

## The Application of a Positive Behaviour Support Model for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities: A Pioneering Study in Hong Kong

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### Abstract

*Background:* Positive behaviour support (PBS) is increasingly viewed as the preferred service approach for people with intellectual disabilities (IDs); however, many services settings may not have equipped their frontline workers with practice skills in this field in Hong Kong. This study is a first attempt to systematically apply the PBS model to ID adult services, with the aims of providing training to staff members on the knowledge and skills in applying the PBS model and in alleviating the challenging behaviours of service user participants with IDs.

*Methods:* A single-system research design was adopted to measure the alleviation of challenging behaviour. In total, 18 service user participants were involved in individual tailor-made interventions. Meanwhile, a pretest-posttest design was adopted to measure the staff changes. A total of 18 social workers participated.

*Results:* The challenging behaviours of seven service users were improved. Participating social workers' competencies in managing challenging behaviour were also enhanced.

*Discussion:* Reflections on the practice and recommendations will be discussed.

*Keywords:* Positive behaviour support, evidence-based intervention, adults with intellectual disabilities, Hong Kong.

### Introduction

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) has been developed since the 1990s (Rotholz & Ford, 2003). It is an approach for supporting behavioural changes in people with intellectual disabilities (IDs) who exhibit challenging

behaviours at home, at school, and in the community. PBS is regarded as an alternative to punitive or aversive interventions that were often used to manage behaviour in the 1980s (Carr et al., 2002; Horner et al., 1990). It represents an advancement of applied behaviour analysis (Risley, 1999). Carr and

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