

Stem Center Planning and Research Division Activity Report

[Resident support project]

We conducted this project for residents with various concerns, such as residents who still carry psychological burdens after the disaster, or residents who feel more isolated due to changes in the community.

1. Consultation support project

For FY2020, we responded to 12 telephone consultations.

2. Community resident exchange project (cooperation with management of salon activity – “Utsukushima salon”)

We cooperated with the management of the Stem Center Community Support Division’s salon for victims outside the prefecture (i.e., those who relocated from Fukushima Prefecture).

3. Cooperation with health surveys

In response to Typhoon Hagibis (Typhoon No. 19), we cooperated with the health survey conducted by Marumori Town and made 25 visits to victims together with the Community Support Division.

[Support for supporters project]

We provided support for the activities of local government employees and supporters, who have many psychological and physical burdens, and cooperated in responding to various mental health issues.

1. Alcohol-related problem response project (support in affected areas by alcohol-related problem support organizations)

To respond to alcohol-related problems in the affected area, we contracted work to the Tohokukai Hospital and Miyagi Prefecture Danshukai and provided support so that supporters could appropriately handle alcohol-related problems. Monthly meetings were held in Natori City, Ishinomaki City, Kesenuma City, and Motoyoshi Town, which led to the establishment of a Danshukai.

2. Supporters club operation project (supporter dispatch coordination)

Six new people, including professionals involved in mental health care, were registered. These individuals cooperated in the implementation of the “Psychological support skill improvement course” and the “Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum.”

[Human resource development project]

We conducted professional training for improving the skills of community supporters so that they could effectively tackle future mental health issues.

Due to COVID-19, the “Psychological support skill improvement course” was changed to an online format as a disaster-related professional training. Furthermore, the on-the-job training for alcohol-related problems was reduced from the planned six sessions for the year to four sessions (September, November, December, February). Priority was given to municipal staff who wished to attend and had not yet attended.

1 Disaster-related professional training project

We conducted training for professionals involved in disaster support.

Table 1 Disaster support-related professional training project

Implementation date	Host municipality	Title	Number of participants
2020/8/4	Sendai City	Psychological support skill improvement course, Session 1 – “Putting cognitive behavioral therapy into practice” (Instructor: Kazunori Matsumoto, Mental Health Clinic OASIS Director)	31
2020/12/16	Sendai City	Psychological support skill improvement course, Session 2 – “Initial response / initial support for counseling recipients with trauma” (Instructor: Tomoko Osawa, Hyogo Disaster Mental Health Care Center Senior Researcher)	25
2021/2/3	Sendai City	Psychological support skill improvement course, Session 3 – “Present and future of support that utilizes cognitive behavioral therapy” (Instructor: Yutaka Ono, Center for the Development of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Training Chairman)	28

2. Alcohol-related problem response training project (on-the-job training for alcohol-related problems)

We conducted training for administrative staff who were involved in direct support with the aim of acquiring professional knowledge and skills in alcohol-related problems. Nine individuals involved in work relating to alcohol-related problems, who were employees of municipalities and health centers in the prefecture, took the course.

Table 2 Participants

Session	Implementation date	Participants	Number of participants
1	2020/9/15–2020/9/17	Individuals involved in work pertaining to alcohol-related problems, who were employees of municipalities and health centers in the prefecture	2
2	2020/11/17–2020/11/19		2
3	2020/12/15–2020/12/17		2
4	2021/2/16–2021/2/18		3

Table 3 On-the-job training program

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Orientation	Cognitive behavioral therapy program in alcohol ward	Gambling addiction family program
Alcohol beginner program awareness video / group therapy / family program	Drug addiction recovery facility tour	Addiction psychological education lecture
In-hospital AA tour	※Participation in the addiction countermeasure supporter workshop (held online) for the 2 nd and 4 th sessions	Summary
Addiction / open seminar Lecture by doctor		
Family group therapy Drug group therapy		

[Raising public awareness project]

We conducted public awareness projects that allowed for citizens of the prefecture and supporters to deepen their understanding of mental health, and which led to the improvement of mental health.

1. Dissemination of information through homepage, blogs

We conducted updates as needed, such as introducing activities of the Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center (hereinafter, “Center”), publishing back numbers of public relations magazines, allowing for the browsing of various pamphlets, and providing training information.

Furthermore, to facilitate access for international researchers and practitioners to access the activities and research of the Center, we translated the “Bulletin” and posted the English versions of Nos. 3, 4, and 7 on the homepage.

2. Creation and distribution of leaflets, etc.

We distributed various materials for public awareness at workshops, health consultations, home visits, etc.

3. Responding to various materials

[Research aggregation project]

We conducted research to understand the situation of affected areas and victims.

We continued to conduct the “Children’s Cohort Study” over time to evaluate the changes in children born immediately after the earthquake and their families, and to determine effective support for them.

In addition to aggregating research, we created and distributed a record magazine and held a forum to disseminate the results and issues of activities.

1. Research aggregation project (see reprint, activity report by project item)

- (1) Longitudinal support study for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families (1): From the relationship between cognitive development, problematic behaviors, and family damage status in children in Miyagi Prefecture

- (2) Longitudinal support study for children born after the great East Japan earthquake and their families (2):
Damage status of parents and progress of each cluster due to past traumatic experiences
※ Poster presentation at the Annual Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting (held online).

2. Bulletin issuance project

“FY2019 Bulletin (No. 8)” created and distributed to related organizations (1,200 copies created, distributed to 883 locations).

English version of bulletin created (Nos. 1, 2, and 8), scheduled to be posted on homepage within FY2021.

3. Ethics committee management project

A research ethics committee was held (3 times in total).

4. Official activity record formulation project

Created the “Official activity record (2011–2020)” which summarizes the 10 years of activity by the Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center and distributed this to related organizations (1,300 copies created, distributed to 960 locations).

5. Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum project (re-displayed, see FY2020 Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum Implementation Report)

The FY2020 Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum was hosted (February 27, 2021, held online).

[Other]

1. Business statistics data management

We continued operating the business statistics system and individual support system. We analyzed activities such as changes over time.

2. Staff training

We held general meetings twice a year online. We also called for external training as recommended training to improve staff qualifications.

[Children’s Mental Health Care Community Base project] (re-displayed, see FY2020 Children’s Mental Health Care Community Base Project Implementation Report)

1. Professional dispatch project

We dispatched professionals to Iwanuma City, Watari Town, and Natori City Nursery Center upon request, and we coordinated the dispatch of instructors.

2. Training project

We conducted “Psychological first aid (PFA) for children training (1-day training)” and “Trauma-informed care training” once each in Sendai City.

3. Research

We continued to conduct the “Longitudinal support study for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families” (re-displayed).

4. Raising public awareness

We distributed clear files for public awareness to training participants, and we distributed self-care posters to public high schools and special-needs schools in the prefecture.

[Summary]

FY2020 was set as an end to 10 years of activities for the Center; thus, we decided to summarize our overall work and to either conclude some projects or shift them to other organizations.

However, projects were implemented while considering the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, some could not be implemented as initially planned. There was a remarkable impact particularly in the training projects, and we were forced to cancel many face-to-face training sessions.

Some projects were concluded as Center projects with FY2020 and implemented by other organizations from FY2021 and were suspended. These were the “WHO Psychological first aid (PFA) training” and “Alcohol-related problem follow-up training.” Meanwhile, the “On-the-job training for alcohol-related problems” was implemented with a reduced number of sessions. The “Psychological support skill improvement course,” which ended in FY2020, was shifted to an online format and implemented.

Additionally, the “Psychological first aid (PFA) for children training” was conducted only once as a 1-day training session. Initially, we did not anticipate that the effects of COVID-19 would last so long;

nevertheless, it seems necessary to continue investigating not only the curriculum, but also how effective training could be conducted in place of face-to-face training. Meanwhile, the “Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum,” which started in FY2017 and was hosted for the final time in FY2020, was implemented online for the first time. This also had some advantages, such as having some long-distance participants from outside the prefecture. These were the circumstances under which we operated in FY2020. However, we were able to carry out milestone projects, such as creating an official activity record that summarizes the 10 years of activities of the Center and hosting the Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum. This was an opportunity for the staff to reflect on the past and future activities of the Center, and many people were able to learn about the current situation of the Miyagi Prefecture.

From FY2021, the projects of the Center will be consolidated into the three pillars of “resident support,” “support for supporters,” and “raising public awareness” based on the “Second operation plan (FY2021–FY2025).” However, from FY2021, the work of the Planning and Research Division will be taken over by the Business Administration Division. Here, they will continue to contribute to the “improvement of community mental health and welfare in the disaster area,” as well as to work on issues with related organizations and proceed with preparations for the end of activities in FY2025.