Editorial

Dissemination reports are concise informative reports of health-related research supported by funds administered by the Food and Health Bureau, for example, the *Health and Health Services Research Fund* (which was consolidated into the *Health and Medical Research Fund* in December 2011). In this edition, 11 dissemination reports of projects related to mental health, injuries and accidents, neurology, and musculoskeletal disorders are presented. In particular, four 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.

Depression is a global health concern and will be the second highest cause of disability by 2020. The prevalence of postnatal depression ranges from 5% to 25%. Leung et al[1] conducted a randomised controlled trial in 164 postnatal Chinese women comparing group cognitive behavioural therapy with usual care (information booklet) in reducing depressive symptoms and the rate of postnatal depression after intervention. The cognitive behavioural therapy intervention significantly reduced depressive symptoms and was well received by postnatal women. The authors suggest further testing cognitive behavioural therapy as an integral part of postnatal care to complement existing services and reduce waiting time.

Fall is the second leading cause of accidental death worldwide and the elderly is particularly at risk. Poor balance control is a major risk factor for falling in the elderly. Tsang et al[2] conducted a randomised controlled trial in 79 elderly Chinese nursing home residents with a history of fall comparing virtual reality exercise (Wii Fit) with conventional balance training. The results showed that playing Wii Fit games can improve standardised measures of balance and enhance the management of fall prevention in older adults (especially for those living in aged care facilities) and may reduce health care costs and suffering in older adults.

Falls and fall-related injuries after stroke are common. Physical rehabilitation can restore balance control, promote functional recovery, and prevent secondary complications, disability, and handicap. Ng et al[3] conducted a randomised controlled trial to test the effectiveness of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation plus task-oriented balance training in recovery of balance and motor function after the first sub-acute stroke. The authors found that the experimental intervention was superior to placebo in improving balance performance and motor functions. Future studies should examine the optimal combined training programme in terms of frequency, duration, and intensity.

Spasticity leads to decreased range of motion of joints, increased pain, spasm, functional disability, and contractures. Limb spasticity also increases the burden on carers in the provision of nursing and personal care. Lam et al[4] conducted a randomised controlled trial comparing botulinum toxin A and placebo (saline) as a supplement to conventional physiotherapy and occupational therapy to treat upper limb spasticity in 55 debilitated infirmary patients. Patients receiving botulinum toxin had significant improvement in muscle tone and joint mobility, and caregivers were able to perform basic upper limb care more easily.

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.

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