

Editorial

Dissemination reports are concise informative reports of health-related research supported by the Health and Medical Research Fund (and its predecessor funds) administered by the Food and Health Bureau. In this edition, we present 11 dissemination reports of projects related to mental health, paediatrics, and neurology. 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.

Psychotic disorders including schizophrenia are severe mental illnesses pose a significant burden on healthcare systems around the world. Numerous early intervention programmes for psychosis have been established. In Hong Kong, the Early Assessment Service for Young People with Psychosis (EASY) was launched in 2001, as a publicly funded, territory-wide service comprising community awareness programmes, an open referral system and a 2-year specialised early intervention for young people aged 15 to 25 years with first episode psychosis. Chang et al¹ systematically evaluated the effectiveness of an extended EASY programme for adult first episode psychosis patients. They found that patients who received 3-year extended EASY treatment had significantly shorter treatment delay than those managed in standard psychiatric care and that the extended EASY programme was superior to standard care in functional outcome improvement and alleviating symptom severity, in particular negative and depressive symptoms.

Adolescent drinking is an important public health issue but little is known about the drinking pattern in Hong Kong adolescents. Ho et al² investigated the drinking pattern of Hong Kong

secondary school students in order to identify risk factors and problems associated with alcohol drinking. They found that in secondary 1-6 students, the overall prevalence of current drinking and binge drinking were 21.5% and 7.5%, respectively. Risk factors for adolescent drinking were parental pro-drinking practices, lack of parental disapproval of adolescent drinking, and adolescent positive expectation of alcohol drinking. These modifiable factors could be targeted in interventions. Adolescent drinking was associated with depressive symptoms, poor academic performance, and sleep problems.

Mirror therapy has been shown to be effective for patients with phantom limb pain after amputation. Mirror therapy involves the superimposition of reflections of unaffected limb movements on the affected limb to make it appear as if the latter is moving. Fong et al³ conducted a randomised controlled trial comparing the effectiveness of a 6-week (12-session) course of mirror therapy against bimanual arm training in improving motor and functional performance of hemiplegic upper extremity on adults with chronic stroke. Both therapies were useful in enhancing hemiplegic arm functions of stroke patients, with possible benefits to the distal hand functions in mirror therapy.

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 (<https://rfs2.fhb.gov.hk/>). 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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References

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3. Fong KNK, Ting KH, Chan CCH, Li LSW. Mirror therapy with bilateral arm training for hemiplegic upper extremity motor functions in patients with chronic stroke. *Hong Kong Med J* 2019;25(Suppl 3):S30-4.