

# Enhancing Care through Establishment of Therapeutic Groups in Mental Health Service

## INTRODUCTION

**Therapeutic Groups, group work, or group therapy**, according to Ezhumalai, S., et al. is a form of treatment in which emotionally disturbed persons are placed in a group, guided by one or more therapists for the purpose of helping individuals to bring a change in them.

According to Halter, M. J. et al. group work is a method whereby individuals with a common purpose come together and benefit by mutually giving and receiving feedback within the dynamic and unique group context.

Therapeutic groups or group therapy is considered one of the promising psychosocial treatment modalities which are practiced in clinical settings for persons with emotional problems or mental health issues by qualified mental health professionals.

**Mental Health Service (MHS)** in Qatar, composed of different inpatient units, outpatient clinics, community, day care, and residential services, caters to patients having mental and related illness. In MHS, Therapeutic Groups are structured, based on the identified needs of the patient, to support them during their admission and in their discharge. Therapeutic Groups in MHS was established since 2017.

## AIM

This project aims to assess the compliance and effectiveness of structured therapeutic groups established across MHS, identify challenges faced by the facilitators, and formulate solutions to improve its implementation.

## PROCESS

- The Plan – Do – Study – Act (PDSA) Cycle was followed in the implementation and evaluation of the project.
- Cross audits conducted by the members of the Therapeutic Group – Working Group on different units of Mental Health Service.
- Summarized Feedback Report were submitted by the facilitators in each unit to the Working Group for evaluation.

### PLAN

To start structured therapeutic groups in each unit across MHS, which includes, grounds rules, inclusion criteria, process, and session outline.

### ACT

- Measuring the compliance in running the group in each unit, and to look on the reasons for cancellation
- Recommendations based on the collated challenges faced by the facilitators will be formulated to address the issues.
- Ensuring the effectiveness of the groups, suggestions and improvements for the groups and facilitators will be formulated based on the analysis of the patients feedback.

### DO

- A Therapeutic Group-Working Group was established composed of facilitators from each unit. The Working Group develops, review, and implement a structure therapeutic group program for patients in MHS.
- Courses on Facilitating Therapeutic Groups were offered to nominated facilitators by the Education Team.
- Forms are created to monitor compliance; asses the groups conducted, and take the feedback of the patients.
- Different Therapeutic Groups are running across the units in MHS since 2017.

### STUDY

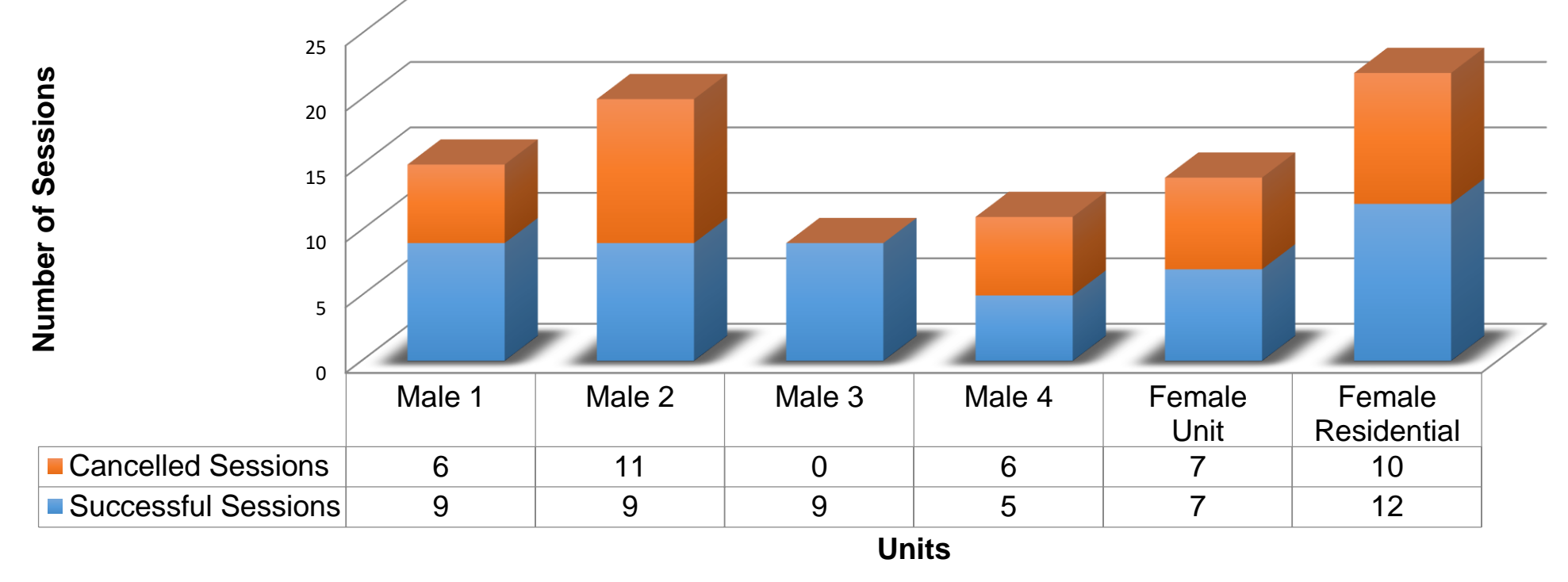
- Cross audit among units are implemented to look in to the compliance of groups running based on the timetable created.
- Challenges faced by the facilitators will be collated.
- Feedback of the patients will also be gathered by the facilitators in each unit, and submit a summarized report.

## FINDINGS

**Table 1: Therapeutic Groups Running Across each unit of MHS**

	Male 1	Male 2	Male 3	Male 4	Female Unit	Female Residential
<b>Primary Group</b>	Relapse Prevention	Stress Management	Medication Adherence	Motivational Group	Anger Management	Coping Skills
<b>Associate Groups</b>	Smoking Cessation	Smoking Cessation	Smoking Cessation	Smoking Cessation	Healthy Lifestyle	Personal Hygiene
	Healthy Lifestyle	Healthy Lifestyle	Healthy Lifestyle	Healthy Lifestyle		Healthy Lifestyle

**Therapeutic Groups Sessions in MHS November 2018 – March 2019**



- Total of 9 Structured Therapeutic Groups are running in different units of MHS.
- From November 2018 to March 2019, a total of 91 sessions were projected, of which 56% or 51 sessions were conducted successfully while 44% or 40 sessions were cancelled due to varying reasons.
- Average number of participants for each unit ranges from 2-5 patients which have qualified under the inclusion criteria.
- Generally, patients' feedbacks were positive based on the summarized report from each unit.

## CHALLENGES

- Some patients refused to join the sessions
- Participants went for out on pass
- Target participants already attended the group / previous sessions
- Patients are unstable
- Lack of participants who meet the inclusion criteria
- Low census
- Lacking of facilitators
- Staffing issues

## ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

- Formulation and publication of timetable to increase awareness of the groups, and to help facilitators in scheduling sessions and anticipating issues beforehand.
- Coordinating with Head Nurses and Lead facilitators to involve more facilitators to join and conduct the groups.
- Offering Facilitating Therapeutic Group Course, in coordination with the MHS Nursing Education Team, to develop and encourage more facilitators.
- Continuing cross auditing in the units periodically.
- Creation of a SharePoint Folder in the HMC Intranet, for easy access of data and information needed by the facilitators

## FUTURE PLANS

- Involving other units and services of MHS in the Therapeutic Groups by encouraging formation of new groups.
- Increasing the number of groups running in each unit thru Cross Facilitation of existing groups.
- Review and enhancement of existing Therapeutic Group programs in MHS.
- Development of Guidelines on Establishing and Facilitating Therapeutic Groups in MHS.

## REFERENCES

Ezhumalai, S., Muralidhar, D., Dhanasekarapandian, R., & Nikketha, B. S. (2018). Group interventions. *Indian journal of psychiatry*, 60(Suppl 4), S514–S521. doi:10.4103/psychiatry.IndianJPsychiatry\_42\_18

Halter, M. J., Varcolis, E. M. (2003). Therapeutic groups. In D.R. Kenny & K. I. Morgan (Ed.), *Varcarolis' foundations of psychiatric mental health nursing* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 607-618). St. Louis , MO: Elsevier.

