




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 healthcare 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 the Center’s operation during the five-year period from FY 2021 to FY 2025.

Initiatives and issues to date

Resident support

We played the role of 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 deemed indispensable for early detection and support with respect to various issues.

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

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

Support for supporters

Projects, such as for alcohol-related problems and suicide prevention, have led to the effective development of projects in line with community mental health and welfare issues as a result of cooperating with local governments 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 the disaster area 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 Tohoku University Graduate School of

Medicine on the basis of 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, by continuing to provide support.

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 local governments.

Raising public awareness

We cooperated with local governments in holding community residents’ workshops. The use of picture-story shows and skits to make the topics feel more familiar to the residents was effective in improving the mental health of the residents.

We cooperated with local governments 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 physical and mental health of residents who tended to be isolated after moving into public housing or relocating.

We disseminated various information, such as the Center’s activity status and training, on the homepage and in workshops, which led to an understanding of issues such as mental health and alcohol-related problems among residents.

Children's Mental Health Care Community Base Project

We responded to consultations from children and parents through walk-ins and home visits. The number of handled cases is increasing every year, and the content tends to be complicated. For the professional dispatch project, which has the objective of providing professional advice to supporters, we provided Center staff-based supervision upon the request of local governments. We then dispatched professionals, such as clinical psychologists and mental health 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 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 change in children and families and clarifying efficient support. This is expected to yield valuable survey data. The study is necessary to continue in the future.

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. Initially, we received many requests for cooperation in earthquake-related lectures and training, such as 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 outsourcing to Tohokukai Hospital. We have received many requests every year. Many representatives from community medical organizations and local government officials have taken the course. 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 plan to collaborate with local governments and health centers to continue studying the training content.

Research

The Bulletin that was published every year and the official activity record that was published in FY 2020 are also the result of a detailed summary of the activities of the Center to date.

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

Basic principle and basic policy

Basic principle

Improvement of community mental health welfare in the disaster-affected area

Basic policy

- ① Implement "seamless support from children to adults"
- ② Resident support involves mental healthcare activities centering on outreach, based on accompanying visits with related organizations, such as local government units.
- ③ Support for supporters involves implementing activities that contribute to the improvement of the skills of supporters through case studies and consultations. It is concerned with support related to the mental health of supporters.
- ④ Raising public awareness involves activities related to mental health for community residents. It prioritizes preventive viewpoints to deepen public understanding and interest in the mental health of residents. The campaigns are conducted in cooperation with municipalities.
- ⑤ Implement activities with the perspective of handing down the experience cultivated in past activities, such as summarizing the ideal way of providing support in the event of a disaster in the future. The activities that the Center has overseen to date will be valuable knowledge for mental healthcare activities in the event of a disaster.
- ⑥ Conduct activities according to the actual circumstances of municipalities while collaborating and cooperating with related organizations, with the aim of improving community mental health and welfare activities. Systematically implement the transition of various projects to related organizations 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/pupils, people with alcohol-related problems, and those who have challenging problems, such as being a shut-in.
- ◇ Cases with multiple issues have been increasing, and we will conduct visits and consultations with municipal and health center public health nurses to provide seamless support from children to adults. Further, 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 healthcare, such as residents with psychological burdens after the disaster or residents who have become further isolated owing to changes in the community. We will continue to improve community mental health.

Support for supporters

- ◇ Supporters who oversee support activities in disaster areas will continue to be important players in reconstruction. Follow-up on supporters represent an important issue. We will supervise individual cases with an eye toward human resource development and provide technical support, such as accompanying visits, with an aim toward the skill improvement of supporters. 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 various 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 types of 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.
- ◇ With regard to places to gather, such as salons with which the Center has been involved, we recognize a need for continuously providing a place where residents can connect and be active, and for investigating the ideal form of such activities in collaboration with local governments 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. What and how various documents related to raising public awareness issued by the Center to date will be kept, such as organizing them by phase, are also important issues to consider.

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, and we will use various methods to provide necessary information to all community residents. Further, 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 the 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 to be able to respond appropriately, as a part of the community mental health and welfare activities where local governments, related organizations, and community residents work together.

Community resident exchange project

With regard to places to gather, such as salons with which the Center has been involved, we will continuously provide places where residents can connect and be active. We will investigate the ideal form of such activities in the future, in collaboration with local governments 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.

Supporters' mental health support

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

Support for supporters involved in children's mental healthcare

We will provide consultations and training for supporters through cohort studies, through which we can provide effective support for children's mental healthcare.

Mental health public awareness promotion project

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

Dissemination of mental health information

To deepen understanding among residents, we will disseminate information on mental health through public relations magazines and the homepage. Additionally, we will actively disclose materials to utilize the knowledge that the Center has cultivated to date for new disasters.

Annual activity report creation project

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

Promotion of the 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

The system is expected to 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.