

Hosting the Heart and Mind Counseling/Relaxation Salon Project
Mental Health Support Initiatives of the Miyagi Psychiatric Center

Miyagi Psychiatric Center
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1. Introduction

Two years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake, which caused a disaster of an unprecedented scale. Nevertheless, many disaster survivors remain trapped in difficult daily circumstances and require health support.

Immediately after the disaster, our facility quickly set up temporary housing support teams in Natori and Yamamoto, and has worked to provide psychiatric care to disaster survivors via the Heart and Mind Counseling/Relaxation Salon Project (from FY 2012 onward, we have implemented it as a contracted project from the MDMHCC).

2. Guiding Points

Pursuant to the hosting of the Heart and Mind Counseling/Relaxation Salon Project, we sought to:

(1) Provide knowledge (allowing participants to learn about disaster stress and how to cope with it and enabling them to improve their self-care abilities).

(2) Provide a place to speak freely (allowing individuals to share with each other by describing their own difficult experiences and then listening as others do the same).

(3) Provide a place where people can take care of their minds and bodies (collaborating with psychiatrists and local internal medicine doctors).

(4) Provide a place for participants to independently get involved in activities (including programs that people can easily participate in, such as handicrafts, karaoke, and stretching).

(5) Provide a place for continuous support (in accordance with survivor lifestyles, using face-to-face relationships as a foundation for regular, continuous support).

(6) Allow nurses, psychiatric social workers, and occupational therapists to work together to manage a program and enable them to make use of their professional strengths therein.

(7) Refer issues that become visible through this project to affiliated organizations, such as the Public Health Center.

3. Implementation of the Heart and Mind Counseling/Relaxation Salon Project

As we moved toward implementation of the Heart and Mind Counseling/Relaxation Salon Project for tenants of emergency temporary housing, we considered various options, and eventually, through the Iwanuma Branch of the Sendai Public Health and Welfare Office, we were able to meet with officials from Natori and Yamamoto. Specifically, we held lectures, individual counseling, tea parties, and light exercise for these individuals (details described elsewhere).

In Natori, 180 individuals participated in FY 2011 (17 events), and 201 participated in FY 2012 (14 events), whereas in Yamamoto, 141 participated in FY 2011 (nine events) and 122 participated in FY 2012 (10 events). Some participants shared feelings including the following: "I feel a bit happier now. I'm glad I was able to talk to someone." Some individuals were also referred to the Public Health Center or to medical institutions following their individual counseling sessions.

4. In Place of a Summary

We have continuously conducted support activities for temporary housing residents in Natori and Yamamoto over the past two years. Through our projects, I think the number of smiles in the community is on the rise. However, in our individual counseling sessions, we have seen several people whose condition is only growing worse, highlighting the need for further support. In the future, we hope to continue to work closely with survivors while putting the specialty of this institution—team medical care—to full use.

To all residents in temporary housing in Natori City and Yamamoto Town.

Hosting the Heart and Mind Counseling / Relaxation Salon Notice of Holding

We offer programs to make your life in temporary housing more fulfilling and relaxing, and to help you feel better both physically and mentally. Please gather in large numbers.

Date: Third Thursday of every month 13:30~15:30

Contents: ◎ Lecture by psychiatrist

「Stress and Mental Health」

◎ Relaxation salon

(Tea parties, stretching, etc.)

Venue: Each temporary meeting place



Individual consultation corner will be provided.
Please feel to contact us.

In addition to psychiatrists, mental health workers, occupational therapists, etc. with visit you.

Miyagi Psychiatric Center
Mental care team

Contact information
Miyagi Psychiatric Center
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