

ISANA NZ

Mental Health workshop

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Intra-cultural Stressors





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香港人興排龍，換禮品排隊、取入學申表格排隊、買演唱會票排隊，但想不到報暑期補習班都要大費周章排長龍。(Yahoo hk news 18 May 2015)

The Australian experience

Anxiety to be the most common problem. Depression and stress in particular were found to be related to academic performance. Concern about finances was also strongly associated with depression, and with anxiety and stress to a lesser extent (Rosenthal et al. 2006).

Asian students indicated that they were less likely to seek counseling for reasons associated with lack of knowledge of these services. Such circumstances are compounded by a later finding that suggests counseling staff are often not aware of culturally appropriate ways of providing care

Delaying intervention for mental health problems often meant increased severity of these problems, with students requiring more intensive intervention than would otherwise have been necessary.

Intercultural stressors

- Personal Safety
- Culture Shock including food
- Language barrier
- Home sickness
- Friendship
- Finances (studyinnewzealand.govt.nz, 2016)
- Adjusting to unfamiliar academic practices
- Future plan
- Lack of Support (MOE, 2004)
- Difficulty dealing with and managing demands from everyday life

Problems encountered

- Victims of crimes
 - Sexual abuse
 - Theft
 - Robberies
 - Assaults
- Perpetrators of violence
- “Accidental” pregnancy
- Alcohol related issues- drink driving, driving while disqualified
- Being financially exploited
- Suicide and self harm
- Frequent absences from school leading visa issues
- Social isolation

What is Mental Illness

- is a disease that causes mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behaviour, resulting in an inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines.
- 3 Ds:
 - Is it psychologically **d**ysfunctional?
 - Is it **d**istressing or handicapping to the individual or others?
 - Is it associated with a response that is atypical or **d**eviant?

Mental Disorder (Mental Health Act 1992)

- *“An abnormal state of mind (whether of a continuous or an intermittent nature), characterised by delusions, or by disorders of mood or perception or volition or cognition, of such a degree that it.....*

Mental Disorder (2)

- “....
 - a) *Poses a serious danger to the health and safety of that person or of others; or*
 - b) *Seriously diminishes the capacity of that person to take care of himself or herself.”*

Section 2 Mental Health Act 1992

Exclusionary Provisions

- The definition should not be invoked in respect of any person by reason only of-
 - That person's political, religious or cultural beliefs; or
 - That person's sexual preferences; or
 - That person's criminal or delinquent behaviour; or
 - Substance abuse; or
 - Intellectual disability (MH Amendment Act 1999)

Section 4 MH Act 1992

When to intervene

stress

Adjustment problems

Disorder



Assignment due

Symptoms lasted for a few weeks and subsided

Impaired functioning for some time and risk↑

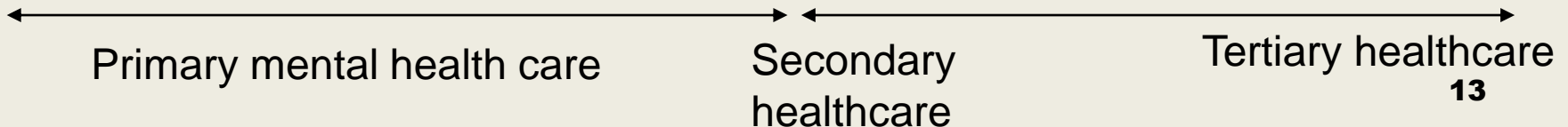
Level of intervention

- Psychosocial

Level of Intervention

- Psychosocial ↑↑
- Medication ↑

- Psychosocial ↑
- Medication ↑↑
- Containment



Look for symptoms

- Behaviour:
 - Anger, conflicts with no good reasons.
Frequent absences from classes.
 - Academic deterioration, social withdrawal
 - Peers/teachers concerns
 - Intermittent or persistent change of behaviour
 - Hyperactivity
 - Dramatic change in eating and sleeping habits
- Confused thinking
 - Preoccupation with certain thoughts
 - Numerous unexplained physical ailments
- Mood
 - Low, high, apathetic
 - Anxiety and fear
- Risk
 - Potential or imminent
 - Signs of self harm or acting out
- Addiction issues
 - smoking
 - substance abuse
 - gambling related problems
- Other symptoms
 - Signs of psychosis- D and H
 - Extravagance
- Signs of CHANGES
- Lasting for a period of time
- Collateral information

Challenges

Contemporary methods

- Engagement
- Disclosure
- Assessment
- Intervention

More culturally relevant

- Intervention
- Disclosure
- Engagement
- Assessment

When to seek professional help

Signs of distress are **disrupting** student's progress

- Problem is more serious than you are **comfortable** handling
- You are worried about student's **safety**

Helping Adjustment

- Orientation:
 - Start from pre arrival
 - Pamphlets, DVD, YouTubes, WeChat (Subscriptions)
 - Emphasis on maintenance of health and mental health
 - Adjusting to study and lifestyle changes
 - Individual School orientation programmes
 - identifying who is more at risk: young, dependent who has never been away from home, and risk takers (with money)
 - Early promotion and establishment of a caring, warm and supportive relationship, as a preventative measure to facilitate:
 - disclosure and sharing
 - help seeking behaviours
- Helping students understand the local Health, Social and Legal systems- most are insensitive to these until when they are in crisis
- Knowledge on how to keep “safe” - personal and social safety

Learning Styles and Adjustment

- Language competence
 - spoken, written and understanding what is being told
- Study styles:
 - Tutorials: critical thinking and writing skills
 - Understanding their needs: science papers Vs art papers
- Desire and commitment to study
- Students', expectations and needs
 - Escape route Vs desire to succeed
 - Unrealistic Vs realistic expectations
 - If the ulterior motive is to obtain residence --- “freelance study”
- Peer influences
 - Social support
- Plagiarisation

- Identifying specific needs of students and problematic ones, that is,
 - The sojourners
 - The time killers
 - The professional students
 - The perfectionists
 - The unrealists- students with high expectations and demands due to various reasons
 - The “out of sight and out minders”
 - People here for secondary gains eg marriage, making money, reliance on health care systems in NZ

- Explore local cultural and professional supports
 - Start from GP
 - Religious groups
 - Police Cultural Liaison Officers
 - Language and cultural appropriate Counsellors/Psychologists/Psychiatrists
 - Explore Insurance funding
 - Study support groups
 - Using hotlines eg Youthline

Thank You

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