

A Leap Forward- A Rehabilitation Programme

The CEAP or Cognitive Enrichment and Assessment Program was first introduced in Simei Care Centre in mid 2006. It began as a pilot study, looking into a feasible way to conduct cognitive remediation to persons with severe mental illness. The basic premise of conducting such a study was to establish a rehabilitation program that was not only supplementary to social skills training and vocational rehabilitation, but holistic in its approach to the whole meaning of psychiatric rehabilitation for the mentally ill. Research have shown that involvement in cognitive remediation, together with other psychosocial rehabilitative programs, proved to be more successful, instead of just psychosocial intervention alone, it is helping a person with severe mental illness reintegrate back to society.

The CEAP took a leap forward in 2008 when it was awarded funding from NCSS (National Council of Social Services) to study the effectiveness of cognitive remediation to a wider population of sufferers. It is hopeful that this program achieves its objectives of improving the cognitive functioning of persons with severe mental illness and helping them in the other aspects of their psychosocial rehabilitative work.

by Godfrey Lau

Upcoming Events

- 11 April 2009 **Easter Celebration**
- 24 April 2009 **Sports Day**
- 23 May 2009 **Flea Market**

What does the Mental Health First Aid Training course involve?

This 12-hour mental health literacy course has been developed for members of the public. This course addresses the following crisis situations: Person having

- *suicidal thoughts*
- *a panic attack*
- *recently experienced a traumatic event*
- *overdosed*
- *Psychotic person threatening violence*

The course also provides tips on how to help people with mental health problems before a crisis develops. The 4 teaching modules (3 hours each) cover the following areas:

- *Psychosis*
- *Mood disorders*
- *Anxiety disorders*
- *Addiction problems and other mental health related issues*

Members of the public are welcomed to enrol for the above mentioned course.

Date for the next run: 6, 13, 20 & 27
June 2009 (Saturdays)

Time: 9am – 12pm

Venue: Simei Care Centre,
2nd floor, Conference Room.

Please contact: Kristine at 6781 8113 or
admin@sacsscc.org.sg

First Run at SCC was conducted for 12 persons (staff and volunteers) of SCC on 6, 13, 20 Feb and 13 March.



SCC Highlights 2009

9 Jan 2008 Thanksgiving Celebration • 23 Jan Chinese New Year Celebration • 11 Mar Members' Outing • 11 Apr Easter Celebration • 24 Apr Sports Day • 23 May Flea Market • 10 Jun Members' Outing • 20 Jun Caregivers' Seminar • 16 & 17 Jul 2009 Wellness Camp • 7 Aug National Day Celebration • 9 Sep Members' Outing • 10 Oct World Mental Health Day • 23 Oct Members' Taletime • 14 Nov Flea Market • 12 Dec Caroling Event • 21 Dec Christmas Party

News Bits

Simei Care Centre

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In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven. *Matthew 5:16*



Director's Message

Are people with psychiatric disorders usually violent? This question has generated lengthy discussions after the incident of MP Seng Han Thong being set on fire by an elderly man with a psychiatric condition in January. Another tragedy took place in March whereby a 14-year-old girl was killed by her mentally ill mother. As a psychiatric rehabilitation practitioner, the incident is very disturbing as the perception of the general public takes precedence over the safety issue.

Statistic show that the incidence of violence in people with psychiatric disabilities is not much higher than it is in the general population. Those suffering from a psychosis such as schizophrenia are more often frightened, confused and despairing than violent.

In lieu of this, two of our staff were sent for the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Instructors' Course in January. Since then, 12 staff and volunteers were trained as mental health first aiders. The MHFA course is to train people to provide initial help to someone experiencing mental health problem before professional help is sought. Simei Care Centre will continue to provide the training not only for internal staff and volunteers but also to the public.

It is imperative that people with psychiatric disabilities are integrated with the society at large. Besides normalising relations, the integration helps to reduce the stigma attached to mental illness. As such, steps are taken to address these issues.

We hope everyone, especially the public, help us bridge the gap in the near future.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Mr Steven Ting
Mrs Krishnan Vasugey
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Mr Sebastian Seet
Mrs Deepthika De Silva
Ms Goh Siao Yen

Mr Steven Ting
Director, Simei Care Centre

For internal circulation only

Thanksgiving Celebration

On 9 January 2009, we held our fourth year Thanksgiving Celebration. In 2008, Simei Care Centre initiated new projects like RICHE, Youth Empowered for Success, Members Own Social Enterprise and Services (MOSES), MOSES Push Cart at CGH and 2 Flea Markets. A Manna Fashion Show was also organised. SCC also received the Community in Bloom Award 2008 (Silver) and the Singapore Health Award 2008 (Bronze).

Besides networking and collaboration with many agencies, SCC was blessed with generous donations from churches, corporate companies and individuals. To commemorate the abundant blessings received, SCC staff and members put up a highly commendable show that evening.

by Lim Hua Cheng



Members Contribution Thanksgiving from a member's perspective

As we ushered in the annual Thanks-giving, I was blessed with the opportunity to participate in a wholesome and inspiring skit.

Siao Yen who overlooks the operation of the YES Club, took a discerning heart in sourcing and orchestrating the form and background of the intended play - "I Dream Again"

The drive of the play revolves around 3 main individuals and their run towards recovery and fulfilment within the ever-accommodating parameters of Simei Care Centre (SCC). Daniel, Ken and myself, were assigned to role-play real-life-inspired parts. Along with some other YES Club members, Ivy, Claire and Christina, with minor roles, we practiced 2 weeks prior to the performance. Infused with witty dance choreography and self-reflecting dialogue, rehearsals were often draining and repetitive. Even so, all of us knew the purpose of the play, and drew

strength and perseverance from the constant encouragement of Siao Yen.

Came performance day! All of us were excited to give our best run in front of a crowd made up of esteemed guests, volunteers and staff. Alas, blips are bound to happen. Daniel, who meticulously rehearsed his part in the play all this while, had to pull out due to a relapse in his health condition. Siao Yen, who had no prior practice, took on the last minute role of sharing Daniel's account in the play. Her performance? Flawless.

As the audience applauded in thunderous appreciation, I took pride and satisfaction in knowing that we had worked and contributed unconditionally. Through the period of practice and performances, I drew closer to the other members, and formed dependable bonds.

Ultimately, what mattered most was the sense of belonging, satisfaction and achievement garnered from the performance.

by Matthew Foo

Chinese New Year Celebrations. Members Celebrate !



Chinese New Year on 23rd of January 2009, saw a great 90% turnout by Residential and Day Care members. Captain Jessica and her crew from Riche committee welcomed everyone, followed by CNY greetings from the department staff, dressed in different traditional costumes. Promoting the value of Harmony in Riche among all racial groups, members enjoyed games facilitated by the staff and Lily, a volunteer.

About 10 AFPD staff distributed red packets to the staff and members present. The 1 ½

hour event at the 4th floor basketball court ended with dinner sponsored generously by both AFPD and volunteer Jessie's church group.

Another Celebration organised by the Anglican High Parents Support Group on 6th of February for the members, had inter-active games with volunteers and CIP students from Anglican High School. Besides a High Tea, members each received an ang pow from the volunteers.

by Rebecca Moh / Jessica See-Tok



"Down But Not Out"

Twelve stunning personal stories of the power of perseverance, courage & hope that go straight to the mysterious inner world of the mind of the mentally ill are related here.



"Down But Not Out" is a collection of experiences from the people Simei Care Centre had served. It is about individuals struggle to survive in the society when the word 'mental illness' was rarely talked about. How they have been tortured by the ordeal of the illness, wrapped by the symptoms, the desperate longing for explanation, and the hope of recovery are reflected.

For anyone who suffers from a mental illness, you will be able to relate to the stories in this book. If you know someone with a mental illness, or is curious about what it may be like, this is a must read!

The book will be available in May at Simei Care Centre.

by Sebastian Seet

Professor Harvey's Visit

Simei Care Centre was honoured to receive a visiting expert on psychiatric rehabilitation services from Australia. Here to deliver a series of lectures at IMH, Professor Carol Harvey from the University of Melbourne, said that she was happy and impressed by the range of services available at the centre. She was shown around the centre and had a cordial discussion with the counsellors.

by Francis Goo