



Project Axon

7-04

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Project Axon - Written Report

Section 1: Overview

A. Area of Concern

The lack of interaction between People with Parkinson (PWP) and society has brought inimical consequences to their quality of life. According to (Parkinson's Foundation, Depression 2019), 50 percent of PWP experience some form of depression during their illness due to negative thoughts and social isolation. Furthermore, according to a survey done by (Maffoni et al., 2017), Parkinson patients and their caregivers experience “a mark, a shameful sign of different needs and impaired behaviors”. A lack of interaction with PWP may cause stigmatisation towards PWP to persist or worsen, all the more deleterious to PWP’s social well-being.

Worldwide, around 10 million people have Parkinson, with Singapore alone possessing 8000 Parkinson patients. As Parkinson is more prevalent after the age of 65 (Willis, 2013), the proportion of PWP in Singapore’s ageing population is expected to increase.

B. Challenges Identified

We have identified three problems we aim to address:

1. Lack of awareness of Parkinson symptoms and the challenges PWP face
2. Need for interaction with Parkinson patients, especially with current COVID-19 measures stifling social interaction
3. Lack of awareness of our beneficiary, Parkinson Society Singapore (PSS) and the activities they organise

C. Underlying Problem

Given that Parkinson is becoming increasingly pervasive in Singapore’s ageing society, coupled with the lack of public awareness and interaction with PWP, how might we be able to educate the public to dispel misgivings regarding Parkinson; while supporting and interacting with the Parkinson community to improve the lives of the PWP and help foster a society that can better empathise with PWP in the year 2021 and beyond?

D. Plan of Action

We put together a plan of action to foster a Parkinson-friendly society. Initially, we aimed to create interaction opportunities between the public and PWP and raise awareness for our cause

through physical campaigns. Due to tightening of COVID-19 measures and the restrictions implemented near the start of the year, we decided to shift our focus to online activities.

1. Creation of online educational campaigns with utilisation of social media to reach out to the public
2. Organising online interaction sessions with PWPs
3. Creation of website containing activities for the PWPs

Through educational campaigns, we aimed to raise awareness about Parkinson. We uploaded regular interactive social media posts featuring news articles and facts. Furthermore, we created a website containing information regarding Parkinson. Online dialogue sessions with a representative from PSS were also held.

Through online interaction sessions, we hoped to bring happiness to the PWPs and help them cope with symptoms of Parkinson. These interaction sessions would allow PWPs to remain physically and mentally healthy while giving us and participating OTs the opportunity to brighten their lives.

Through interactive resources uploaded on our website, we aimed to provide interesting activities for PWPs to do at home to stay active and slow the onset of Parkinson, whilst bringing enjoyment to them as well.

Section 2: Implementation of Action Plan

A. Actions and Outcomes to date

Month	Activity	Objectives
<u>2020</u>		
December	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formation of CORE 2. Goal setting 3. Preliminary research 	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Understanding the problem</p>
<u>2021</u>		
January	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruitment of Organising Team 2. Regular meetings with representatives from the Parkinson Society Singapore 3. Primary research on 118 people through online surveys 4. Inheritance of Instagram account 5. Setting up of website containing information on Parkinson 	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Awareness</p> <p>Awareness</p>
February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start of Instagram educational post campaign “Did You Know?” 2. Meeting with mentor to conceptualise ideas (theme, suitable events, etc) 3. Planning for CNY gameshow with Project Lirio 	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Interaction</p>
March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monthly “Did You Know?” Instagram post 2. Start of Instagram “Synapse” campaign 3. First karaoke session with PWPs (我最愛的情歌 [一]) 	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Awareness</p> <p>Interaction</p>
April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monthly “Did You Know?” Instagram post 2. Second karaoke session with PWPs (我最愛的情歌 [二]) 	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Interaction</p>

	3. Publicising of “Move To Beat Parkinson” Virtual Charity Run 2021	Awareness
May	1. Monthly “Did You Know?” Instagram post 2. “Axon Game Hour” with PWPs	Awareness Interaction
June	1. Monthly “Did You Know?” Instagram post 2. “Let’s Farm!” Interactive Programme	Awareness Awareness + Interaction
July	1. Monthly “Did You Know?” Instagram post 2. Last monthly karaoke session (我最愛的情歌 [三])	Awareness Interaction
August	1. Monthly “Did You Know?” Instagram post 2. Exercise video package 3. Webinar with PSS member	Awareness Awareness Awareness

Section 3: Scope of Impact

A. Accomplishments

As of 7th August, we've been able to impact over **2500** people through this project. Through our interaction sessions, we have impacted **78** PWP's over **30** hours. Our interactive programmes were well-received by PWP's, **encouraging them to keep active and positive**. Our online educational campaigns involved over **2400** members of the public, effectively **raising awareness** on Parkinson. Our beneficiary **commended** us for impacting the lives of PWP's, as they seldomly interacted with youths, especially during the pandemic; and **helping to raise awareness about them**.

B. Reflections

The main challenge we faced was working within the restrictions of the safe-distancing measures. We learnt to improvise, adapt and overcome, adjusting our previous plans to fit online interaction platforms like Zoom. We were able to polish technological skills like video editing, using Zoom functions to aid us in facilitation of activities and using free software on the internet to engage with the PWP's.

We are grateful for the opportunity to interact with the PWP's, trying to understand challenges faced by PWP's and their caregivers. Throughout the course of this service-learning project, we were very inspired by those who refuse to let Parkinson hold them back from living their best lives. Just as we exposed the PWP's to new virtual experiences, the heartfelt interactions with the PWP's were eye-openers for ourselves. Witnessing their sanguine attitude despite the troubles they faced brought smiles to our faces, and their words of encouragement gave us the motivation to keep pressing on. We are thankful for this opportunity to forge bonds with the respectable and affable PWP's. It reminded us to be open in embracing and empathising with disadvantaged groups in society, and to truly embody the spirit of service learning in engaging with the people we are trying to better the lives of. We are grateful for this opportunity to give back to the community and champion such a meaningful cause and be able to pass our legacy down to future cohorts. We fervently hope that our actions, no matter how minute, brought significant improvements and genuine experiences to the lives of the PWP's and that our juniors who take over this project will continue to strive to promote awareness for Parkinson's, and bridge the gap between PWP's and the public in the coming years.

C. Scope of Impact

Community Impact:

Raised awareness regarding the PSS's activities, as well as the plight and symptoms of Parkinson; spreading the cause of building a Parkinson-friendly society.

Impact on people with Parkinson and their caregivers:

Through the interaction sessions and interactive resources, we encouraged PWPs to remain mentally and physically active. Large-scale karaoke, gameshow and makeshift farming activities brought them happiness in enjoying fun, new experiences, and interacting within as well as outside their social circle.

Resolution of UP:

Given that we have identified a lack of awareness of Parkinson, we have raised awareness on fostering an inclusive society for PWPs to an estimated **2400** members of the public. Additionally, the eclectic array of interaction sessions and packages brought positive impacts to the quality of life of PWPs.

References:

Maffoni, M., Giardini, A., Pierobon, A., Ferrazzoli, D., & Frazzitta, G. (2017, January 24). *Stigma experienced by parkinson's disease patients: A descriptive review of qualitative studies*. Parkinson's Disease. <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/pd/2017/7203259/>.

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