

Project Title: Improve the psychological well-being of older adults with an online lifestyle medicine program

Abstract

Issue

According to the data of the Hong Kong government, while three out of 100 adults in Hong Kong have depression, one out of 10 older adults have depressive symptoms. Worsened the situation is that more than half of the people with depression have not sought help from mental health services. The situation of emotional distress of older adults has increased significantly due to the outbreak of Covid-19 resulting in social isolation for most older adults. According to a recent study by the University of Hong Kong (JC JoyAge of the University of Hong Kong, 2022), more than a third of Hong Kong adults aged 60 and above suffered from “emotional distress” during the city’s fifth and worst wave of Covid-19.

Solution

This project suggests a possible remediation program for older adults even in the situation that social isolation is necessary, that is, an online lifestyle medicine program. Lifestyle Medicine is a medical approach that uses evidence-based behavioral interventions to prevent, treat and manage chronic disease. According to the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, lifestyle medicine focuses on six areas to improve health including a healthy diet, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, stress management, avoidance of risky substances, and other non-drug modalities. Much scientific evidence supports the efficacy of lifestyle medicine in reducing physical (i.e., heart disease and stroke) and mental (i.e., memory loss and depressive mood) problems.

Impact

Chanwuyi Lifestyle Medicine Program (CLMP) certified by the American College of Lifestyle Medicine and are well-accepted and easy to be followed by the Chinese population. The proposed program provides more step-by-step guidance, and the training schedule can be tailored for the individual user. It is anticipated that people would find it more user-friendly than self-learning on the website. In addition, the online program will help to motivate older adults to improve their lifestyle, prevent physical illness and mental distress.

Beneficiaries

180 older adults aged over 50