The Department of Rehabilitation Sciences (RS) has been providing high-quality internationally benchmarked entry-level education to occupational therapists and physiotherapists for 30 years. Our graduates are competent professionals serving clients in Hong Kong, Mainland China, and many other countries. We also offer excellent opportunities to practitioners and researchers to pursue further education from a disciplinary- or multidisciplinary perspective in rehabilitation sciences. In order to achieve its mission of providing high-quality education and mediating professional development, our Department still has a lot to do in the future. Your support is vital to facilitate this process! Please offer your support by making a donation. Your donation, no matter whether big or small, will make an impact on the future of rehabilitation in Hong Kong and throughout the world.

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Research Output in Public Policy Digest

Professor Hector Tsang (Professor)

Despite strong competition, the study “Rehabilitation Needs of People with Schizophrenia and their Caregivers in Hong Kong: Implications for Public Policy” was funded by Public Policy Research (PPR) in the third round of applications. Professor Hector Tsang was the principal investigator. This was the first PPR project at PolyU to be funded by RCG.

The aims and objectives included the following:

1. To identify issues arising in the rehabilitation needs of people with schizophrenia and their caregivers in Hong Kong via focus-group discussions;
2. To develop and validate questionnaires for measuring the perceived, normative and expressed rehabilitation needs of people with schizophrenia and their caregivers;
3. To carry out a survey to investigate these needs;
4. To propose future directions for mental-health policy and the development of rehabilitation services.

To address these goals, a number of research instruments were developed including the Perceived Rehabilitation Needs Questionnaire – Schizophrenia (PRNQ-S) and the Perceived Rehabilitation Needs Questionnaire – Outreach Services.

Outreach Services” were regarded as very important by people with schizophrenia and mental-health professionals alike. “Self-Management Programs” and “Psychotherapy” were important to caregivers and mental-health professionals, whereas “Social Welfare” was the key service for patients and caregivers.

The Rehabilitation Needs of Caregivers

Both caregivers and mental-health professionals felt that “Knowledge and Information on Mental Illness”, “Mental Health Services”, “Emergency Services” and “Community Support and Welfare” were the most important rehabilitation needs for the former. Apart from “Emergency Services”, mental-health professionals also showed concern about...
“Discrimination”, “Family Intervention”, “Psychotherapy” and “Social Welfare”.

Based on our findings, we made a number of major policy recommendations to the HKSAR government regarding the allocation of resources to high-quality rehabilitation services such as family intervention, psychotherapy and the second generation of psychotropic drugs. The more important suggestions are summarised as follows:

1. Empowerment of people with schizophrenia and their caregivers by opening up channels to seek their opinions on the development of mental health-care policies and rehabilitation services.
2. Better public education about mental health and mental illness through establishing new community-based resource centres and hotlines.
3. Formulation of policies and strategies to reduce the stigma of mental illness.
4. The adoption of an Integrated Community-based Care Approach.
5. Provision of more practical support and advice to caregivers to help them manage their stress better and to relieve the associated burdens.

The results of this project have already been published, or accepted for publication, in a number of journals including Quality of Life Research, Rehabilitation Psychology and Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research. More importantly, they have attracted the attention of researchers in mainland China. A collaborative research study with the Wuxi Mental Health Centre is now in progress, which will employ the research instruments developed in Hong Kong to replicate the study in Jiangsu. The findings will have implications for the estimated 16 million individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia in the mainland. In addition, Professor Tsang has been invited by Griffith University in Australia to serve as a visiting research fellow, to explore ideas for further collaboration based on the findings of this project.

TV interview on holistic management of chronic pain at RS

Sammi Tsui (Physiotherapist I) and Sharon Wan (Clinic Manager), Rehabilitation Clinic

Not many people here in Hong Kong, a prosperous city, live a healthy lifestyle. It is not surprising to find numerous people around us tormented by chronic musculoskeletal pain. This is also not confined to the elderly population. Although such pain is not life-threatening in most cases, it certainly affects the sufferer’s quality of life. People usually find it difficult to cure such chronic pain. Different therapies use various treatment approaches. So, how do we help these people who come to us with chronic pain in the Rehabilitation Clinic?

We were approached by RTHK in July 2011 to help with the lead role, Billy, in the last episode of the TV series Medical Discovery. Billy, aged 34, had suffered for 10 years from chronic neck and back pain and stiffness. Like most Hong Kong people, Billy worked long hours and required prolonged standing and occasional lifting as a florist. He had already sought out several passive treatments, such as acupuncture, Chinese massage, and chiropractic. Since he had heard that ‘sports are good for health’, he also tried running in the hope that it would relieve his pain. But the pain only got worse. Together with Dr Patrick Yung, Orthopaedic Specialist, our team conducted a thorough examination of Billy and found that he suffered from pronated feet, which induced his knee pain in his beloved sport of running. Worst of all, other than inherited scoliosis, he had also adopted poor posture in daily activities, which was the root cause of his chronic pain.

In accordance with the multiple problems Billy suffered from, we carefully designed a rehabilitation programme for him that included prescription of a pair of suitable orthotics, joint mobilization, acupuncture, and a series of active exercises. The exercise programme consisted of Pilates, muscle stretching, and strengthening. After 14 sessions of treatment, Billy enjoyed marked improvement in general. He could also enjoy walking, which he had not tried in five years, at the end of the TV show. Billy could finally pick up a pain-free active life again!

When treating acute injuries, localized treatment usually works quite effectively (though underlying predisposing factors may exist). But when it comes to chronic pain, other possible structures or deficiencies need to be taken into consideration as well. The more precisely we can identify the root cause(s), the more effective treatment will be. This TV programme passed along a very important message of taking a holistic approach to chronic musculoskeletal pain. In physiotherapy, it is the strength of our profession that we used both passive and active treatments so as to treat clients more holistically.

Treatment effectiveness may not be as satisfactory if either passive or active treatment stands alone. In response to the tremendous demand of these patients, we will shortly be launching a Chronic Pain Management Programme. Helping people get rid of their pain and lead a healthy lifestyle is the ultimate goal of this programme. Let us work hand-in-hand with our clients in leading to a healthy and happy life!
On 18 March 2011, when I stepped into the “OT practical room” located at the clinical teaching building at West China Hospital, Sichuan University, I saw a group of youngsters so eager and attentive. This is our first batch of bachelor degree students in the Mainland that we are targeting to train as Professional Occupational Therapists in a programme that could be benchmarked internationally. This training programme was funded by the HK SAR donation fund after the Sichuan S12 earthquake, with a view to strengthening rehabilitation services in China.

Our university was given around $10 million in funding to support the teaching of the OT, PT, and P&O programme in Sichuan. But the funding is sufficient only for providing one batch of graduates in Sichuan, and there is no support for equipment or any other teaching materials. Thus, academic staff are often confronted with a lack of teaching materials, books, assessment instruments, and rehabilitation equipment, all of which are extremely important for educating students in their professional knowledge and skills. OT, however, is often good with adaptation and modification. We have purchased materials and equipment locally and improvised them for our teaching purposes.

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In addition, the students are very motivated and eager to learn, particularly practical skills in assessment and treatment. They also enjoy the sharing of case studies that we have captured via the e-cased platform. With the help of our Sichuan partners, we managed to get three patients attending class for practical demonstrations of our therapeutic techniques. I hope the enthusiasm and dedication of these students and staff will continue in the coming year such that our first batch of OT students will excel in their professional knowledge and clinical skills. Our vision is to set up the first group of quality OT graduates to serve the Chinese community, to provide training, and, if possible, to enhance evidence-based rehabilitation practices within the scope of OT.

Finally, my hat is off to the teaching team, since all of them are so dedicated to teaching students and despite the cold, humid weather, lack of equipment and teaching materials, and poor articulation of Putonghua, they still managed to achieve such high SFQ scores and many compliments from the students. Let us continue our momentum to get the job done.

The 13th World Congress of the World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (WFUMB) was held in late August in Vienna, Austria. We are very happy to share with you all that our electronically presented poster, titled “Ultrasonography-assisted in vivo tendon strain can discriminate between athletes with and without anterior knee pain” was awarded a certificate of merit.

As physiotherapists in the musculoskeletal field, no doubt we were the “minority” group participating in this global congress. Within hundreds of posters, we were delighted that three posters awarded out of a total of 10 were in the musculoskeletal field. We can appreciate that sonography in the musculoskeletal field really caught the eyes of the jury and researcher! Ultrasonography was to me completely new about two years ago. Thanks to my working unit and colleagues, I was given the chance to study overseas in musculoskeletal ultrasound imaging in the late 2009. Since then, I have admired the art of this imaging technique and its use in our daily clinical practice. I think this is the reason I insisted on merging the component of sonography into my postgraduate research that I am now pursing. I hope that through the learning path of my research study, I can continue to explore and appreciate the maximal use of this evaluation and differentiation tool in our sports physiotherapy management. Here I must express my deepest thanks to my great teamwork of my research colleagues and the excellent guidance by my supervisors Dr Amy Fu and Prof Gabriel Ng. The award belongs to you all!
In Memory of Dr Jenny Chung

Dear Jenny,

Your contributions to the Department, the University and the OT Profession are deeply appreciated and valued. You will always be remembered and loved by us all.

Gabriel Ng

Dear Jenny,

You are a gentle kind and genuine lady. You have always brought calmness to our mind & remind us to keep a good balance between work and family......
You will be very sadly missed....

Alice Jones

Dear Jenny,

Your ready smile & lively personality live on! Our friendship has spanned many years & I will always remember well your enthusiasm for life & living....
I will miss you!

Kit Sinclair

Dear Jenny,

Your work means a lot to all of us, and particularly to the people suffering from dementia. Your dedication and warmest heart in teaching students will be forever remembered.

Chetwyn Chan

Dear Jenny,

Rest in peace. Remember your smile always.

Cecilia Li

Dear Jenny,

We will remember your dedication, hard work and love for our students at PolyU. May God bless you in heaven.
You will be in our heart & memory at PolyU.

Walter Yuen

Dear Dr Chung,

We will be working hard to be a professional OT. Thank you for your teaching. You’re really a good teacher.

Yr 3 student, Harry Hung

Dear Jenny,

I will miss you at breakfast... at badminton....
We all miss your smile! You will always be with us in our hearts!!!

Grace Szeto
Stroke patients face multiple challenges when they return to the community. Most daily tasks can still be accomplished to some extent using one-handed techniques. But dressing is a challenge for individuals because it requires a combination of bilateral gross and fine motor functions. Therapists can advise patients to wear a different kind of clothing such as button-up shirts to avoid this problem. But clothing selection is often limited. As occupational therapists, we want our clients to have a choice when deciding on their wardrobe, thus increasing their self-efficacy. Zippers remain a stalwart in many fashion designs, especially in jackets. We realize that this is a type of clothing that the Hong Kong population wears throughout the four seasons but is also a type that is difficult for hemiplegic clients to put on.

“Zzzip” was inspired by a simple phone strap. The idea is to utilize other parts of the body to simulate the pulling action of the hemiplegic hand with the functional hand. The neck is ideal because it remains well controlled for most stroke patients. A ring is attached to the end of the zipper. This is connected by the phone strap. The differences in the length of the phone strap and the height of the zipper result in the jacket being lifted up. This allows the client to use his or her functional hand to insert the other side into the slider. The client initiates the pulling action by pulling back his or her neck, causing the slider to move up against the teeth of the zipper while the functional hand stabilizes the jacket. The shorter the phone strap, the higher the zipper will go.

The phone strap itself is a fashion accessory and is easy to carry. The ease of accessibility and low cost also means that it can serve a large percentage of the stroke population. Don’t wait now, start zzzipping!

The Asia Physical Therapy Student Association (APTSA) is a non-political organization initiated by PT professors and students at the National Taiwan University in Taiwan. The aim of APTSA is to broaden the horizon of PT students by providing them with an international outlook and greater understanding of the PT profession in other Asian countries. While Hong Kong is not a country, we are happy to join the likes of Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea as a member of APTSA.

This year the 2nd APTSA Annual Congress was held in Kyoto, Japan, on 1-4 September 2011. Three second-year PT students – Natalie Fung, Adrianna Stjernqvist, and I – represented Hong Kong. Nearly a hundred PT students from eight major universities in Japan worked incredibly hard to make the four-day event a huge success. The level of friendliness and hospitality they displayed is worthy of insurmountable praise.

The overall theme of the congress was clinical practice, and each country’s team prepared a presentation to highlight the structure of clinical education in their country. Other events from the congress included the institution and hospital visit at Kyoto University, as well as symposiums based on community-based rehabilitation. Following these visits, we discussed the similarities and differences between the PT programmes and the PT profession of each country. This was informative, since we were made aware of varying job markets across Asia and major differences in school curricula.

On the third day, however, we were met with a severe tropical storm, which cut the planned festivities short. But that day still proved to be productive and fun as country representatives gathered in a hotel room for six hours to partake in one of the most intense representative meetings there to decide on the future direction and member roles of APTSA.

After the conclusion of this year’s congress, we already look forward to next year’s in Manila, the Philippines, in November 2012. The planned theme will be regionally unique PT practices, and we hope more students will partake in this wonderful opportunity to learn and grow as PT leaders.

The zzZip – Winner of the Prof Alan Tam Memorial Fund Award 2011 in assistive product design

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Be PART of the global physiotherapy community: student participation in the APTSA 2nd Annual Congress

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Neurological services at the Rehabilitation Clinic – a HAPPY formula

Jack Lai (Physiotherapist I)

Our neurological services serve clients with neurological disorders across the lifespan. While some recover rapidly, many must live with these debilitating conditions for the rest of their lives. Though they may suffer from different conditions, our clients share the ultimate goal of achieving happiness by improving the quality of their lives. For this reason, a HAPPY approach to rehabilitation is essential, and this is what characterizes our service.

Holistic approach: Because the different parts of the body work together as a whole, we believe they cannot be considered separately. Multiple systems are normally affected in clients with neurological conditions. Although our focus is on improving the neuromuscular system, other systems are not overlooked. Our knowledge of and experience with neurological clients allows us to gain a better understanding of their conditions and needs. This extends from the neuromuscular system to other affected physical systems, and also includes psychological and social aspects.

Attentive care: We understand that our clients go through a process of motor skills relearning, and they need proper guidance and practice for effective learning. We run a one-to-one model so we can pay full attention to our clients. Better rapport and closer communication (including a feedback system and doubt clarification) facilitate more effective motor relearning.

Pragmatic program: Our evidence-based treatment programme was devised after detailed assessments of our clients’ conditions. Its effectiveness is regularly measured so that we can frequently fine-tune the programme to meet the most current needs of our clients.

Professional, advanced equipments: Our service is located in rooms GH026 and AG056. GH026 is a spacious private therapy room without distractions. It is equipped with an adjustable neurological plinth, a tilt-table, and other equipment. We use plinth exercises, hands-on therapy, and carer education sessions, especially for clients with attention deficit and sensitivity issues. Room AG056, which has an area of over 4,000 square feet, is equipped with advanced rehab equipment that meets the needs of clients with different levels of functional capacity. An Arjo walker, a vibration platform, a weight-supported ambulatory system, and functional electrical stimulation are some examples. Our clients’ improvement in functional capacity can be better facilitated with such equipment.

You and your carers are the keys to the success of our rehabilitation programme. It is of the utmost importance that clients be proactive, while a client’s family members need to know how they can help. We therefore provide hands-on training to clients and their carers for better home exercise programmes and care. We aim to bring hope to clients through our HAPPY factors of therapy with love, care, and patience.