

THE QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

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Introduction and aims: Previous studies showed that persons with mental illness had poorer quality of life than persons with the other medical conditions. We developed a manualized treatment - Quality of Life Enhancement Program (QOLEP) based on literature review and clinical experiences. The contents of the program include 4 sessions of 'occupational life scheduling' and 4 sessions of 'coping skills' provided by an occupational therapist during a 4-week period (2 times/week) which each session lasts for one to two hours.

Methods: Twenty-one subjects were recruited from community mental health rehabilitation centers in northern Taiwan. They were randomly assigned to either treatment group (N=11) or control group (N=10). The subjects in the control group received general supportive therapy over the phone twice a week for 4 weeks. Both groups were evaluated at baseline and post-treatment. The mixed-effects linear model was applied to analyze the efficacy of the treatment.

Results: The results showed that the subjects who participated in the QOLEP had significantly better physical QOL than that of control group (-9.66 ± 4.24 , $p < .05$). The suicidal ideation of the subjects for both groups decreased over time (2.64 ± 3.16 , $p < .05$). Most of the participants indicated that the activities were easily understood, helpful to them, and are willing to participate in the program again.

Discussion: With the program developed based on concept of occupational engagement, we were able to demonstrate the efficacy of specific treatment on quality of life and used it as evidence to support future development in mental health area.