

## The Development of the Psychosomatic Nursing Model from an Evidence-Based Action Research on Proactive Mental Health Care for Medical Inpatients

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**Abstract :** In nearly all physical health conditions, suicide risk is increased compared to healthy people even after adjustment for age, gender, mental health, and substance use diagnoses. In order to highlight the importance of suicide risk assessment for the inpatients and early identification and engagement for inpatients' mental health problems, a study was designed aiming at developing a comprehensive psychosomatic nursing engagement (PSNE) model with standardized operation procedures informing how nurses communicate, assess, and engage with the inpatients with emotional distress. The purpose of the study was to promote the gatekeeping role of clinical nurses in performing brief assessment and interventions to detect depression and anxiety symptoms among the inpatients, particularly in non-psychiatric wards. The study will be carried out in a 2000-bed university hospital in Northern Taiwan in 2019. We will select a ward for trial and develop feasible procedures and in-job training course for the nurses to offer mental health care, which will also be validated through professional consensus meeting. The significance of the study includes the following three points: (1) The study targets at an important but less-researched area of PSNE model in the cultural background of Taiwan, where hospital service is highly accessible, but mental health and suicide risk assessment are hardly provided by non-psychiatric healthcare personnel. (2) The issue of PSNE could be efficient and cost-effective in the identification of suicide risks at an early stage to prevent inpatient suicide or to reduce future suicide risk by early treatment of mental illnesses among the high-risk group of hospitalized patients who are more than three-times lethal to suicide. (3) Utilizing a brief tool with its established APP ('The Five-item Brief Symptom Rating Scale, BSRS-5'), we will invent the standardized procedure of PSNE and referral steps in collaboration with the medical teams across the study hospital. New technological tools nested within nursing assessment/intervention will concurrently be invented to facilitate better care quality. The major outcome measurements will include tools for early identification of common mental distress and suicide risks, i.e., the BSRS-5, revised BSRS-5, and the 9-item Concise Mental Health Checklist (CMHC-9). The main purpose of using the CMHC-9 in clinical suicide risk assessment is mainly to provide care and build-up therapeutic relationship with the client, so it will also be used to nursing training highlighting the skills of supportive care. Through early identification of the inpatients' depressive symptoms or other mental health care needs such as insomnia, anxiety, or suicide risk, the majority of the nursing clinicians would be able to engage in critical interventions that alleviate the inpatients' suffering from mental health problems, given a feasible nursing input.

**Keywords :** mental health care, clinical outcome improvement, clinical nurses, suicide prevention, psychosomatic nursing

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