

Document I

Second Operation Plan of the Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center (Summary version)

FY 2021–2025

Purpose of plan

The prefecture has indicated a policy of continuing mental health care even after FY 2021 and formulated the “Miyagi Prefecture Mental Health Care Initiative Policy for FY 2021 Onwards” in August 2020. Based on this, the Center decided to formulate a second operation plan to clarify the basic principles and policies of Center operation during the five-year period from FY 2021 to FY 2025.

Initiatives and issues to date

Resident support

We offered victim support upon the request of municipalities by sharing the role of supporting those requiring follow-up after health surveys with support center support staff and others.

The number of requests for support for older adults living alone and cases with multiple problems, such as alcohol-related problems, has increased, and we provided support in cooperation with related organizations in municipalities and communities. These initiatives were indispensable for the early detection and early support of various issues.

We conducted salon activities for apartment-type rental housing residents, who tended to be isolated, in collaboration with municipalities and related organizations. These initiatives were effective in preventing the isolation and deterioration of physical and mental health.

Relocation to public housing has progressed, and the number of cases requiring support has decreased. Collaboration and relationships of trust were established with municipalities and related organizations through the activities, and there have been more requests for supervising and accompanying visits for difficult cases, such as shut-ins.

Support for supporters

Projects, such as those tackling alcohol-related problems and suicide prevention measures, have led to the effective development of projects in line with community mental health and welfare issues. These are outcomes of cooperating with municipalities and health centers.

The Center adopted a secondment system from an early stage to dispatch staff to municipalities upon their request. These staff members responded to various issues that arose in disaster areas after the disaster, such as overseeing mental health and welfare projects and difficult cases, and they were highly regarded by the municipalities.

We established staff member counseling service booths with the cooperation of the Department of

Preventive Psychiatry of the Graduate School of Medicine at Tohoku University based on requests from municipalities, and we provided individual consultations. We have seen promising results, such as increased awareness of the importance of mental health measures in the workplace.

Danshukai held in each region immediately after the earthquake functioned as important venues for the participants to continue abstinence. In the future, it is necessary to continue providing support for *danshukai* activities in each region as well as for alcohol-related problems according to each region while cooperating with municipalities.

Raising public awareness

We cooperated in community residents' workshops held by municipalities. The use of picture-story shows and skits so that the topics feel more familiar to the residents was effective in improving the mental health of the inhabitants.

We cooperated with municipalities and related organizations to try to understand residents who tended to be isolated, and we held salons and various classes.

These were effective for improving the interaction between residents and for the physical and mental health of residents who tended to be isolated after moving into public housing or relocating.

We disseminated information, such as the Center's activity status and training, on the homepage and workshops, which fostered the understanding of issues, such as mental health and alcohol-related problems, among residents.

Children's Mental Health Care Community Based Project

We responded to consultations from children and parents through walk-ins and home visits. The number of handled cases increased every year, and the content tended to be complicated.

For the professional dispatch project, which aimed to provide professional advice to supporters, we provided Center staff-based supervision upon the request of municipalities, dispatched clinical psychologists and psychiatric social workers, conducted case studies with municipal managers and others, and responded to consultations. This was an opportunity for municipal managers to recognize the usefulness of collaborating with external professionals.

We invited instructors from outside of the prefecture to conduct training for educators and supporters. There was much interest from public health nurses, nursery teachers, school teachers, and others, and there were many participants in each session.

We conducted the "Children's Cohort Study" in three prefectures in the Tohoku region (Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima) with the objective of evaluating the transformation of children and families and clarifying support efficiency. This is expected to provide valuable survey data, and ought to be continued.

Human resource development

We took up a wide range of themes in response to requests from related organizations and supported the mental health promotion of victims. There were initially many requests for cooperation in earthquake-related lectures and training, such as on stress and PTSD, following the earthquake. However, over the years, the topics changed to alcohol-related problems, suicide prevention, and workplace mental health.

We have conducted on-the-job training for alcohol-related problems since the opening of the Center after being entrusted by Tohokukai Hospital. There have been many requests received every year, and many community medical organization and local government officials have taken our courses. However, although the number of graduates is increasing every year, it has been difficult to raise the level of community supporters owing to relocations at the affiliation location. In the future, we think it is necessary to collaborate with municipalities and health centers to encourage the continuous study of the training content.

Research

The *Bulletin*, published every year, and the official activity record published in FY 2020 are also results of the detailed summary of the activities in the Center.

The Miyagi Mental Health Care Forum, which was started in FY 2017, was planned as a venue for sharing and understanding the situation of the disaster area as well as investigating the reconstruction of community mental health and welfare. As support organizations continue to withdraw from the region every year, there have been fewer places for supporters to gather and exchange ideas, and visitors have said these types of plans are necessary.

Basic principle and basic policy

Basic principle

Improve community mental health and welfare in disaster areas

Basic policy

- ① Implement "seamless support for residents, from children to adults."
- ② Resident support involves mental health care activities centered on outreach, based on accompanying visits with related organizations and municipalities.
- ③ Support for supporters involves implementing activities that contribute to the improvement of the skills of supporters through case studies and consultations. It aims to offer support relating to the mental health of supporters.
- ④ Raising public awareness involves activities relating to the mental health of community residents that prioritize preventive viewpoints to deepen understanding and interest in the mental health of residents while cooperating with municipalities.
- ⑤ Activities are implemented with the perspective of handing down the experience cultivated in past activities, such as by summarizing the ideal way of support that can be utilized in the event of a future disaster. The activities that the Center has overseen offer valuable knowledge on mental health care activities in the event of a disaster.
- ⑥ Activities are conducted according to the actual circumstances of municipalities while collaborating and cooperating with related organizations and municipalities, with the aim of improving community mental health and welfare activities. The transition of various projects will be systemically implemented in anticipation of the conclusion of activities in FY 2025.

Project plan

Central issues to be addressed in the next five years

Resident support

- ◇ There is a need to focus on older adults living alone, isolated individuals, infants/schoolchildren, alcohol-related problems, and those who have other problems, such as being a shut-in.
- ◇ Support for cases with multiple issues has been increasing. We will conduct visits and consultations with municipal and health center public health nurses to provide seamless support. Furthermore, there is a need to cooperate with medical and welfare-related organizations in the community and shift to community mental health and welfare activities while responding by teams.

Plan

We will collaborate with related organizations to conduct consultation support activities for community residents who require mental health care, such as those with psychological burdens after the disaster or those who have become further isolated owing to changes in the community. We will seek to improve community mental health.

Support for supporters

- ◇ Supporters who oversee support activities in disaster areas will continue to be important players in reconstruction, and follow-ups on supporters are an important issue. We will supervise individual cases with an eye toward human resource development and provide technical support, such as accompanying them on visits with an aim toward skill improvement. We will collaborate with health centers and mental health welfare centers, depending on the local circumstances.

Plan

We will provide professional advice and accompanying visits for supporters to help supporters address a wide range of mental health issues. We aim to further improve the skills and reduce the psychological burdens of supporters by providing opportunities for various professional training (including self-care).

Raising public awareness

- ◇ Activities for raising public awareness among residents with the aim of improving the mental health of community residents and preventing the aggravation of any illnesses will be conducted in collaboration with municipalities and health centers using various methods that we have cultivated. We will further establish the understanding and interest of residents toward mental health.
- ◇ Regarding places to gather, such as the salons with which the Center has been involved, there is a need for continuously providing venues where residents can connect and be active, and for investigating the ideal form of such activities in collaboration with municipalities and related organizations.
- ◇ The *Bulletin* and its English translation, the official activity record compiled in the final fiscal year, etc., are published on the homepage. The practice of the Center to date can be utilized for new disasters. Other important issues to consider include what documents relating to raising public awareness issued by the Center will be kept, and how, such as organizing them by phase.

Plan

We will continue to disseminate information to further establish and deepen the retention of information on mental health that has been spread in the wake of the earthquake. We will provide places where people can casually gather and give lectures to residents who work during the day. We will use various methods to provide the necessary information to all community residents. We will collect the knowledge gained through long-term activities and disseminate the results, to contribute to future disaster countermeasures.

Individual support

We will visit residents who require support upon request of municipalities. For difficult cases, we will collaborate with related organizations to strengthen the team-based support system. We will promote the transition through these activities so that we can respond as part of the community mental health and welfare activities where local governments, related organizations, and community residents work together.

Community resident exchange project

Regarding gathering places, such as the salons with which the Center has been involved, we will continuously provide opportunities for residents to connect and be active. We will investigate the ideal form of such activities in collaboration with municipalities and related organizations.

Supporter consultations

We provide professional advice from the perspective of mental health in response to requests from supporters regarding the handling of difficult cases and project management.

Supporter's mental health support

We will conduct training and interviews for supporters at the request of municipalities with the aim of self-care and skill improvement.

Support for supporters involved in children's mental health care

We will provide consultations and training for supporters through cohort studies so that we can provide effective support for children's mental health care.

Mental health public awareness promotion project

We will make efforts that utilize the various methods that we have cultivated to further establish the understanding and interest of residents regarding mental health. We will provide information on mental health to elementary, junior high, and high school students in the prefecture; and we will disseminate professional knowledge and skills to related parties at the request of local governments.

Dissemination of mental health information

We will disseminate information on mental health through public relations magazines and the homepage to deepen understanding among residents. We will actively disclose materials to utilize the knowledge that the center has cultivated, in the event of new disasters.

Annual activity report creation project

We will summarize the activities for each year and provide them to related organizations as an activity report.

Promotion of plan

① Progress management

After the end of the half-term, manager-level employees and above will confirm and evaluate the implementation status of the operation plan. The steering committee will also evaluate the implementation status.

② Promotion system

It is expected that the system will gradually shrink as we move toward the conclusion of activities in FY 2025. Meanwhile, outreach by multiple occupations and support for supporters need to be developed as an important project of the Center. We will secure a personnel system according to the amount of work and promote this work.