

Activity Report of the Community Support Division, Kesennuma Regional Center

The activities of the Kesennuma Regional Center (“Division”) in FY 2021 in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake were in Kesennuma City and Minamisanriku Town, under the jurisdiction of the Kesennuma Public Health Center.

【Resident support project】

For resident support in FY 2021, we received consultations on mental health from children to older adults and provided support at the request of individuals, family members, and related individuals.

1. Consultation support project (establishment of mental health counseling service booths)

At the request of schools, we opened counseling rooms for students, their families, and teaching staff, to promote mental health and prevent mental illness.

Student counseling booth, Nursing School, Kesennuma City Hospital (held 20 times, total number of people: 29)

Student counseling booth, Nursing School, Kesennuma Medical Association (held 17 times, total number of people: 4)

2. Local resident exchange project

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

We provided time for lectures and activities on health for men who tended to be socially isolated and whose mental health may be declining, with the aim of improving and promoting mental health. Events were co-sponsored by the Health Promotion Division of the Health and Welfare Department of Kesennuma City (henceforth, “City Health Promotion Division”). We asked related departments (community comprehensive support center, Elder Care Division, Social Welfare Division, Karakuwa General Branch, Motoyoshi General Branch), medical institutions, and consultation organizations in Kesennuma City for their cooperation in reaching out to the target population. We planned to hold seven sessions a year, but the seventh session was canceled owing to the COVID-19 pandemic (held six times, with a total of 18 participants).

【Support for supporters project】

1. Professional staff dispatch

We dispatched one staff member four times a week to the City Health Promotion Division and the Health Promotion Section of Minamisanriku Town’s Health and Welfare Division (“Town Health Promotion Section”). Efforts were made to reduce the workload of local public health nurses by assisting in their work.

2. Supporters’ mental health support project

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

A health counseling service booth for local government employees was opened in Kesennuma City Hall on the third Wednesday of every month from 10:00 to 16:00 (total number of people who used the service: 29). In opening the booth, we provided support in collaboration with the Personnel Division of the General Affairs Department of Kesennuma City.

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

A health counseling service booth for local government employees was opened on the third Wednesday of every month from 14:00 to 19:00 (total number of people who used the service: 18). In opening the booth, we provided support in collaboration with the General Affairs Division of Minamisanriku Town.

3. Supporters’ mental health promotion support project

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

Table 1. Supporters’ mental health promotion support projects

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training title/content	Number of times	Number of participants	Requester
April 2, 2021 April 16, 2021	Kesennuma City	In-hospital training for new recruits at Mitsumine Hospital “Deepening our understanding of mental disorders”	2	28	Utsushikawatetsujinkai Mitsumine Hospital

April 7, 2021– March 2, 2022	Kesennuma City	Social Skills Training (SST)for staff belonging to Hope Garden kesennuma	22	126	Employment Transition Support Office for Persons with Disabilities Co. Ltd., Hope Garden Kesennuma
July 14, 2021	Minamisanriku Town	Minamisanriku Town Social Welfare Council staff training “Let’s be better at communicating”		45	Minamisanriku Town Social Welfare Council
July 16, 2021	Kesennuma City	Training for long- term care certified surveyors “How to maintain self-care on a daily basis: Preventing mental and physical fatigue”		10	Kesennuma City
November 25, 2021	Kesennuma City	Care Home Megumi staff workshop “Listening to the story”		15	Senrikai Communal Living Support Office, Care Home Megumi
December 15, 2021	Minamisanriku Town	Minamisanriku Town Social Welfare Council staff training “Let’s be better at communicating” Assertion edition		44	Minamisanriku Town Social Welfare Council
December 22, 2021	Kesennuma City Minamisanriku Town	First “Learning about mental illness” workshop for supporters in health, medical care, and welfare		77 *1	Kesennuma Public Health Center
January 24, 2022–March 28, 2022	Kesennuma City	Social Skills Training(SST) for staff belonging to Train and user	4	17	Koeru Employment Support Center Train
January 25, 2022	Kesennuma City	Second “Learning about mental illness” workshop for supporters in health, medical care, and welfare		28 *2	Kesennuma Public Health Center
January 28, 2022	Kesennuma City	Kesennuma City staff training “Harassment prevention training”		1,700 *3	Kesennuma City

*1 The number of participants includes those who participated online at the Minamisanriku Town venue in addition to those who participated at the Kesennuma City venue.

*2 Online training for each audience member.

*3 The number of participants includes online participants as well as participants at the venue.

【Public awareness campaign project】

1. Resident mental health public awareness promotion project

(1) 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 Kesennuma City during Suicide Prevention Week in September and Suicide Prevention Strengthening Month in March. We conducted panel exhibitions and distributed public awareness materials in collaboration with the City Health Promotion Division.

During the period, we cooperated with the Kesennuma City radio station “Radio Kesennuma” to transmit information on suicide prevention in the program.

We cooperated in the creation and exhibition of public awareness materials on suicide prevention that Minamisanriku Town conducted during Suicide Prevention Strengthening Month in March. We were co-sponsors with Minamisanriku Town during Suicide Countermeasures Strengthening Month in March and distributed public awareness materials as part of public awareness activities relating to suicide prevention.

② Other training projects

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

Table 2. Various municipal activity support projects

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training name / content	Number of participants	Requester
October 12, 2021	Kesennuma City	Hashikami district health promotion staff training, “Let’s handle stress well”	18	Kesennuma City
December 17, 2021	Kesennuma City	FY 2021 Mental health promotion lecture (Motoyoshi district), “To protect the life of those close to you: Recognize it early—stress and mental illness”	33	Kesennuma City
December 17, 2021	Kesennuma City	FY 2021 Mental health promotion lecture (Karakuwa District), “Hints for staying calm: Communication and stress care”	26	Kesennuma City
March 14, 2022	Kesennuma City	FY 2021 Mental health promotion lecture (Kesennuma District), “Hints for staying calm: Communication and stress care”	12	Kesennuma City

(2) Support for health festivals

At the Health Promotion Festival that was sponsored by Kesennuma City, we exhibited posters and distributed public awareness materials on mental health and drinking-related problems to maintain and improve the mental and physical health of local residents.

We were planning to participate in the Minamisanriku Town Welfare and Health Festival as an executive committee member, and we were preparing to conduct activities to raise public awareness of mental health among local residents. However, the public awareness activities were canceled on the day owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

(3) Lectures

We held training and lectures for local residents to deepen their understanding of mental health (Table 3).

Table 3. Lectures

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training name / content	Number of participants	Requester
May 7, 2021	Kesennuma City	Drug abuse prevention class lecture, “What is self-harm?”	260	Motoyoshi Hibiki High School, Miyagi Prefecture
August 24, 2021–February 22, 2022	Kesennuma City	Health lectures 4times	29	Municipal Makizawa Housing District A
September 8, 2021	Kesennuma City	Kesennuma City Gas and Water Workers Union youth and women’s study meeting, “About mental health”	8	Kesennuma City Gas and Water Workers Union
October 12, 2021	Kesennuma City	Café for dementia patients/Shishiori exchange meeting, “How to maintain mental health”	14	Shishiori and Karakuwa community comprehensive support center, Kesennuma City
October 25, 2021	Kesennuma City	Junior high school health lecture, “Confusing friendships in the second year of junior high school”	64	Omoso Junior High School, Kesennuma City

November 12, 2021	Kesennuma City	Dementia roundtable conference, Sansan café “How to maintain mental health”	9	Shishiori and Karakuwa community comprehensive support center, Kesennuma City
November 16, 2021	Kesennuma City	Drug abuse prevention class lecture, “Status of drug dependence and crisis avoidance”	14	Kesennuma High School, Miyagi Prefecture
February 14, 2022	Kesennuma City Minamisanriku Town	Kesennuma Motoyoshi District High School student guidance teachers training, “Cooperation between schools and mental health care: Experience from our Center”	100	Kesennuma Motoyoshi District High School Student Guidance Liaison Council
February 25, 2022	Kesennuma City	Third-year lecture, “How to communicate”	60	Kesennuma City Jonan Junior High School
February 28, 2022	Kesennuma City	Pre-graduation lecture, “Self-care for the mental health of nurse”	33	Nursing School, Kesennuma City Hospital

2. Public relations project

(1) Posting columns in *Sanriku Shimpo*

We posted the column “Sanriku Mental Health Communication” once a month, in collaboration with the Kesennuma Health and Welfare Office, Miyagi Prefecture, in the local newspaper *Sanriku Shimpo*, which is a monthly subscription mainly in Kesennuma City, with the aim of providing information on mental health to residents. The posted contents matched the local circumstances and covered topics relating to the Great East Japan Earthquake. As the Division will end its activities by 2025, the postings were reduced from six times to four times in FY 2021. The September 2021 publication of “What you can do to prevent suicide” and the March 2022 publication of “On taking in March 11,” which were overseen by the Division, were prepared jointly by the City Health Promotion Division and Town Health Promotion Section.

(2) Dissemination of information through radio

We disseminated information with Radio Kesennuma with the aim of informing a wide range of residents on how to maintain their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

【Summary, future prospects, and issues】

With an eye toward the end of activities in FY 2025 based on the MDMHCC’s Second Operation Plan, in FY 2021, we shared information on issues in the area, and we regularly held meetings with related organizations (Kesennuma Public Health Center, Mental Health and Welfare Center) as a forum for examining future mental health care in the community. Mental health care meetings (study meetings on mental health care), sponsored by the Kesennuma Public Health Center, were held as a forum for exchanging opinions with local governments regarding the mental health care system in the area from FY 2021 onwards. In preparation for hosting the event in FY 2021 as well, we discussed what we could do regarding the local issues raised by local governments in FY 2020 with related organizations (Kesennuma Public Health Center, Mental Health and Welfare Center). Given that it is necessary to exchange detailed opinions with local governments regarding future efforts, we requested each local government division to hold meetings, with the Kesennuma Public Health Center and the Division conducting visits and explanations at these meetings. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to host mental health care meetings (study meetings on mental health care), but we will continue to do so from FY 2022. Additionally, we dispatched Division staff to local government divisions and provided operational support to the local governments throughout the year.

In FY 2021, the Kesennuma Public Health Center had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the local governments had to increase their vaccination work against COVID-19. The Division’s projects could not be implemented as planned. However, we were able to support local governments together with the Kesennuma Public Health Center and the Mental Health and Welfare Center with the goal of improving community mental health and welfare activities.

In FY 2022, we plan to strengthen cooperation while diligently sharing schedules for the completion of activities and the status of Division activities with the related organizations in the region. We intend to strengthen cooperation and work on the three projects: (1) resident support, (2), support for supporters, and (3) public awareness campaigns. We aim to continue working toward the termination and handover of the projects to related institutions.