

Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital

**Michelle Lew, Anita Yiu, G. Meenambal
Nurulfajriyah Binti Mohd Idris, Nursyaibah Begum**

Introduction / Background

Kwong Wai Shiu Care centres' (KWSC) operations were suspended due to Circuit Breaker / Covid-19. As a result, our Active Ageing (AA) members and Senior Care Centre (SCC) clients were unable to gather for exercises/activities and socialize with their peers in our centres.

This has affected our elderlies significantly; developed a sense of isolation and loneliness. They also felt languid as partaking in activities at our centres had become their daily routine prior to Covid-19. Moreover, the lack in active participation in physical exercises entail the risk of deterioration in elderlies' physical conditions.

Goal / Objective

1. To remain connected and engaged with our AA members and SCC clients with virtual activities via Zoom/WhatsApp to maintain an active lifestyle when centres were closed due to circuit breaker.
2. Usual centre group activities can be conducted virtually daily using technological applications such as Zoom and WhatsApp, to allow elderlies to maintain an active lifestyle.
3. To provide a new and enhanced experience for our elderlies.
4. Maintaining of nil physical gathering and contact during circuit breaker for client safety.

Implementation Plan

Plan

1. Gathered feedback from our elderlies via a simple survey, prioritized and identified the preferred/ suitable programs that are safe, not too strenuous and that can be conducted virtually.
2. Identified the criteria of the target group members.
3. Planned the materials and manpower required.
4. Identified potential issues that may be encountered e.g., Wi-Fi speed, PC specifications, screen size, speaker volumes & etc. and consulted our IT department to curb such potential issues.

Do

1. Implemented shortlisted virtual programs by using Zoom and WhatsApp e.g. chair exercises, low impact aerobics, drawing, card making, art & craft, cooking demonstration etc.
2. Educated AA members/SCC clients/caregivers on the basic operations of Zoom via phone and WhatsApp broadcasting.
3. 73 IT training sessions were conducted in May 2020 and 113 IT training sessions were conducted in June 2020 to elderlies/caregivers facilitate the project.
4. Conducted the virtual group activities from Mondays to Fridays.

Implementation Plan (Con't)

Study

1. Surveyed and collected feedback at the end of each session.
2. Monitored the hardware and software performances and issues rectified with IT department.

Act

1. Fine-tuned programs and implemented enhanced programs based on survey and feedback.
2. More elderlies were recruited to participate, and a variety of classes were gradually added on.

Benefits/Results

- Started with only 4 to 5 elderlies as a trial and ultimately increased to over 30 members within 1 month of implementation.
- A tremendous 264% increase in participation from the 1st to 2nd month of implementation, as evidenced by the increase from 256 attendances on May 3, 2020, to 931 attendances in June 2020.
- Members and colleagues became very savvy in operating Zoom/WhatsApp & the IT gadgets.
- Minimal manpower required to conduct the programs but with maximum yield of very high participation rates.
- Daily virtual group activities attendances were approximately 50 elderlies/day in June 2020 and only 1 staff was required to conduct the program for 0.5 hours.
- In a traditional centre-based / classroom group activity, a max of 10 elderlies/session only and 1 hour would be required as opposed to only 0.5 hours for virtual group activities, with the requirement to disinfect items used and the logistics arrangement of the facility prior to the next class.
- Hence, in a usual classroom setting, it would require at least 5 hours for 1 staff to conduct such sessions for 50 elderlies/day.
- For a group of 50 elderlies/day, the aforementioned would translate to a savings of man-hours by ten-fold (0.5 vs 5 hours) that is equivalent to 1872 man-hours saved per annum, total savings of \$56 160 per annum.
- The man-hours saved could be better utilized to coordinate/conduct other programs and we could reach out to more elderlies too.
- Elderlies/caregivers feedback that the elderlies' moods and mental conditions improved significantly as they were actively connected even during circuit breaker period.