

Community Mental Health Programme



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Preface

Mental health disorders are increasingly recognised as a major health concern in many developed countries in the world, affecting one's quality of life, personal relationships and economic productivity. In line with the National Mental Health Blueprint and the World Health Organisation's recommendations to improve access to mental health care in the community, we at JurongHealth have run a Community Mental Health (CMH) Programme since 2013.

One of the goals of our CMH Programme is to promote affordable, holistic, patient-centred mental health care in the community. We network with various community agencies such as Family Service Centres, Senior Activity Centres, General Practitioners (GP), COMIT (Community Mental Health Intervention Team) and ASCAT (Assessment and Shared Care Team) and facilitate access to them for our patients.

The CMH Programme at JurongHealth consists of a comprehensive multi-disciplinary team comprising psychiatrists, psychologists, case managers, medical social workers (MSWs) and programme executives.

Our key objectives:

- Improve access to evidence-based pharmacological and psychological treatment in the community
- Work with our community partners to enhance knowledge to recognise and manage mental health conditions in the community
- Promote integrated care for persons with mental health conditions and provide support to their caregivers
- Build capacity for mental health care and mental wellness promotion in the community

Commonly Asked Questions

What is the Community Mental Health General Practitioner (CMH GP) Partnership Programme?

CMH GP Partnership Programme is a collaborative partnership between JurongHealth and a network of GPs who practice in the west of Singapore. Together, we adopt a shared care approach, with a dedicated case manager managing the liaison among GPs, patients and psychiatrists. In addition, patients under this programme have access to our medical social workers or psychologists should they need psychosocial intervention.

Most of the patients referred to our CMH GP Partnership Programme have mild to moderate mental health problems, predominantly depression and anxiety, which are two of the most common conditions seen in general psychiatric practice.

Are General Practitioners under the CMH GP Partnership Programme trained in psychiatry?

All our GP partners have experience in managing psychiatric conditions. Some even have formal qualifications such as a Graduate Diploma in Mental Health. The JurongHealth CMH team of mental health professionals is committed to provide ongoing support and training to our GP partners.

How do you manage mental health crises?

A crisis may mean different things to different people. The CMH case manager will work collaboratively with a patient to determine an appropriate crisis intervention plan, which may include the following 24-hour public helplines:

SOS (Samaritans of Singapore): 1800 221 4444

IMH Mental Health Helpline: 6389 2222

What are the benefits of joining the CMH GP Partnership Programme?

- Shorter waiting time at a more convenient location closer to home.
- More flexible appointment time, e.g. after office hours.
- Shared care by GPs working in conjunction with a psychiatric specialist's support.

- Personalised and prompt care coordination provided by case managers.
- Access to psychosocial interventions by psychologists and MSWs from our multi-disciplinary team.
- Access to personalised, holistic care by GPs who may also manage other chronic medical conditions (e.g. hypertension, diabetes).

How is shared care coordinated in this programme?

Patients of either the Ng Teng Fong General Hospital (NTFGH) Department of Psychiatry or CMH GP partners may be suitable for the CMH Programme.

The case manager or psychiatrist will advise patients of JurongHealth on the CMH GP Partnership Programme if they are eligible. If the patient finds it acceptable, an appointment with a GP partner will be arranged within two months. In the event of deterioration or relapse, the patient will be referred back to NTFGH under a fast-track appointment system.

Our GP partners may also refer their own patients to the CMH Programme. This will allow patients access to a wider range of medications, as well as the services of the multi-disciplinary team, according to their individual needs.

Being the main contact person, the case managers of the CMH Programme play a big role to enhance care coordination.

What is a case manager's role in the patient's management?

The case manager is a patient's key contact and resource person. Under the CMH Programme, they will do the following:

- Monitor the patient's condition via regular phone contact.
- Engage a patient's family, with permission, to get a more comprehensive assessment of a patient's care needs.
- Liaise with various service providers to facilitate care between specialists, allied health professionals and community partners.
- Psycho-educate the patient and his/her family to improve their understanding of mental health and adherence to treatment.
- Provide healthy lifestyle advice, such as regular exercise and sleep hygiene.

What are the patient's responsibilities on the CMH programme?

Patients under the CMH programme will gain the most benefits if they are actively engaged in maintaining their mental wellness. The case manager will provide the necessary psycho-education to empower patients to manage their own condition. This may include medication adherence and symptom monitoring.

More specific issues, such as those related to maladaptive patterns of thought or behaviour, or relationship difficulties with loved ones, can be addressed by other members of the multi-disciplinary team.

The role of the medical social worker

Medical Social Workers (MSW) work together with other healthcare professionals to provide continual support to patients. Their areas of expertise include life problems that involve family, work or social functioning.

The JurongHealth CMH Programme has a system in place to ensure that our patients have access to psychosocial intervention when needed, as part of the bio-psycho-social holistic care that we aim to provide.

Upon referral to the CMH Programme, the MSW conducts a psychosocial assessment which looks into the patient's support system and family relationships (e.g. marital, parenting, etc). The MSW also performs financial and/or suicide risk assessment where relevant to the case. In some cases, a family conference may be conducted.

Based on the results of the psychosocial assessment, the MSW will recommend an intervention plan, which may include:

- Grief processing
- Counselling on illness acceptance issues
- Counselling on relationship issues
- Guidance on employment-related issues
- Referrals to community services
- Financial assistance
- Crisis intervention

The role of the psychologist

In the CMH Programme, the psychologist promotes subjective well-being and effective life-coping skills to people with depression and anxiety disorders. Psychological knowledge and intervention skills based on the bio-psycho-social model are applied to help patients understand, prevent and relieve psychological distress or behavioural dysfunction.

As a healthcare professional, the psychologist plays a critical role in addressing the mental and behavioural aspects of a patient's well-being. He/she will:

- Deliver therapeutic treatment based on empathy, good listening skills and training in evidence-based methods to promote adaptive and functional behaviours.
- Assess a patient's needs, abilities or behaviour using a variety of methods, including psychometric tests, interviews and direct observation of behaviour.
- Address each of the factors associated with maladaptive behaviour and design strategies for patients to meet individual needs.
- Devise and monitor appropriate treatment programmes, including therapy, counselling or advice, in collaboration with the multi-disciplinary team, to enhance the psychological factors associated with mental well-being.
- Assist patients in identifying and achieving behavioural changes, such as engaging in physical activity, to improve mental well-being.
- Highlight the interaction between the mind and the body to help patients establish lasting healthy behavioural and lifestyle changes.

How much does it cost?

All medication charges are similar to those at NTFGH pharmacies.

Psychologist and MSW charges are similar to those at NTFGH.

Consultation fees at GPs will vary.

A more detailed breakdown of the charges will be provided by the case manager during the initial counselling.

For more information

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

General enquiries: 6716 2000 Fax: 6716 5500

www.ntfgh.com.sg

Clinical and appointment line hours (closed on Sundays and public holidays)

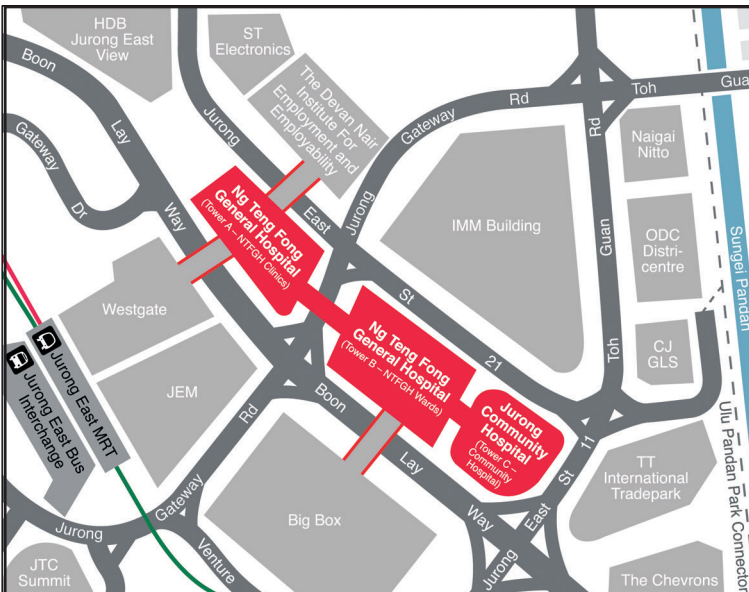
For appointments, please call 6716 2222

Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Saturday 8.00am - 12.30pm

For dental appointments, please call 6716 2233

Monday - Thursday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm

Getting there



By train

Jurong East MRT Station

By bus

From Jurong East Bus Interchange

SBS 49, 51, 52, 66, 78, 79, 97, 97e, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 183, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

Along Boon Lay Way

SBS 99, Private bus service 625

Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.