

Message from Issue Editor



Promoting Mental Health

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Mental Health Promotion: Where It Goes from Here?

In the recent few years, mental health services in Hong Kong have experienced substantial growth in both public and private sectors. The expansion was fuelled by reports of family tragedies of persons with mental illness, increasing public awareness on the lack of rehabilitation and ongoing support for persons with mental health problems, long queues for psychiatric services, more public awareness of importance of mental health, as well as alarming increases of drug abuse and mental health issues among young people. With some solid reviews of mental health policy, more government resources would be allocated to hospital and community care for patients. However, what will be done in mental health promotion? What has been done to help the public become more 'literate' about mental health? What could make an impact on the stigmatizing attitude toward persons with mental illness? What mental health promotion programs are there to achieve these ends?

Mental health promotion has long been a key mission of the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong. The current issue invited submissions from scholars, researchers, clinicians in the frontier of mental health promotion and primary care. With their support, we are able to publish a rich collection of scholarly papers on these initiatives. The

paper by Dr. L.K. Chan discusses the ongoing debate of the relationships between media and stigma toward persons with mental illness. The paper by Prof. Daniel Shek outlines a large-scale positive youth development program that is being implemented in junior secondary schools, and Dr. Bonnie Siu outlined the public education initiatives of the Institute of Mental Health, Castle Peak Hospital. Prof. Sally Chan presented an innovative, evidence-based program on mental health promotion for children with mental ill parents, and Dr. A.F. Jorm reviewed the experience of developing Mental Health First Aid in Hong Kong and other countries – how lay persons could be trained to provide early intervention to persons with mental health risks. We also have the pleasure to include a manuscript of the 5th Dr. Gerald Choa Memorial Lecture titled "Learning from our mistakes: How the 'wrong' result can set you 'right' in community psychiatry research" by Prof. Tom Burns. Lastly, our Association sums up the recent development of Mental Health First Aid.

Through the collection of papers in this issue, I hope we could share the experience of current efforts in mental health promotion, help to provide some hints to the direction of mental health promotion, and encourage more people to take part in the ongoing endeavor of mental health promotion.