



## CSDA Seminar: Research by Social Work Students

### Introduction

This seminar showcases research by Social Work Honours and Masters students and covers two major themes - i) Caregiving Experiences in Mental Health and Eldercare, and ii) Social Work with Low-Income Families. The presentations in Panel 1 will examine the beliefs, attitudes, relationships and meanings in caregiving, and discuss the approach of person-centeredness. The presentations in Panel 2 will discuss the vulnerabilities of individuals and families from low-income backgrounds, including issues relating to single parents, young mothers, parent-child relationships and debt management. Implications for social work will be discussed.

### Panel 1: Caregiving Experiences in Mental Health and Eldercare

- 1) A Journey Through Suffering: The Family Caregiving Experiences of Adults with Schizophrenia in Singapore by **Ong Wann Qin**
- 2) Exploring the Influence of Beliefs of Family Caregivers on Their Person-Centredness in Dementia Care by **Pamelyn Tan Pei Jia**
- 3) Exploring the Factors Related to Hospital Readmissions: The Caregivers' and Patients' Perspectives by **Caleb Wong Kei Soong**

### Panel 2: Social Work with Low-Income Families

- 1) Social Support in Low-Income Single Mothers by **Hewlett Chew Tsieh**
- 2) A Study of Experience of Debt, and of Help Received from FSCs for Debt-Related Issues by **Hillary Hoo Hui-Wen**
- 3) An Exploratory Study on the Characteristics of Parent-Child Relationship Among Low-Income Families that Promote Children's Academic Success by **Tok Kheng Leng**
- 4) Examining Social Work Intervention and Support for Young Mothers from Disadvantaged Backgrounds by **Ng Ting Ting, Ruth**

**5th Aug 2016 | Friday | 2:00 - 6:00pm**

**Lecture Theatre 12, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, NUS**

**Registration : <http://goo.gl/forms/klo44j3bzdPLFUsr1>  
 (First-come, first-served. Deadline: 25th Jul 2016)**

**For enquiries, please email [csda@nus.edu.sg](mailto:csda@nus.edu.sg)**

*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: Caregiving Experiences in Mental Health and Eldercare

### 1) A Journey Through Suffering: The Family Caregiving Experiences of Adults with Schizophrenia in Singapore by Ong Wann Qin

Schizophrenia has been associated with impaired functioning in multiple domains of life. In Singapore, schizophrenia was found to be the leading cause of disability burden among mental disorders. This study aims to explore the experiences of family primary caregivers of adults with schizophrenia, and shed light on meanings of the caregiving experience, reasons for caregiving, and perceptions of the caregiving relationship. In-depth interviews were conducted with nine caregivers and data was thematically analyzed. Findings depicted the caregiving experience as a tumultuous journey through suffering, but with enduring strength from love and family bonds. Implications for social work are discussed.

### 2) Exploring the Influence of Beliefs of Family Caregivers on Their Person-Centredness in Dementia Care by Pamelyn Tan Pei Jia

The focus of person-centred care (PCC) for persons with dementia (PWD) is to acknowledge the personhood in PWD by recognizing their worth, well-being and needs. This study explores the influence of beliefs of family caregivers on their person-centredness in dementia care. Qualitative interviews with family caregivers of PWD were carried out and analysed. The study findings show the beliefs which are connected to the caregivers' attitudes toward-PWD, and their attitudes-toward-situation, that influence their person-centredness. The findings also reveal moderating factors that affect the influence of these beliefs and attitudes. Policy and practice implications, as well as future research directions, are suggested.

### 3) Exploring the Factors Related to Hospital Readmissions: The Caregivers' and Patients' Perspectives by Caleb Wong Kei Soong

This qualitative study seeks to explore the non-medical reasons that lead to frequent hospital readmissions and to explore potential gaps in current services trying to address this issue; all of which from the patients' and caregivers' perspective. The participants selected were those involved in three or more hospital readmissions within a year in NUH. A total of eight participants were interviewed, from which it was found that customized home-help services indirectly reduced readmissions. The findings point to the larger implication whereby a patient centered approach is essential in understanding the reasons for readmissions and enacting effective preventive strategies.

# Abstracts of Presentations

## Panel 2: Social Work with Low-Income Families

### 4) Social Support in Low-Income Single Mothers by Hewlett Chew Tsieh

Due to conflicting demands of childcare and managing finances, low-income single mothers often lack much-needed social support. Through semi-structured interviews with 5 low-income single mothers, this study explored how low-income single mothers utilised social support in coping with parenting. Findings are consistent with existing literature that childcare is a key concern which tends to be in conflict with work. Interestingly, respondents sought emotional support from formal sources in relation to negative life events, but were unwilling to seek emotional support from their natural networks for the same. The implications for social work and social welfare policy are discussed.

### 5) A Study of Experience of Debt, and of Help Received from FSCs for Debt-Related Issues by Hillary Hoo Hui-Wen

Considering debt's impact on members of Singapore's society, the differing perspectives of what indebtedness can be attributed to, and the unique position Family Service Centres (FSCs) have in communities as main touch points for individuals with debt, this thesis looked into three main areas: the process of getting into debt, the experience of debt, and the experience of help received from FSCs for debt-related issues. Within the perspective of cognitive bandwidth, this thesis also suggested improvements for social workers in general working with individuals in debt, ways to understand and support this client group, and the value of financial help in more than solely financial aspects.

### 6) An Exploratory Study on the Characteristics of Parent-Child Relationship Among Low-Income Families that Promote Children's Academic Success by Tok Kheng Leng

A high proportion of children from low-income families do not succeed academically. Yet, despite the challenges presented by their constrained socioeconomic situations, some children defy the odds to perform well in school. Current research is clear that parents play an important role in enabling academic resilience in children, but is silent on i) what constitutes a strong parent-child relationship and ii) the role of children in achieving academic success. This study aims to provide insights on the characteristics of parent-child relationships that promote academic success in children from low-income families. Guided by the positive deviance methodology, this study also hopes to unpack the strategies used by children of low-income families to excel in their academics.

### 7) Examining Social Work Intervention and Support for Young Mothers from Disadvantaged Backgrounds by Ng Ting Ting, Ruth

This exploratory study undertakes a secondary analysis of 24 case reports, consisting of the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST) and written case notes from social workers from Covenant Family Service Centre. This is to examine risk and protective factors of women (currently aged 21 to 40 years old) who have given birth to a child at or before the age of 21 years old. The presentation seeks to highlight the key findings, learnings, and recommendations for ground workers for the future analysis of data and clinical practices of agencies.