



## CSDA Seminar On Research by Social Work Honours Students



Centre for Social  
Development Asia

### Introduction

This seminar presents research by Social Work Honours Students involving two key themes : 1) Social Work and Spirituality / Religiosity and 2) Youths in Care. The presentations in Panel 1 will discuss how vulnerable individuals manage and cope with their medical and mental health conditions and the implications for social work practice in embracing the dimensions of spirituality/ religiosity. The presentations in Panel 2 on youths in care will highlight challenges faced by youths in care transiting to adulthood and the implications for policy and practice. The presentation on the role of Board in the management of Voluntary Children's Homes provides insights on the importance of good leadership to achieve good outcomes for children and youths in care.

### Who should attend?

Students and academics interested in social work research. Practitioners in the social service and healthcare sectors. Policy makers and grant makers keen to gain new knowledge.

### Panel 1. Social Work & Spirituality / Religiosity

Living With Dialysis: Exploring The Lived Experiences Of Older Malay End-Stage Renal Disease Patients by Mr Muhammad Ilham Firdaus B OA

How Religious/Spiritual Persons Affect the Help-Seeking Behavior of Malay Persons with Mental Illnesses by Ms Siti Nur Diyanah Hardy

### Panel 2: Youths in care

Leaving Care: Exploring The Experience Of Independent Living For Youths From Residential Care by Ms Ng Jinning Janine

What Makes An Effective Nonprofit Board In Voluntary Children's Home Sector By Ms Zoe Tee Wan Ting

**Thursday, 6th Aug 2015 | 3:00 - 5:00pm**

(Welcome tea & registration starts from 2:15pm)

**Lecture Theatre 10, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, NUS**

**To register:** <http://mysurvey.nus.edu.sg/EFM/sc.ashx?s=543BE5C22E9D11E6>

*Centre for Social Development Asia (CSDA) is a joint partnership between Center for Social Development at George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University (St Louis) and the Department of Social Work, National University of Singapore. The primary mission of CSDA is to conduct applied research, pioneer social development programmes, and build knowledge to inform policies and programmes in social development, with a focus on Asia.*

# Abstracts of Presentations

## Panel 1. Social Work & Spirituality / Religiosity

### Living With Dialysis: Exploring The Lived Experiences Of Older Malay End-Stage Renal Disease Patients by Mr Muhammad Ilham Firdaus B OA

End-stage renal disease (ESRD) is a chronic condition where kidneys cease proper functioning, necessitating dialysis to sustain life. Over 1400 cases of kidney failure occur each year in Singapore, attributing it with the 5<sup>th</sup> highest incidence rate in the world. Practitioners need to understand how this illness and subsequent treatment regime affect patients in order to provide responsive, patient-centric care. This presentation provides an understanding of the lived experiences of 5 older Malay ESRD patients undergoing haemodialysis treatment in Singapore. By exploring patients' meanings and perceptions of illness, coping methods, challenges in adjustment and role of belief systems in illness experience, a deeper insight into the lives of ESRD patients will be gained.

### How Religious/Spiritual Persons Affect the Help-Seeking Behavior of Malay Persons with Mental Illnesses by Ms Siti Nur Diyanah Hardy

This study looks at how religious/spiritual persons (RSPs) affect the help-seeking behavior of Malay persons with mental illness (MMIs). It is a qualitative research that looks into the narratives of MMIs, as well as the counsellors and RSPs that work with them. The findings of this study reveal that while the MMI-RSP relationship can be positive, it can also lead to psychiatric treatment delay and poor treatment compliance. This is often due to their low mental health literacy, and their familiarity with cultural-religious narratives on spiritual illnesses. As such, greater efforts should be focused on increasing the mental health literacy of RSPs in the community, and on greater collaborative interactions between RSPs and formal mental health professionals.

## Panel 2: Youths in care

### Leaving Care: Exploring The Experience Of Independent Living For Youths From Residential Care by Ms Ng Jinning Janine

Not all children in care achieve reunification with their families. Some remain under state care until they transit into independent living. Existing literature acknowledge care leavers as a vulnerable group that needs compensatory support for them to succeed in adulthood. This study therefore explores the experiences of local youth care leavers, specifically their perception of independent living, the challenges they face, and the support they received so as to identify the gaps in service. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the experiences of 10 youth care leavers and 3 social work professionals were gathered and analysed. This research reveals that Independent living is perceived to be an individual effort towards making a normal but hastened transition into adulthood. The lack of support after care is most pressing and several practice and policy implications are discussed.

### What Makes An Effective Nonprofit Board In Voluntary Children's Home Sector By Ms Zoe Tee Wan Ting

The Voluntary Children's Home (VCH) sector had evolved from providing basic care e.g. food and shelter to one that serves children and young persons who are "abused or neglected, from dysfunctional families...in need of shelter, care and protection, beyond parental control and/or in conflict with the Law" (Ministry of Social & Family Development, 2014). Boards of these VCHs had been recognized as being paramount to enhancing services, because they hold high responsibility in their duty to act on behalf the interest and values of the community, constituents and the sponsors. This exploratory study therefore focused on insights into the factors that impact board effectiveness in the VCH sector, drawing out key areas that enhance the work of leaders in this sector.