

Readme file

Project Title: Integrated study of drug abuse, HIV/AIDS and harm reduction program

Project Number: DOH96-DC-1008

Executing Institute: Taipei City Hospital

Principal Investigator(P.I.): Wong, Wing-Wai

P.I. Position Title:

P.I. Institute: Taipei City Hospital

Abstract:

Subprogram 1

Background: During 2003-2005, a large-scale HIV epidemic occurred among intravenous drug users (IVDUs) in Taiwan. We have established a mathematical model for this epidemic in our previous study DOH-95-DC-1104. The present study aimed to investigate the current nationwide HIV prevalence among IVDUs and predict its future trend.

Methods: The numbers of new drug users were estimated based on statistical data of Ministry of Justice in 2006. The HIV prevalence among new IVU prisoners in Tu-Chen Prison was obtained. Capture-recapture method was used to estimate the nationwide HIV prevalence among IVDUs. The future trend was estimated by extrapolation of the mathematical model.

Results and Conclusion: There was no increase in the predicted number of IVDUs in Taiwan in 2006, which ranging from 48,854 to 60,125, as compared with that in 2005. After excluding the identified cases of death, the HIV prevalence among IVDUs is at least 9-11%. Calculation using capture-recapture method yields an estimate of nationwide HIV prevalence in the range of 11-13%. The implementation of harm reduction program by Taiwan government is anticipated to reduce 51,862 cases of HIV/AIDS among IVDUs (the resulted range of sensitivity analysis is from 40,785 to 110,935). However, this predicted number may be influenced by the uncertainty in predicting number of total IVDUs cases.

Keywords: drug abuser 、 HIV infections 、 harm reduction 、 Taiwan

Subprogram 4

Through intensive field work, this research focuses on substance abusers' subcultures, which, in the study, have been "viewed" and "reviewed" by the subjective attitudes, values, and frames of cultures of the researcher.

This research started in January 2007, and since then has 56 substance abusers. The surveyed include the outpatients of the Methadone Treatment Center of the Taipei City Hospital, the prisoners at the Taipei Detention Center, the Shih-lin Detention Center, and the Yilan Prison. The researcher also partnered with four volunteer workers of the Taipei City Hospital, whose life histories were also studied by the researcher.

In result, the substance abuse history can be generally divided into four stages: entrance, indulgence, partnership, and exit. In the stage of entrance, drugs were introduced to the not-yet abusers by their friends and family under particular circumstances. In the period of indulgence, the not-yet abusers became de-facto abusers who cannot live without drugs. In the stage of partnership, the abusers partnered with other fellow substance abusers, collecting money and sharing drugs with them.

The crucial finding of this research is that the substance abusers treated drugs a tool for personal and social communication, for which they could even sacrifice their self-esteems and make excuses, and by which they were finally conditioned.

This research therefore has three implications. In the level of legal institution, we suggest a rational counter drug abuse policy be applied. In the level of medical treatment, we suggest a full-scale epidemiological database for (anti-)drug abuse be established. In the last, but not least, level of consultation, we suggest professionalism be applied.

Key word: Drug Addict ; Abstinence ; heroin users ; drugs craving ; Harm Reduction

Subprogram 5

Aim: The purpose of this research is to investigate the knowledge, attitude and acceptance level of AIDS for community pharmacists and drug abusers. And it is also to investigate the knowledge, attitude and practice of Harm Reduction Program for community pharmacists and drug abusers. We want to understand the relevant factors of the community pharmacies to join in Harm Reduction Program and drug abusers to utilize these community resources.

Method: firstly, random sampling Taipei and Tainan community pharmacies accept the questionnaire, secondly, through the district of the disease control of the Taipei city hospital, guard house, and counseling and medical cooperative program for people who were protected and restrained to collect the research cases. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and deductive statistics.

Conclusion: A response rate 18.84% in Taipei and 23.11% in Tainan were achieved. The average score of all pharmacists' AIDS knowledge was 18.22 ± 1.48 , all pharmacists' AIDS attitude was 35.18 ± 3.94 , all pharmacists' Harm Reduction Program knowledge was 12.34 ± 2.50 , and all pharmacists' Harm Reduction Program attitude was 60.52 ± 7.15 . There were 64 female and 98 male pharmacists, including 154 college degree, 7 graduated degree, and 1 other degree. Work full time was 155 and part time was 7. All pharmacists' average age was 47.20 ± 11.77 y/o, and average work time was 14.37 ± 12.41 years. The score of AIDS attitude and Harm Reduction Program attitude of Taipei and Tainan community pharmacists had positive correlation and significant relationship. The score of Harm Reduction Program knowledge and Harm Reduction Program attitude of Taipei community pharmacists had positive correlation and significant relationship. The work property and AIDS attitude were the most influence to Harm Reduction Program attitude.

Suggestion: 1. Professional training to community pharmacists was needed. The government should commend nation pharmacist society to hold conference or workshop regularly. 2. Harm Reduction Program was continued to be hold, including raising clean needles and syringes exchange service positions, reward pharmacies participating in Harm Reduction Program, giving legislative guarantee and keeping their safety. 3. Regional health department should active guidance to local community pharmacies, especially for those elder and work long time pharmacists to give their further training about Harm Reduction Program. These recommendations will help government carry out Harm Reduction Program more efficiency.

Key words: AIDS, Harm Reduction Program, Knowledge, Attitude, Community Pharmacist, Drug Abuser