

**MedPAC Hotline: A Medical Peer
Addiction Counselling Hotline
Service for Drug-abusing Youth
and Young Adults
BDF190028**



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Introduction

Prevalence of youth drug misuse ↑

25% increase was observed in
the number of students who
claimed to have used drugs
(2014/15 - 2017/18)

88% youth drug-misusers

- ✗ sought help
- consider
- ✗ addicted

Youth ~~≠~~ Adult

The need to promote and support services targeting
high risk/ drug-misusing youth

Introduction

Telephone counselling

➤ Youth clients prefer to use telephone counselling ¹

- ✓ ↓ Confrontational
- ✓ ↑ Private & emotionally safe environment
- ✓ Encourages those **X** to seek face-to-face help
- ✓ Directly interact
- ✓ ↓ Cost

Peer counsellors

➤ ↑ Appeal ²

➤ Similar ages & social backgrounds ²

- ✓ ↑ Understand problems encountered
- ✓ ↑ Address concerns that are relevant to their experience
- ✓ ↑ Individualized advice

MedPAC
Quitline

¹ Gibson, K., Cartwright, C., Kerrisk, K., Campbell, J., & Seymour, F. (2016). What young people want: A qualitative study of adolescents' priorities for engagement across psychological services. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25, 1057-1065.

² Karcher, M. J., Brown, B. B., & Elliott, D. W. (2004). Enlisting peers in developmental interventions. *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities*, 193-215.

Project Content

Phase 1: To raise anti-drug awareness among young people and identify high-risk/hidden drug-abusing persons in Hong Kong.



Phase 2: To train university students with medical backgrounds to become peer counsellors who will provide counselling services.



Phase 3: To provide a drug abuse hotline service for drug-abusing persons and other relevant individuals, including the drug abusers' family members, friends and helping professionals who may call for help. The hotline will be staffed by trained peer counsellors.



Other activities conducted

- Designed websites, Facebook, and Instagram for the service.



- Organized over 70 community outreach activities.



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Other activities conducted

- Provided anti-drug promotion talks in 8 secondary and tertiary schools.



- Held 9 sharing workshops for trained peer counsellors to share their experience and difficulties in delivering the hotline service.



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Output Targets & Achievement

	Output Target Indicators	Output Achieved
Output Indicator 1	Deliver 20,000 publicity materials to students and teachers of secondary, tertiary schools, and young employees in high-pressure industries.	Delivered 20,068 publicity materials (100.3%)
Output Indicator 2	Provide 2 structured addiction counselling training program to 50 students	Provided 2 structured addiction counselling training program (100%) to 103 students (206%) majoring in nursing / medicine.
Output Indicator 3	The MedPAC hotline handle at least 1000 incoming calls from general public	Received 1134 incoming calls (113.4%)
Output Indicator 4	Provide telephone addiction counselling to at least 150 drug abusers	165 drug abusers (110%) received counselling

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Outcome Benchmarks & Evaluation Results

Outcome Indicator 1	
Description of Indicator	Students with medical background are satisfied with the peer telephone counsellor training
Evaluation Method	BDF Question Set No. 21 Questionnaire to evaluate elementary level professional training for anti-drug workers
Expected Result	70% of students with medical background are satisfied with the peer telephone counsellor training
Achieved Result	96.1% of students with medical background were satisfied with the peer telephone counsellor training

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Outcome Benchmarks & Evaluation Results

Outcome Indicator 2

Description of Indicator	Drug abusers show reduction in drug consumption
Evaluation Method	BDF Question Set No. 5 Drug use frequency in the past one month
Expected Result	50% of drug abusers show reduction in drug consumption
Achieved Result	89.5% of drug abusers show reduction in drug consumption

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Outcome Benchmarks & Evaluation Results

Outcome Indicator 3

Description of Indicator	Drug abusers accept that there is a problem and he or she can take concrete steps towards solving the problem
Evaluation Method	BDF Question Set No. 13 Contemplation Ladder
Expected Result	70% of drug abusers accept that there is a problem, and he/she can take concrete steps towards solving the problem
Achieved Result	69.2% of drug abusers accept that there is a problem, and he/she can take concrete steps towards solving the problem

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Outcome Benchmarks & Evaluation Results

Outcome Indicator 4

Description of Indicator	Drug abusers show improvement in self efficacy to avoid drug use
Evaluation Method	BDF Question Set No. 12 Q4 The Adolescent Relapse Coping Questionnaire Q4
Expected Result	Drug abusers show significant improvement in self efficacy to avoid drug use
Achieved Result	Statistically significant improvement in self-efficacy to avoid drug use as indicated by paired t-test (p<0.05) (n=136)

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Experience Gained

- Reasons behind success
 - Recruitment through mass email within university
 - Comprehensive training provided for peer counsellors
 - Multi-way recruitment approach
 - Used motivational interviewing in counseling
- Effective way to convince youth drug abusers to change
 - Collaborate to set small goals for change (changing drug use habits / other health-related behaviors) and follow up on their completion.
- Key telephone communication skills
 - Schedule the next contact during the last interaction.
 - Try different contact times.
 - Arrange the same counselor for each client if possible.
 - Communicate the call time via WhatsApp beforehand.

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Conclusion

● Conclusion

- Training university students with medical background to become peer counselors for anti-drug counseling services is feasible and effective to reduce youth drug consumption.

● Implication for anti-drug sector

- In addition to health professionals and social workers, trained university students with medical backgrounds can serve as anti-drug counsellors.

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End

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