



## Content

### Editorial

Dr. Tiffany CHOI,  
Ms. Christine NG  
P.1

### Physiotherapy Tele-Rehabilitation in Geriatric Day Hospital at Shatin Hospital

Ms. Mandy Hong Ching LEUNG  
P.2

### Private physiotherapy under the impact of COVID-19 in Hong Kong

Mr. Kenneth AU-YEUNG  
P.5

### Announcement

HKPA  
P.6

### NGO Corner

Ms. Angel Oi Ping CHAN  
P.7

### People's Corner

HKPA  
P.9

### Legal Column

Mr. Bronco BUT  
P.11

### PA Diary

HKPA  
P.12

### CPD News

HKPA  
P.14

## Editorial

### *Impact of COVID-19 on Physiotherapy Services*

Dr. Tiffany CHOI and Ms. Christine NG

The COVID-19 pandemic is undoubtedly an unprecedented global crisis. Since its first identification, it has quickly become a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in about a month and was recognized by the World Health Organization as a pandemic in March 2020. As of September 2020, more than 30 million cases have been reported, resulting in close to a million deaths across the globe.

The pandemic in general is not merely a serious public health concern, rather it has triggered disastrous socio-economic crises globally. Its impact is on all fronts and physiotherapy, being one of the health care professions, is no exception. The pandemic has brought many changes in our practice and our services. Amid these difficult times, we see the more frequent use of technology in the delivery of Physiotherapy services. We also witness various adaptations in our daily practice.

In this issue, we are delighted to have Ms. Mandy LEUNG, a physiotherapist from Shatin Hospital, to share her experience on the use of telecommunication technologies to remotely provide health care information and services. Private clinics do not have as much resources as public hospitals and the pandemic has posed a major challenge to some private practitioners. A private physiotherapist, Mr. Kenneth AU YEUNG, tells us his easy-to-follow infection control "3-touching-moment" guidelines and how to implement telehealth into his clinical practice.

On the lighter side of this issue, we have an interview done by two Year 2 physiotherapy students, Aiden and Elton, from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. They talked to the Director of District Health Centre Team, Food and Health Bureau, Mr. Jimmy WU, who generously shared his career journey from a physiotherapy student to a successful leader of Allied Health and District Health Centre Team.

Stay safe and enjoy reading.

# Private physiotherapy under the Impact of COVID-19 in Hong Kong

Mr. Kenneth AU-YEUNG  
Private Practice

COVID-19 has changed the lifestyle and habits of everyone in Hong Kong. At the time of writing, Hong Kong is experiencing the third wave of coronavirus infections with a record of new daily high cases, many of which with unknown source of infection. Surgical masks have become one of our daily necessities in life. Every one of us needs to practise proper hand hygiene and pay more attention to environmental and personal hygiene. Social distancing is a requirement to prevent spread of the infection.

As private practitioners, we encounter different patients every day. Our services were inevitably being affected. Many new patients avoid coming for physiotherapy treatment and choose to stay at home, but there are still some of the old cases who want to continue their treatment to preserve the previous treatment effect. This article is to share, as a private practitioner, what strategy our centres took to balance the threat of COVID-19 outbreak and provide services to our patients.

## Preparations and Arrangements during the Pandemic

Private clinics do not have much resources like the Hospital Authority. Resource has become a huge challenge for us. However, the advantage of private clinics facing the pandemic is that we are able to make decision in a speedy and very flexible way. At the beginning of the pandemic, all our staff tried their best to source masks from overseas via the Internet, from Indonesia, Brazil and even Israel. Luckily, we managed to order enough masks for our staff in late January and we even distributed close to 3,000 masks to those in need in February. Fortunately, the Food and Health Bureau has supported us by allocating surgical masks to private physiotherapy practitioners via our professional bodies in May to relieve our pressure.



before touching a patient, after touching a patient, after touching patient surroundings.

Like many other organizations, we have increased the frequency of disinfection and maintain good environmental hygiene of the clinic. We monitor patients' body temperature once they enter our clinics. We basically follow the FTOCC (Fever, Travel, Occupation, Contact, Clustering) principle of the Centre for Health Protection [1]. The difference is that we must tell our patients what measures we have implemented to gain their confidence via different ways, e.g. social media, email, whatsapp, etc. We distribute news and health advice on the prevention of COVID-19 to patients who stay at home and avoid coming for treatment continuously to maintain the good rapport with them and educate them how to protect themselves from COVID-19.

## Tele Rehabilitation

As private practitioners, we have to respond to the market quickly and timely. Although we used to have online basic consultation function, the enquiries were responded by our clinic assistants via messenger and that is not enough to meet the market needed in the pandemic condition. Thus, we have implemented telehealth physiotherapy via Zoom. Telehealth physiotherapy aims at overcoming barriers (e.g. social distancing) and provides adequate access to healthcare services and interventions. Evidence shows telehealth is effective and comparable to conventional methods of healthcare delivery for improving musculoskeletal function and pain [2].

Apart from sourcing protective equipment for staff, we also need to provide guidelines for staff to follow. These guidelines have to be simple and easy to follow. We have established the "3T" guidelines. We suggest staff to wash hands or use hand sanitizer at 3 touching moments (3T):

(Continued on Page 6)

However, telehealth has its limitations. We mainly focus on subjective examination for new cases or follow up cases with stable conditions. Telehealth includes a series of questions and movements to help provide a provisional diagnosis. We have to explain to the patients clearly that accurate physical diagnosis has to be made after physical assessment in our clinic. For cases with stable conditions, these patients are advised on the best way to self-manage the condition through a bespoke exercise program. Follow-up appointments are arranged as necessary to monitor progress and provide further advice. Early physiotherapy intervention on musculoskeletal disorders can prevent acute conditions from becoming chronic. We are obligated to educate patients how to manage the condition by themselves in such pandemic.

Delivering health talk is one of our scope of service in the private sector. We also inevitably must change our way to deliver it. Many health talks have been suspended or called off. But some organizations still want to have health talks by physiotherapists educating them how to keep healthy and exercise when staying at home. Thus, we have spent double effort to prepare the PowerPoint and exercise program via Zoom. We have delivered more than 10 talks in such a way so far. It inspired us a new way to educate the public health knowledge despite physical boundaries.

Remote service has become a new trend against the backdrop of the epidemic. Hong Kong Government has launched the Distance Business (D-Biz) Programme to

support enterprises to adopt IT solutions to continue their business and services during the epidemic. One of the funding scopes aims at helping clinics to adopt online consultation. I suggest our fellow private practitioners may consider applying to upgrade services including e-shop, online booking system, etc.

## Conclusion

Although the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for private practitioners is not as high as colleagues who work in HA respiratory team. We should still spare no effort to maintain the good hygiene of ourselves and our workplaces. I think private practitioners should adapt to changes and review from time to time how to meet the public need. May Hong Kong overcome the pandemic soon and everyone stay healthy.

## References

1. Prevention of COVID-19 - Infection Control Measures for Allied Health Professionals (Interim Guidelines). Centre for Health Protection. [www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ic\\_measures\\_for\\_nid\\_allied\\_health\\_eng.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ic_measures_for_nid_allied_health_eng.pdf)
2. Cottrell MA, Galea OA, O'Leary SP, et al. Real-time telerehabilitation for the treatment of musculoskeletal conditions is effective and comparable to standard practice: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clinical Rehabilitation* 2016;31(5):625-638.

# Announcement

## Acupuncture and Integrative Medicine Specialty Group

HKPA

Acupuncture and Integrative Medicine Specialty Group Biennial General Meeting was held on 15 September 2020. The new Executive Committee of AIMSG in the year of 2020-2022 was elected.

The new Executive Committee members and their post are listed below:

Post	Name	Working Place
Chairperson	Mr. Eric Y.T. LAW	Private
Vice-chairpersons	Mr. Ben B. CHAN	QEH
	Ms. Yvonne P. LAM	UCH
Secretaries	Mrs. May M.Y. CHEUNG	Private
	Ms. Rebecca M.P. NGAI	DTRC
	Ms. Michelle T.K. CHUNG	QEH
Treasurer	Ms. Frances S.M. LAW	CCH
Education Officers	Mr. Kenny C.C. YUEN	Private
	Mr. Derek K.H. YEUNG	Private
IT Officer	Mr. Derek K.H. YEUNG	Private
Public Relation Officer	Ms. Ada S.K. TSUI	BH
Liaison Officer	Mr. Kerry W.Y. FUNG	Private