



Health Promotion Initiative in Long-Term Care Facilities for People with Disabilities

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Abstract

The settings approach to health promotion consists of analyzing factors that affect health, effectively evaluating personal health skills, strengthening the health motive of care facilities, and establishing a healthy supporting environment. With the establishment of health promotion policies and promotional plans, these can particularly promote the health of people with disabilities. This study took the example of Taiwan's first long-term care facility for people with disabilities, which has joined the WHO Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Service, and analyzed in particular its health promotion initiatives. We hope that this study will be used as a reference for groups dedicated to raising the quality of life and human rights of people with disabilities.

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Introduction

Health is a basic human right. Every country should attempt to accommodate its citizens' basic health requirements irrespective of their color, race, place of residence, economic status, or whether or not they are disabled. The tenth additional article in the constitution of the Republic of China states that "The State shall guarantee insurance, medical care, obstacle-free environments, education and training, vocational guidance, and support and assistance in everyday life for physically and mentally handicapped people and shall also assist them to attain independence and to develop." (1). Because of their congenital or acquired physical or mental defects, people with disabilities have higher prevalence rates for disease compared with general people, leading to premature aging and risk of secondary obstacles. Therefore, higher medical needs and health costs are implied for this population (2;3). Establishing a healthy, safe, and lively long-term care facility for people with disabilities is an effective health promotion initiative strategy (4;5). With the settings approach to health promotion, analyzing factors that affect health, evaluating personal health skills, strengthening the health motive of care facilities, and establishing a healthy supporting environment, as well as health

promotion policies and promotional plans, can particularly promote the health of people with disabilities. The decision of Taiwan's first long-term care facility for people with disabilities to join the WHO Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services was used as an example in this study. Furthermore, the progress on health promotion initiatives was analyzed.

Health promotion approach

The Chunhui Center for persons with intellectual disabilities was established in 1984 by the Chung-Hua Foundation for persons with intellectual disabilities. In the spirit of God-given human rights, this center advocates for people with intellectual disabilities to enjoy equal citizen participation rights within society and fit in at workplaces and in the society. This center has been dedicated to the education, training, and counseling of adults with intellectual disabilities and provides them with professional skills training as well as offers consultation on their employment, advocating for their enjoyment of a healthy life in the society. Presently, the center is serving and caring for 42 day-time persons and 137 whole-day persons, with 63% of them being severely or extremely severely disabled, 83% of them having been admitted for



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over 10 years, and over 28% of them being aged 45 years or above. With the health facility's building plan, it is hoped that these persons will be able to maintain their self-reliance and self-care capacities, healthy aging, prevent and delay total disability.

Since 2007, the Chunhui Center for persons with intellectual disabilities began to systemically promote the establishment of health facilities and officially joined the WHO Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services in 2016, becoming Taiwan's first and only member of the network as a welfare institution for the physically and mentally disabled. The course for its establishment of health promoting facilities include establishing a health promotion organization, nutrition education program, oral health care, healthy fitness plan, rehabilitation and occupational therapy service, and to initiate healthy aging plan, and they will be elaborated as described in the following.

Establishing the "Health promotion initiative committee"

In 2007, the center began conducting discussions on the concept of health promotion for the staff members, providing explanation and communication of concepts during parental group meetings, and designed a health management booklet for the Chunhui Center for persons with intellectual disabilities. They also began collecting and analyzing basic health data of the disabled. The center is serving and determined the priority order of intervention based on implementation difficulty, and has continuously promoted health plans on an annual basis.

Nutritional health education

Before the center established the health facility for the mentally challenged, it had been conducting nutritional health educational classes for many years. However, the efficacy outcome was not apparent, so the health promotion initiative group decided to intervene. They instilled healthy dietary concepts in people with intellectual disabilities using images, videos, and actual pastry making and changed the kitchen's oil usage amount, providing dietary information, such as using less oil, less sodium, and more vegetables.

Oral health care

Since 2007, the center has been promoting teeth cleaning exercises to teach the importance of teeth cleaning and taught the severely and extremely severe intellectually disabled to brush their own teeth in a stepwise manner. In 2008, two dentists were

introduced to the facility to perform dental procedures, and the people with intellectual disabilities presently receive around two teeth cleaning and oral health check services annually. To overcome the resistance among people with intellectual disabilities to visit the dentist, beginning in 2012, an annual tooth cleaning competition is held to continuously strengthen the patients' independent oral health care ability.

Healthy fitness plan

Fitness has always been one of the most valued classes since the establishment of the institution. In 2009, fitness course materials designed by the Ministry of Education for special education high school development was introduced, which included exercises for cardiopulmonary endurance, muscular endurance, flexibility and stretch, etc. Individuals with intellectual disabilities were taught to be more effective to reach an exercising intensity, and a "standardized fitness examination for the people with intellectual disabilities" was developed to assess the efficacy of the intervention of the fitness exercises. Modifications were made to the content of the fitness classes based on the examinations to help them increase their fitness and protect their health.

Rehabilitation and occupational therapy

In 2010, professional staff of the rehabilitation department of the local hospital (Enchu Kong Hospital) signed a cooperative agreement accepting the center to recruit rehabilitation doctors, physical therapists, and occupational therapists and perform rehabilitative evaluation of the patients. Rehabilitative treatment courses were then conducted, and approximately 50 patients were enrolled into this plan after evaluation. Through the assistance of medical professionalism, the disabled promoted the body and living functions, decreased their reliance on the caregivers, and increased and maintained their independent ability. Since 2013, it had progressively developed into rehabilitative motions operated in the spaces of daily life, summarized to be the "functional teaching." Using the concept of rehabilitation, the disabled were counseled on and fixed their daily living functions, to improve their quality of life.

Healthy aging plan

As the disabled grow older, in 2016, the healthy aging plan was initiated and was conducted on their aged 45 years or above (the age of premature aging for people with intellectual disabilities). Classes such as nutrition supply design, leisure gardening, pressure relief massage, lively fitness, festival holidays, etc. were



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initiated under the guidance of the health promotion care facility to allow the middle-aged and elderly persons to age healthily and maintain healthy human rights.

Conclusion

In 2016, the Chunhui Center for persons with intellectual disabilities began promoting a comprehensive health promotion initiative plan, particularly in the previous 10 years, and applied for certification to be a “healthcare facility” in April 2016. Under the instructions of the Taiwan Society of Health Promoting Hospitals, the implementation results were analyzed on all aspects, including health management policies, client’ information assessment, health information access and intervention, promotion of a healthy work environment for the work staff, and continuous commitment of the competent authority to maintain working-partnership relationships with the clients’ family members, etc. The center received the accreditation site review in May 2016, and in addition to presenting the past implementation results, the center promised to continuously promote the healthy aging of the elders, lively healthy aerobic exercises, and establishment of a no-smoking environment. After instructions and evaluation by the site review specialist, the HPH accreditation was passed, allowing the center to be Taiwan’s first long-term disability facility to be certified by the WHO Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services. It is our hope that the Taiwan Society of Health Promoting Hospitals can continuously communicate with the network to persevere in promotion and growth.

Through this article’s description of the experience of the Chunhui Center for persons with intellectual disabilities in promoting healthy facility creation in Taiwan’s field of service for people with disabilities, we hope that this study becomes a reference for groups dedicated to raising the quality of life and human rights of people with intellectual disabilities.

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