

Developing a Conceptual Framework for Patient-reported Experience Measure in Community Mental Health Services

A Qualitative Study of Hong Kong Service Users

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Introduction

According to most recent Hospital Authority statistics, there has been an increase in patients afflicted by **mental health illnesses from 270,700 in 2020 to 305,700 in 2024**; marking a 13% increase in just 4 years (1). This has placed overwhelming pressure on the public healthcare system, which is made worse by **high attrition rates** among mental health professionals (1).

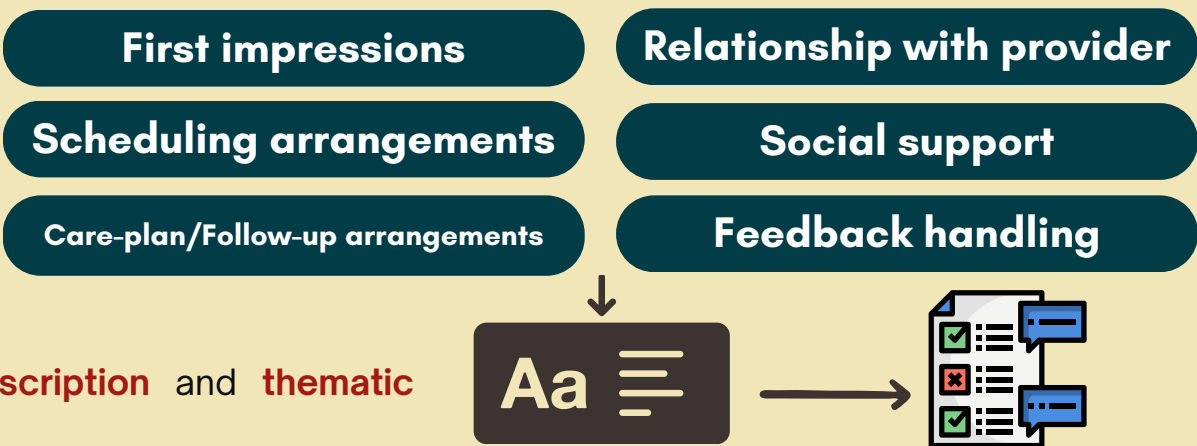
Amid these challenges, efforts to switch to community-based recovery have been made to increase **social reintegration and lessen the pressure on tertiary care** (2). As such, there has been a surge in community mental health services (CMHS), but lack competent ways to evaluate efficiency.

Objectives

- To develop a **conceptual framework** on CMHS evaluation with considerations of local Chinese values and culture;
- To generate a **domains of patient-reported experience measure (PREM)** for local adult community mental health service users.

Methods

- Local CMHS service users were recruited from **3 local NGOs**.
- Focus group discussions were semi-structured to **six topics derived from literature review**.
- Interviews were audio-recorded for **transcription** and **thematic analysis**.



Results

- A total of **25 CMHS users** were recruited for **four focus group sessions**.
- Six major themes** were generated from thematic analysis for the domains of the **PREM**

Focus Group Participant Profile

Characteristics	N (%)
Gender	
Male	8 (32%)
Female	17 (68%)
Age Group	
30-49	1 (4%)
50-69	14 (56%)
70+	10 (10%)
Comorbidity	
Yes	20 (80%)
No	5 (20%)
Years using CMHS	
1 to 5	8 (32%)
6 to 9	7 (28%)
10 or more	10 (40%)

Conclusion

These findings support the notion that the service users ability to collaborate and be included in their care plan is a major factor to consider when evaluating CMHSs.

The PREM framework developed will provide a platform for collecting user-reported information on CMHS experience.

