

Depressive Symptoms and their Association with Adverse Environmental Factors and Substance Use in Runaway and Homeless Youths

Presenters:

Dr Caroline Lim

Moderator:

Dr Li Dong Dong

Date: 24 April 2019

Time: 4:00pm to 5:30pm (*Registration starts at 3.45pm*)

Venue: FASS Dean's Office Seminar Room B, AS7-01-16/17/18, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

Address: 5 Arts Link, Singapore 117570 [*Parking available at carpark 15*]

Abstract:

We used diathesis-stress and stress-sensitization models to determine whether family maltreatment, street-related traumatic events, stressful life events, and substance use were associated with depressive symptoms in runaway and homeless youths (RHY) in Los Angeles. Greater severity of depressive symptoms was significantly related to family maltreatment, being exposed to more traumatic stressors during homelessness, and current substance use compared to no substance use. Family maltreatment was also found to moderate the relationship between traumatic stressors and depressive symptoms. Importantly, cumulative exposure to the investigated risk factors at varying levels was associated with more severe depressive symptoms. Using a trauma-informed approach to screen for RHY at risk of depression may pave the way for secondary prevention of major depression in RHY.

Presenters' profile:

Dr Caroline Lim is a senior tutor in social work at NUS. Her research centers on treatment outcomes of schizophrenia, a less prevalent but among the most disabling and costly psychiatric disorders. A major focus of her research concerns explaining the heterogeneity of treatment responsiveness in schizophrenia from an ecological perspective. Funded by the Okura Mental Health Leadership Foundation Grant and the Asian and Pacific Islander Social Work Educators Association, her dissertation examined the broad needs of Asian Americans with schizophrenia. Special emphasis was given to identifying beneficial and harmful environmental conditions that influenced remission of symptomatology, restoration of critical areas of functioning, and importantly, clinical recovery from schizophrenia. Caroline has 5 years of practice experience as a psychiatric social worker at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) in Singapore. In this position, she provided intensive case management services to individuals referred for the treatment a first psychotic episode, of whom the majority was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Caroline graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Michigan and a Master of Social Work from Columbia University. She received her PhD from the University of Southern California (USC) in August 2017, whereupon she undertook a 1-year postdoctoral training in schizophrenia research at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Dr Li Dongdong is a principal research specialist in the Centre for Research on Rehabilitation and Protection, Ministry of Social and Family Development and an adjunct research fellow at the Social Service Research Centre (SSR). Her research involves the study of child protection issues and youth offender rehabilitation, such as the predictors and outcomes of involvement in child protection service; effects of childhood maltreatment and the cycle of violence. She also studied media effects on child development, for example, the relationship between

violent digital games and children and adolescents' aggressive behaviours. She uses mainly quantitative data and relies on statistical modelling to test relevant research hypotheses.

REGISTRATION IS CLOSED

For enquiries, please contact [Ms Jess Tan](#)