** “yes, I found I have to cover a lot of jobs in the center...”

4. **Informant D:** we are not paid much since we have to cover the range of services.....I found it is quite impossible to complete the daily record after the day care services....”
Indeed, the clients are heavily to rely on staff to plan, organize, motivate and play with them during their stay.

Staff felt that they are not ready to work independently and it is quite true as they are in their post less than one year except one of the PW who has been working at the centre the longest but he was in a different role. This is his first time to take up more responsible job after completing a Certificate in Multi Skill in Elder Care course.

Their concerns/worries are genuine since they are still in their junior positions without formal training as a programme activity worker.
1. **Informant AF:** “....I am very **good at storytelling**.....” (laughing confidently)

2. **Informant A1** “Or, playing with **“Guessing the Chinese phrases” with them....”**
1. It is difficult to have a staff with all talents so they need to find time developing themselves.

2. They must look into their own capacity and ability to enrich themselves so that they can continue to create new games/activity programmes.
1. Informant A1: “I have helped my friend who is also a PW working in an old age home. Her job as a PW is quite different from ours as she needs to do more such as publicity, promotion and recruitment... we only design and develop the activity since we would match to the needs of the clients attending on that day.”

2. Informant S: “yes,....my observation on PW in social centre for the elderly is that they need to prepare a lot and work independently on planning, publicity and implementation....since their clients are physically and cognitively fit to choose for themselves.”
1. **Informant F:** “I think music can stimulate them…..”

2. **Informant A1:** “Matching to their needs is essential……”
1. The focus group interviews did provide a good opportunity for staff to reflect on their work as PAWs

2. Their instant sharing on their work with people with CI showed that they did not mind to work on a place, unknown to them at the beginning but felt the change cognitively and affectively

3. They have developed an affection to the clients and are willing to help and to take care of them
4. The young staff are a valuable asset to the center when the traditional workforce was mainly older female.

5. They have created a different atmosphere since they would make joke with the clients and the clients see them as their grandchildren.
CONCLUSION (1)

1. It is a success for Kin Chi and Kin I, St James Settlement to create a post that can support the professional staff at the Centre

2. The post has attracted young workers joining the workforce and they felt they have gained a lot by caring for People with Cognitive Impairment

3. They are expected to take the lead in the group activity or individual training after having gone through the schedule with the supervisor - they are always under supervision
CONCLUSION (2)

4. The title of a programme (activity) worker has been existed for sometimes but PWs only work in normal settings for the elderly such as nursing homes or day care centre (two informants have already provided the description for a PW)

5. However, the job of a PAW is seen as more demanding on them since they have to care for clients with cognitive deficits whereas the PWs have less concerns on their clientele
CONCLUSION (3)

1. The introduction of a PAW has provided an opportunity for young people to learn about the condition and how to take care of the client with cognitive impairment

2. It is financially viable to employ PAWs since the operation cost is always a concern to a non-subsidized service

3. The PAW can be further improved of their knowledge and skill in programme planning and evaluation
The presenters would like to say “thank you” to the group of programme activity workers for sharing their thoughts and feelings toward their jobs and the work in dementia care.