

Kesennuma Regional Center Community Support Division Activity Report

[Resident support project]

1. Consultation support project

For resident support in FY2020, we consulted on mental health from children to seniors and provided support at the request of individuals, family members, and related individuals. At the request of the Health Promotion Section of the Health and Welfare Division of Minamisanriku Town (hereinafter, “Town Health Promotion Section”), we provided visiting support to residents considered to require health status confirmation. This was based on health surveys of residents living in public housing conducted in Miyagi Prefecture and Minamisanriku Town.

2. Community resident exchange project

(1) Support project for socially isolated residents (enrichment activity for men)

The poor state of male exchange, such as few male participants in exchange events, is an emerging community issue in Kesennuma City as the town development progresses following the Great East Japan Earthquake. The Kesennuma Regional Center (hereinafter, “Center”) has provided lectures on health, experiences for activities, and time for exchange with the aim of improving social isolation and promoting physical and mental health. Events were co-sponsored by the Health Promotion Division of the Health and Welfare Department of Kesennuma City (hereinafter, “City Health Promotion Division”). We asked related departments in Kesennuma City (community comprehensive support center, Elderly Care Division, Social Welfare Division, Karakuwa General Branch, Motoyoshi General Branch); medical institutions; and consultation organizations for their cooperation in accessing the target population.

The planned implementation content initially focused on what was popular with participants; however, with the spread of COVID-19, the content, venue, time, etc., were changed to what was feasible. We proceeded with discussions with the City Health Promotion Division, which was the co-sponsor, for implementation.

We planned to host events seven times a year, but the first session was suspended to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Afterwards, we maintained flexibility while implementing social distancing and mini-health lectures where we could maintain COVID-19 countermeasures for the day (held six times, total number of participants: 17 people).

(2) Dementia Café Kokoccha

We cooperated with the dementia café, Kokoccha, which is sponsored by the Miyagi Prefectural Dementia Disease Medical Center (Utsushikawa Tetsujinkai Mitsumine Hospital). It provides a venue where people and caregivers can interact so that we can approach people who struggle to access medical examinations and thus reduce the burden on caregivers. This was scheduled to be held 12 times a year, but was held only once (11 participants) to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

[Support for supporters project]

1. Professional staff dispatch

One professional staff member was dispatched to the City Health Promotion Division and Town Health Promotion Section, and we endeavored to reduce the work burden of the public health nurses in the local government by assisting with their workload.

2. Supporter’s mental health support project

(1) Kesennuma City staff health counseling service booth (opening of a mental health counseling service booth)

A health counseling service booth for local government employees (hereinafter, “counseling service booth”) was opened in Kesennuma City Hall on the third Wednesday of every month from 10:00 to 16:00. A total of 27 people used the service. By opening the booth, we provided support in collaboration with the Personnel Division of the General Affairs Department of Kesennuma City.

(2) Minamisanriku Town staff health counseling service booth (opening of a mental health counseling service booth)

We opened a counseling service booth for local government employees twice a month on weekdays and holidays. As a rule, on weekdays, it was held from 14:00 to 19:00 on the second Thursday of the month, and on holidays, it was held from 11:00 to 15:00 on a Saturday or Sunday. A total of 14 people used the service. By opening the booth, we provided support in collaboration with the General Affairs Division of Minamisanriku Town (hereinafter, “Town General Affairs Division”).

3. Alcohol-related problem response project

We contracted the project to the Miyagi Prefecture Danshukai and provided support for establishing the Motoyoshi Regular Meeting for Alcohol Temperance.

[Human resource development project]

1. Supporters’ mental health promotion support project

We received requests for and provided training and lectures for staff involved in disaster victim support, as well as staff overseeing mental health and welfare in affected areas (Table 1).

Table 1 Implementation status of supporter’s mental health promotion support projects

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training name / content	Number of participants	Requester
2020/4/8– 2021/3/17	Kesennuma City	23 rd Hope Garden staff training: Social skills training (SST)	129 total	Employment Transition Support Office for Persons with Disabilities Co. Ltd., Hope Garden, Kesennuma
2020/10/13	Kesennuma City Minamisanriku Town	“Learn about mental illness” – workshop for supporters of health, medical care, welfare, etc.	53*	Kesennuma Health and Welfare Office
2020/10/20	Kesennuma City	“Learn about mental illness” – workshop for supporters of health, medical care, welfare, etc.	32	Kesennuma Health and Welfare Office
2020/11/13	Kesennuma City	“Activities of the Kesennuma Regional Center”	3	Asahigaoka Gakuen Children’s Family Center
2020/11/25	Kesennuma City	Staff training: “Mental health training: Taking good care of yourself”	10	Senrikai Communal Living Support Office, Care Home Megumi

*Participants include those at the Kesennuma City venue, as well as online participants at the Minamisanriku Town venue

[Raising public awareness project]

1. Opening of mental health counseling service rooms

Upon the schools’ request, we established counseling rooms for students, their families, and educators to improve their mental health and prevent mental illness.

Kesennuma City Hospital School of Nursing student counseling room (20 times a year, 29 people in total used the service).

Kesennuma City Associate Nursing School student counseling room (32 times a year, 8 people in total used the service).

2. Workplace mental health promotion support project

(1) Minamisanriku Town staff training

We held workshops for Minamisanriku Town staff with the aim of supporting those who returned to work (9 participants).

3. Resident mental health public awareness promotion project

(1) Lectures

① Training for Hashikami District health promotion staff

We conducted lectures and relaxation experiences on how to skillfully manage stress for Hashikami District health promotion staff (43 participants).

(2) Various municipal activity support projects

① Cooperation with “Public awareness initiative for suicide prevention”

We co-sponsored the public awareness initiative for suicide prevention conducted by Kesenuma City during Suicide Prevention Week in September, and Suicide Prevention Strengthening Month in March. Moreover, we conducted panel exhibitions and distributed public awareness materials in collaboration with the City Health Promotion Division. During this period, we cooperated with the Kesenuma City radio station “Radio Kesenuma” (hereinafter, “Radio Kesenuma”) to transmit the program information on suicide prevention.

We cooperated with the creation and exhibition of public awareness materials on suicide prevention that Minamisanriku Town conducted during Suicide Prevention Strengthening Month in March.

② Cooperation in “Initiative for ‘Health promotion awareness project’”

We had planned to host the “Health promotion festival” in Kesenuma based on the “Kesenuma Health Plan 21” and “Food Education Promotion Plan” with the aim of maintaining and promoting the health of residents. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this was changed to a public awareness initiative using a panel exhibition. The Center cooperated with the project by creating panels, exhibitions, and leaflets.

③ Distribution of public awareness materials for local government employees

We distributed leaflets (Kesenuma City: “Stress from the spread and countermeasures for COVID-19: Maintain your physical and mental health” leaflet and wet wipes, Minamisanriku Town: “Sleep debt” leaflet) for providing information regarding mental health among local government employees.

④ Posting health counseling service booth flyer column for local government employees

We posted a “Breather column” on mental health on the monthly counseling service booth flyers provided by the Town General Affairs Division, with the aim of promoting the use of counseling service booths by local government employees.

⑤ Other training projects

We cooperated with lectures given by local governments to community residents, and we aimed to spread understanding and knowledge about mental health (Table 2).

Table 2 Implementation status of various municipal activity support projects

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training name / content	Number of participants	Requester
2020/12/8	Kesenuma City	FY2020 Mental health promotion lecture (Motoyoshi)	18	Kesenuma City
2020/12/14	Kesenuma City	FY2020 Mental health promotion lecture (Kesenuma)	20	Kesenuma City
2020/12/24	Kesenuma City	FY2020 Mental health promotion lecture (Karakuwa)	25	Kesenuma City
2021/1/28	Kesenuma City	FY2020 Attentive listening course – “Energize your mind!”	30	Kesenuma City
2020/10/19–10/30 2020/11/2–11/13	Kesenuma City	FY2020 Health promotion awareness project panel exhibition (alternative project for health festival)		Kesenuma City
2020/10/21	Minamisanriku Town	Minamisanriku Town alcohol-related problems countermeasure project – Health picture-story show – “The health of the princess and turtle and alcohol”	13	Minamisanriku Town
2021/1/15	Minamisanriku Town	Minamisanriku Town alcohol-related problems countermeasure project – Health picture-story show – “The health of the princess and turtle and alcohol”	6	Minamisanriku Town

4. Public relations project

(1) Posting columns in “Sanriku Shimpo”

We posted the column “Sanriku Mental Health Communication” once a month in collaboration with the Miyagi Prefecture Kesenuma Health and Welfare Office in the local newspaper Sanriku Shimpo, which is a monthly subscription mainly in Kesenuma City, with the aim of providing information on mental health to residents. The posted contents included items compatible with the local circumstances and content relating to the Great East Japan Earthquake. The Center oversaw six columns. Of these, the September posting of “Aiming for a society where nobody

is forced into a corner: Thinking about suicide prevention” and the November posting of “Fostering community ties: Working together, calling out, watching over, and being considerate” were created in collaboration with the City Health Promotion Division and Town Health Promotion Section.

(2) Dissemination of information through radio

We disseminated information via Radio Kesenuma with the aim of informing a wide range of residents how to maintain their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The text was created in collaboration with the City Health Promotion Division.

[Various activity support projects]

As in FY2019, in FY2020, we cooperated with the operating of the “Wakachiai Café,” which was hosted by the Sendai Grief Care Study Group as support for bereaved families.

[Children’s Mental Health Care Community Base Project]

1. Resident support

As in FY2019, in FY2020, we continued to respond to consultations with children and students in the area. Most consultations were connected through schools, and the number of support cases increased compared to that in FY2019.

2. Training projects

We received requests for and provided training and lectures for children and students in the area, as well as for staff responsible for child welfare (Table 3).

Table 3 Children’s Mental Health Care Community Base Project

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training name / content	Number of participants	Requester
2020/7/8	Kesenuma City	“Activities of the Kesenuma Regional Center”	8	Eastern Children’s Counseling Center Kesenuma Branch staff
2020/11/2	Kesenuma City	Health lecture: “Appearances and truth of worrisome 2nd-year junior high school students”	59	Kesenuma City Omose Junior High School
2020/12/8	Kesenuma City	Drug abuse prevention class lecture: “Current status of drug addiction and crisis avoidance”	52	Miyagi Prefecture Kesenuma High School – part-time system
2021/2/18	Kesenuma City	Pre-graduation course: “Mental health self-care for nursing staff”	33	Kesenuma City Hospital School of Nursing

[Summary / prospects and issues]

For FY2020, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the postponement or cancellation of various projects. Meanwhile, activities that could be continued were conducted while taking infection countermeasures. Furthermore, we were able to conduct activities according to the circumstances, such as cooperating with Radio Kesenuma and the City Health Promotion Division to start new public awareness activities on how to maintain mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic is different from the earthquake and tsunami in that it is invisible to the eye and its end cannot be seen. However, there are many residents reporting that the situation of restrictions on commuting to work or school according to emergency broadcasts and the sight of people lining up in the city from early in the morning to buy masks or disinfectant are “the same as during the earthquake.” Additionally, there were concerns about its effects on people’s mental and physical health similarly to after the earthquake. Under such circumstances, the fact that we were able to disseminate information through radio broadcasts from an early stage in collaboration with related organizations may have helped us to utilize our experience to date in support activities.

Furthermore, the first phase of activities of the Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center has come to an end with FY2020. During the second phase, we will implement the three following projects: resident support projects, raising public awareness projects, and support for supporters projects. The Center, which has been active mainly in these projects, plans to continue its activities as before. Toward the end of FY2025, we wish to proceed while diligently sharing the schedule and activity status with each related organization in the region.