

Virtual cum Real: Innovative Hybrid Occupational Therapy Programme for Risk Assessment and Management Programme (RAMP) in NTWC Primary Care Setting under COVID-19



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Introduction

New Territories West Cluster (NTWC) pioneered to involve Occupational Therapy in Risk Assessment and Management Programme (RAMP) – Hypertension / Diabetes to further promote active living and balanced lifestyle. Patients with imbalanced lifestyle affecting hypertension or diabetes mellitus control, and with stress or negative emotion in relation to chronic disease are commonly referred to Occupational Therapy for individual or group based lifestyle redesign intervention.

At the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic, Allied Health service in NTWC Community Health Centre was suspended. Alternative mode of service delivery through telephone consultation with assessment and brief lifestyle redesign intervention was adopted. The intensity and quality was much reduced compared to group therapy. On the other hand, demand from patients coping with various life stress as well as living with the pandemic soared.

Objectives

An innovative hybrid service mode with face-to-face and zoom classroom for stress management and mind-body relaxation therapeutic group was developed to address both patient needs and infection control.

Method

In phase I, group therapy sessions were delivered to participants in zoom. In phase II, as the pandemic evolved with resumption of small group intervention, hybrid classroom was adopted. Patients could opt for clinic or zoom based learning. Patients' feedback on group content, perceived benefit and technical support were collected upon completion of the programme.

Results

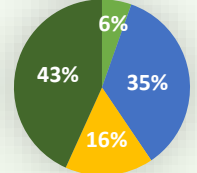
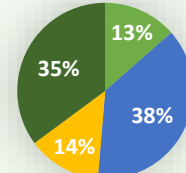
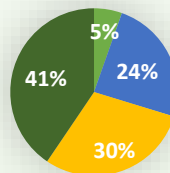
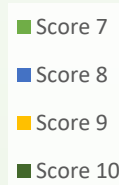
37 patients successfully completed the zoom group in five batches in phase I. Five hybrid classrooms were conducted for 38 patients in phase II, with real time interaction among patients. Analysis showed overall satisfaction of 8.9 for group content, 8.6 for perceived benefit, 8.8 for technical support out of a 10-point-scale.

	Phase I Zoom	Phase II Hybrid	Overall
Participants No.	37	38	75
Female	26	30	56
Male	11	8	19
Age Mean	57	57	57
Age Range, SD	41-75, 8	37-75, 11	37-75, 10
Zoom to Clinic Ratio		1.2 : 1	
Satisfaction			
Group Content	9.1	8.8	8.9
Perceived Benefit	8.7	8.5	8.6
Technical Support	9	8.6	8.8

Zoom - Group Content

Perceived Benefit

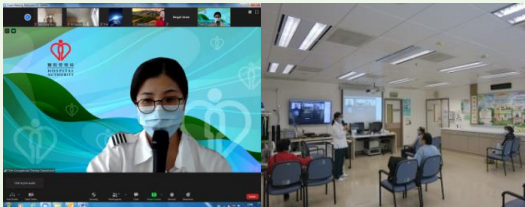
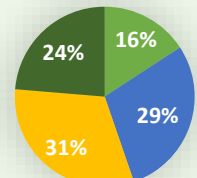
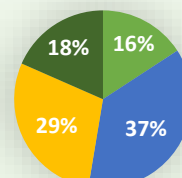
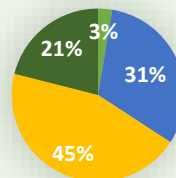
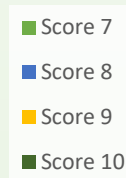
Technical Support



Hybrid - Group Content

Perceived Benefit

Technical Support



Qualitative feedback was positive as the hybrid mode accommodated different patients' needs, including flexibility for the working patients and patients who were reluctant to attend clinic in person during the pandemic. Patients who preferred traditional learning or with lower technology literacy could still attend therapeutic groups with enhanced infection control measure.

Conclusion

This innovative hybrid service mode enabled Occupational Therapists to maintain or expand service capacity despite strict social distancing and space limitation in clinic. This innovative hybrid service mode serves as a new normal model on group therapy in future.