

Project Axon 2018 (7-14)

Members:

- Sean Tham (4S2.19)
- Justin Lai (4O2.14)
- Joshua Wong (4O2.13)
- Bryan Lam (4O2.2)
- Ong Tze Wei (4A3.19)

Project Type: 2nd year

Project Overview:

Summary of your project. Project Axon is a group of secondary 4 students from Hwa Chong Institution that aims to aid patients suffering from Parkinson's disease in Singapore. We are currently working hand in hand with the Parkinson's Society Singapore (PSS), and seek to educate the public about this condition and at the same time provide help and care to the clients in the beneficiary. Project Axon would like to do this through a two-pronged approach by direct interaction and raising awareness with the community itself. We hope that through our project, patients of Parkinson's will be able to better integrate into the society.

Scope of Project:

- **People with Parkinson's**
- **The Public**

A) Area Of Concern:

Parkinson's is the second most common neurological degenerative disorder in Singapore. Three in every 1000 patients above the age of 50 suffer from Parkinson's bringing the tally to between 6,000 to 8,000 patients.

After numerous interactions with People with Parkinson's (PwP), the public and PSS, we found out that there is a severe lack of public awareness, with many mistaking Parkinson's for other neurological diseases.

Many PWP also lack a sense of companionship as their families do not spend much time with them. They avoid going out as they feel different from normal people. Hence, it is crucial to forge bonds with the PWP to raise their self-confidence.

B) Challenges Identified:

- Encouraging PWP to attend our events
- Ensuring that PWP will benefit from our initiatives.
- Forging bonds with the PWP
- Attracting the public to attend our events and reading our informative brochures
- The public may be unwilling to change and put in effort to learn more about Parkinson's disease

C) Underlying Problem:

Given that Parkinson's will become increasingly prevalent in Singapore and the lack of social support for PSS and public interaction with the Parkinson Community, how might we raise awareness amongst the general public for Parkinson's such that the public as well as medical professionals in the field can better understand and empathise with PWPs in 2018 and beyond?

D) Plan of Action

Nov 2017:

- Formation of Core Team
- Setting up social media pages

Dec 2017:

- Fact of the Week to increase understanding of Parkinson's

Jan 2018:

- Confirmation of partnership with PSS

Feb 2018:

- Sourcing of venues for events
- Needs analysis to find out about awareness levels of public and areas of concern our beneficiary faces

March 2018:

- Obtaining of Sponsorship

Apr 2018:

- **Move to Beat Parkinson 2018**
- Arts and craft
- Parkinson's Outreach Programme

June 2018:

- Arts and craft
- Tech Workshop
- Parkinson's Outreach Programme

July 2018:

- **Games Day (Fortis)** at Star Vista
- Parkinson's Outreach Programme

August 2018:

- **Mass Painting** at PSS

Actions and Outcomes to Date:

Project Axon 2018 has conducted activities following a two-pronged approach: Direct Interaction, Raising Awareness

Domain 1: Direct Interaction

Art and Craft Courses: Involved over 40 PWP and caregivers over 2 art and craft sessions in PSS. Helped increase their finger dexterity whilst allowing them to forge bonds with volunteers, enabling them to be more open

Tech Workshop: Involved over 20 PWP and caregivers. Conducted a smartphone-related enquiries consultation session, enabling PWP to become more tech-savvy and comfortable opening up

Mass Painting: About 40 PWP and 13 volunteers participated in the mass painting session conducted outside PSS. They joined hands in painting a banner with a logo designed by us to show our commitment to helping PWP

Move to beat (MTB): Setup a games booth at MTB, which created an avenue for volunteers and PWP to interact. Also helped increase their muscle control and practice delicate movements

Domain 2: Raising Awareness

Parkinson's Outreach Programme: During our events, we educated the public on Parkinson's, corrected common misconceptions using brochures and a follow-up quiz.

Games Day (Fortis): Attended by 57 PwP and over 600 members of the public, this event allowed them to try out 6 game booths and an informative booth. The aim is to promote exercise, the best method to slow down the progression of Parkinson's, and increase interaction between volunteers, the public and PwP.

Social Media: 418 followers on Instagram, Fact of the Week series launched to increase knowledge of Parkinson's amongst public.

Accomplishments:

- Engaged over **1000** members of the public
- Engaged over **110** PWP

Reflections on outcome:

Justin:

This journey has helped me learn many things. I'm certain we were able to bring about positive change in the lives of the PWP, and I'm sure that they have learned something from us, just as we have learned something from them. I'm proud that we were able to exceed our capabilities and managed to bring about a greater impact on the PWP.

Joshua:

I feel that in this one year that I have embarked on this project, I am really proud and pleased with what we have accomplished, through all the events and the direct interaction with the PWP, I am happy to say that we have definitely benefited the PWP greatly, be it teaching them new skills or helping them regain self-confidence.

Ong Tze Wei:

This journey has taught me much about myself and others as well. I'm grateful for the chance to give back to society and help those in need. I'm positive that we have aided the PWP in one way or another. We were able to meet our objectives and even exceed them, hence I'm proud.

Bryan Lam:

I realised that the PWP are not so different from us and it's joyful connecting with people. I am glad our efforts helped better educate the public on Parkinson's disease while helping PWP overcome their problems.

Sean Tham:

I'm thankful for this opportunity to directly serve and impact the PWP. Although we are just a group of students, we were able to go beyond our limits and positively impact the PWP. I'm sure we were able to truly impact the PWP.