

**MSS238PM: A holistic support, self-help & wellness enhancement programme for
PLHIV – the Continuation
Executive Summary**

Aim and Objectives

The aims of the programme were to encourage participation of PLHIV to help other PLHIV and/or themselves to better cope with the infection and reintegrate to mainstream society; improve access to information and services to help PLHIV better manage their health; fostering an environment which allows PLHIV to meet, share, learn, grow, participate and deliver in order to sustain quality life; and, facilitate collaboration and partnership among other NGOs, GOs and professional units to enhance holistic care and support to PLHIV.

The objectives were to facilitate PLHIV and their associates effectively access to useful information and holistic psycho/social/personal supports to better manage their health and well-being; strengthen self-help network and mutual supports to enhance health management and better cope with life after infection; maintain a centre that served as an incubator in developing PLHIV related services; and, facilitate collaborations and partnerships among NGOs, GOs and professional bodies.

Programme Design

A centre was maintained to help gather the PLHIV to participate; provide useful and accurate information; facilitate PLHIV and their associates build and sustain a strong supportive self-help network; provide professional emotional and psychological support services; help PLHIV and their associates better understand and manage their body/mind/soul wellness; build capacity of PLHIV volunteers and empower them in helping others.

Besides counselling, seminars, workshops, volunteer trainings and social gatherings that were being held at the centre, outreach counselling, clinic escorts, hospital/elderly home/home visits and a peer listening hotline were also provided. Expressive Art Therapy components were integrated in most activities and they proved to have pronounced impact in helping the participants release their stress and voice out their problems.

Target Population

PLHIV, their partners, families and care takers, workers and volunteers of other NGOs, schools and students, GOs and the three HIV clinics are all target audience of the programme.

Main Achievements

In the programme period, 1,609 PLHIV (counts), an increase of 12.36% over last year, and roughly 150 (counts) staff and volunteers of other NGOs, GOs, pharmaceutical companies and students had visited the centre. There were 39 new PLHIV referrals from the HIV clinics and 6

other reached us through our Helpline or referrals from other PLHIV. Various services were provided to about 140 individuals on and/or off premises. 176 centre-based and 82 outreach counselling sessions were provided to 69 individuals. Around 74% of them reported that they could better handle their difficulties after counselling. 180 calls were made to the peer listening hotline, of which 71 calls involved extensive counselling elements. 47 workshops, seminars and social gatherings were organized throughout the programme period with 87% of the attendees stating that the various activities improved their knowledge on the topic of the respective activity. Numerous collaborations were made with 5 NGOs, GOs, universities and professional bodies in various forms in the programme year.

Conclusion

Counselling, support network, Expressive Art Therapy, drop-in centre and accurate information are key elements in effectively servicing the PLHIV and sustainable funding for such services is crucial.