

Project Epilogue (7-25)

Yeo Yu En (4A1) (31), Jacques Wang (4A1) (29), Caleb Tang (4A1) (01)
Elliot Cheng (4P2) (03), Loo Wen Xian (4P2) (22)

Written Report



Project Overview

Area of Concern

Many still believe hospice care is a place for chronic illness patients who give up treatment, having given up on life.

Studies showed how the public endorsed higher levels of negative stereotypes about terminally-ill cancer patients who chose hospice care over chemotherapy, seeing them as less afraid of death. Other studies prove how hospice care stigma was associated with lower usage of hospice care for the terminally-ill. This relationship was mediated by negative stereotypes about individuals receiving palliative care.

Hospice Care Association (HCA) is the largest hospice care in Singapore. Its services are provided at no charge to 3,600 patients annually. Besides medical care for patients, it also entails psychological support for patients and caregivers.

Challenges identified

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely limited face-to-face activities with our beneficiaries, especially since they are more vulnerable to Covid-19.

Although we went on-site at the start of the year, Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) prevented us from further physical interaction with hospice patients. Thus, we sought to develop alternative ways to promote interaction between hospice patients and the public to raise awareness regarding hospice care stigmatisation.

Underlying Problem

Given that hospice care services are still largely seen as an unfavourable option for chronic illness patients in Singapore, how might we raise awareness about hospice patients and reduce stigmatization against them to enrich the lives of the hospice care patients so that Singaporeans can be more accepting towards it as a favourable option from 2021 onwards?

Plan of action

Date	Action	Objective(s)	Successful?
Jan - March	Identify core group of volunteers, developing a personal experience with patients	Interaction	Yes
	Visitations to HCA Daycare Centres, enriching patients lives	Interaction, Community Involvement	Yes
April - June	Social media publicity about beneficial activities at the centre, debunking myths of hospice care	Awareness	Yes
June - August	<p><u>Original plan of action:</u> Visiting hospice centre twice a week during the June holidays, organising various activities and exercise sessions</p>	Create bonds with hospice patients, enriching their hospice experience	No
June - August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstormed ideas for interaction with patients at HCA hospice care Discussed with the coordinator about feasibility of our plan-of-action during Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) 	Maintain interaction between patients, public	Yes
	<p><u>Art Mural Exhibition</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase patients' art pieces Present to the public at the school/public library Show that patients have enriching experiences at the centres 	Awareness	No
	<p><u>CareOasis Initiative</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Through social media, we invited youths to send encouraging messages to patients. Transfer messages onto post-its, stick them on two separate A2 papers, one that forms our project logo and one that forms an oasis. 	Community involvement	Yes

	3. Allow public to express care for patients		
	Fundraiser 1. Organised bubble tea sale in school.	Raise funds for hospice care patients	Yes
	Pen Pals 1. Send physical mail to the centre to converse with patients through hand-written letters	Interaction	No
	Adopt-A-Wish 1. Through social media, people donate money to fund for the hospice care inventory 2. The public pledges for items 3. Provide the hospice care with items they need	Community involvement	No
	3 part-interview 1. Conduct physical/online interviews with caregivers, patients, ex-patients 2. Publicise material collated on social media	Awareness	No
	Exercise live-stream 1. Live Exercise routines over Zoom	Interaction	Yes

Reasons for unimplemented initiatives:

1. Activities held at hospice centre:

- Covid-19 restrictions rendered us unable to go down to the centre in the June holidays

2. Art Mural Exhibition:

- COVID-19 restrictions meant physical exhibitions could not be held. HCA was not in favour of virtual exhibitions.

“As shared previously, this initiative is not favorable. There is no plan to conduct another online or onsite art exhibition at the moment. Thus, we seek your team's understanding to either scrape off or change this initiative.”

3. Pen Pals

- HCA was not interested in this initiative.

4. 3-part interview

- HCA rejected this, preferring face-to-face interviews. They suggested reposting HCA media instead.

“Not in favour of this, your end can just re-post HCA's posts which can also help your team to achieve your stated objectives.”

Action	Date of implementation
Daycare Visitations, Volunteering	5 February, 15-16 March
Social media publicity	13 May - 11 August
Fundraising Event	23 July
CareOasis Initiative	5 August - 11 August
Live-streamed exercise session with HCA patients	29 July

Project outcomes

Accomplishments

Over 140 people sent kind messages for patients at the hospice care for our CareOasis collage initiative. Through social media posts, we educated the youth on benefits of hospice care, correcting preconceived misconceptions about hospice care, reducing stigmatisation against hospice care. We reached out to 400 people through social media and have amassed nearly 1200 likes on Instagram.

Reflections

We learnt that we take luxuries in life for granted and that our knowledge of the less fortunate in our community is limited due to our lack of exposure. The experience has made us appreciate hospice care even more due to a better understanding of its objectives. Through visitations, we impacted our beneficiaries through different activities like arts and crafts and exercise sessions, which serve to enrich their daily lives. The success in our initiatives suggests we made an impact on our community. Although restrictions under Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) may have hampered the implementation of initial plans, we managed to develop new initiatives to maintain interaction with our beneficiaries even under strict Covid-19 restrictions. Overall, this journey has been

fruitful and we will work with Project Epilogue 2022 to ensure they can push out improved initiatives.

Scope of impact

Community impact

The public learned more about hospice care in Singapore, along with various forms of stigmatisation regarding hospice care. Through our initiatives, we hope that the public are more aware that hospice care is not for chronic patients who have given up treatment to await death, rather a place for them to enrich their remaining days.

Community involvement:

- a. Under the CareOasis Initiative, we obtained heartfelt messages from youths in Singapore containing encouraging messages to the hospice care patients, effectively showing their care and empathy for the patients.
- b. During our physical visitations to HCA Daycare centres (Jan-Feb), we found peers who willingly volunteered to interact with the patients there.
- c. Under our fundraiser, members of the community contributed to HCA Centres by providing items that serve their needs.

Resolution of AOC/UP:

We educated the public through online publicity on benefits of hospice care services for terminally-ill patients. We enabled youths in Singapore to empathise with patients through our CareOasis Initiative. More importantly, we sowed the seeds for sustainable development of this project as we established a strong connection with the beneficiary. We are eager to implement activities we planned this year with Project Epilogue 2022 and are looking forward to interacting with hospice care patients.

Word count: 1000 excluding references and titles

References

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