

Dissemination reports are concise informative reports of health-related research supported by funds administered by the Food and Health Bureau, namely the *Research Fund for the Control of Infectious Diseases* (RFCID) and the *Health and Health Services Research Fund* (HHSRF).^{*} In this edition, 11 dissemination reports of projects related to mental health, reference standards, and traditional Chinese medicine are presented. In particular, three projects are highlighted due to their potentially significant findings, impact on healthcare delivery and practice, and/or contribution to health policy formulation in Hong Kong.

Individuals with poor mental health may also have poor compliance with treatment. Research suggests that self-stigma is a significant disincentive for psychosocial treatment compliance. Tsang¹ examined the underlying mechanism of self-stigma and treatment compliance and developed and tested the effectiveness of an interventional programme for reducing self-stigma, enhancing readiness for change, and treatment compliance. In a study of 105 Chinese subjects with schizophrenia, he found that self-stigmatised individuals were less willing to seek psychiatric services due to anticipated stigma, and that such individuals possessed poor insight with respect to the beneficial effects of psychiatric treatment. The intervention programme was not effective in enhancing treatment compliance, which emphasises the complex nature of poor mental health and the need to further augment psychosocial intervention in this vulnerable group.

Growth standards are useful for monitoring whether a child's health care needs are being adequately met or not. Schooling et al² examined how the 2006 World Health Organization (WHO) criteria for an optimal nurturing environment impacted infant growth in Hong Kong Chinese children. They found that parental socio-economic status was positively associated with length and body mass at 9 months. At 36 months, local children were generally shorter and fatter than the WHO growth reference. The authors caution that as rapid infant growth is associated with adult obesity and metabolic risk, attention should be paid to ensuring Hong Kong children achieve appropriate linear growth without becoming overweight.

Constipation is a common gastrointestinal complaint for which Chinese herbal medicine is becoming a more popular form of treatment. Bian et al³ conducted an 18-week prospective, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical study of a Chinese herbal medicine for treatment of functional constipation in 120 Hong Kong Chinese subjects. The herbal remedy was superior to placebo and no serious adverse effects were reported.

A research impact evaluation was conducted 2 years after the project end date for many of the studies reported in this supplement. Impact was reported through publications in peer-reviewed journals, gain of additional qualifications for project team members, career advancement, additional research funding obtained, stimulation of other research groups to conduct related research, and impact on policy and health care practices through changes in behaviour of health care professionals and/or other decision makers.

We hope you will enjoy this selection of research dissemination reports. Electronic copies of these dissemination reports and the corresponding full reports can be downloaded individually from the Research Fund Secretariat website (<http://www.fhb.gov.hk/grants>). Researchers interested in the funds administered by the Food and Health Bureau also may visit the website for detailed information about application procedures.

^{*} In December 2011, the RFCID and HHSRF were consolidated into a new fund called the *Health and Medical Research Fund* (HMRF) with an expanded scope to include advanced medical research.

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3. Bian ZX, Cheng CW, Zhu LZ. Chinese herbal medicine for functional constipation: a randomised controlled trial. *Hong Kong Med J* 2013;19(Suppl 9):44-6.