

*6th Pan-Asian Initiative on Service-Learning  
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# **Enhancing Mental Health Literacy for the Young**

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# *Introduction*

- **Early identification** of mental health problem is the **first step** for timely intervention and appropriate treatment.
- This is particularly true to the elderly living in the community who usually lack the knowledge and access.
- In the participation of a mental health assessment project, the concept of **service-learning** was applied for our social work students.



# *Background*

- In collaboration with the Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council (NAAC) on ***Mental Health Assessment Tool Development Project***, social work students from Hong Kong College of Technology have been involved in meaningful service-learning experience.



# *Definition of Service-Learning*

- Service-learning combines **service objectives** with **learning objectives** with the intent that the activity **changes** both the **recipient** and the **provider** of the service. This is accomplished by combining service tasks with structured opportunities that link the task to **self-reflection**, **self-discovery**, and the **acquisition** and comprehension of **values**, **skills**, and **knowledge** content.



# *Service-Learning in HKCT*

- **student-oriented**
- participation on **voluntary basis** (freedom of participation)
- **involvement** of students in planning and delivery of service (different levels of involvement)
- **reflection-in-action** and **reflection-on-action** as ways of consolidation and integration of learning experience



# *Service-Learning Process (1)*

- Students are recruited on voluntary basis.
- Specific training on the use of assessment tools for **dementia** and **depression** are provided.



# *Service-Learning Process (2)*

- After basic training, students paired up to **home visit** and **assess** the mental health of the selected respondents (elders) in **different districts** of Hong Kong.



# *Service-Learning Process (3)*



- Students made use of their social work theories learned in school and the learning in the training.

# *Results (1)*

- Preliminary review found that this special opportunity extends students' classroom learning into the community and **integrates knowledge into life practice**.
- The visits by the students break the walls of the elderly and bring the assessment from the clinical setting to the **familiar living environment**, hence making early detection possible.

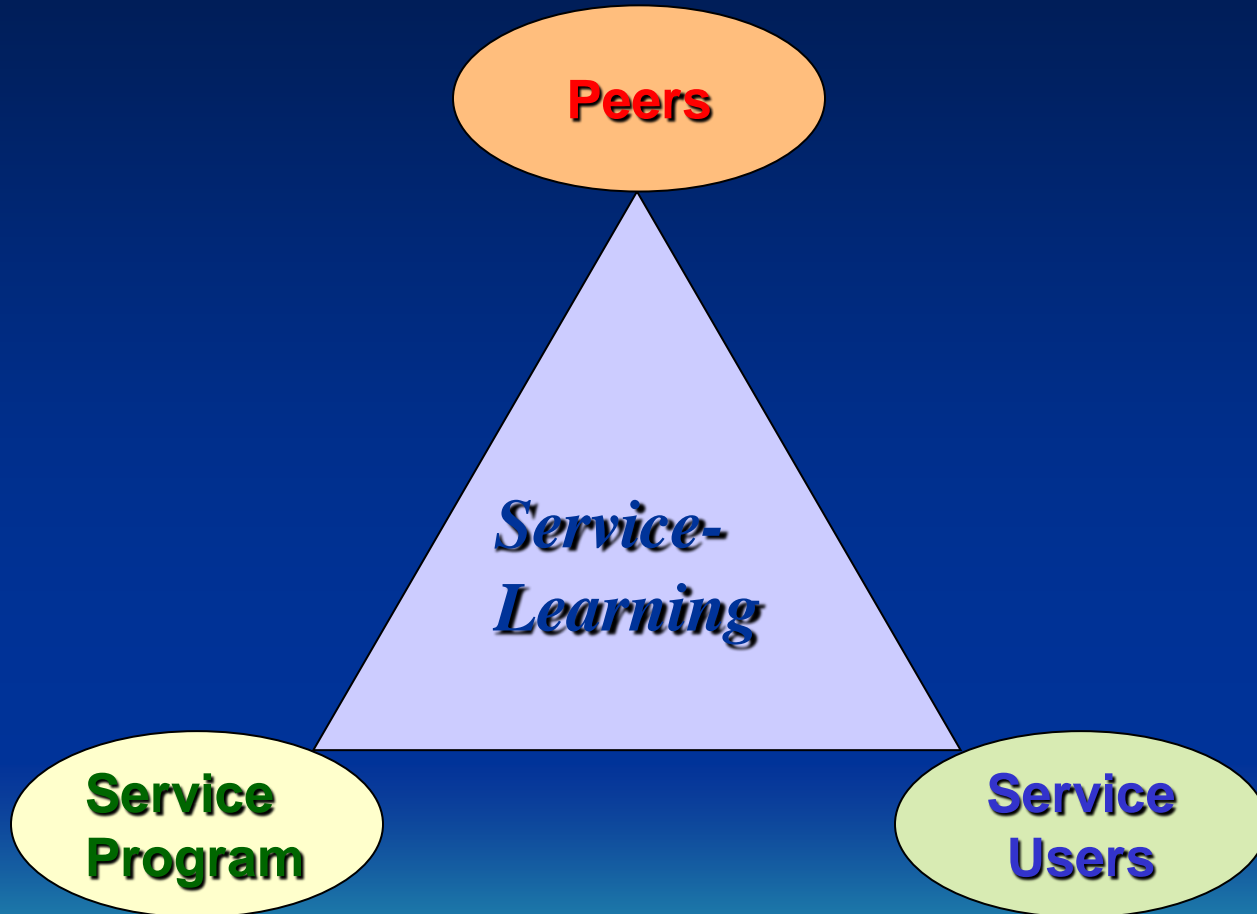


## *Results (2)*

- The mental health education enhances the mental health literacy of students on the recognition and management of the common mental health issues in later life. The **direct training** and **service delivery** brings indirect and far-reaching impact in the long run.
- Reflection on **personal values in-depth** would be made possible. Such reflection would consolidate students' beliefs on social work profession.



# *Personal Reflection (1)*



# *Personal Reflection (2)*

- Learning from **Peers:**
  - *Life Experience*
  - *Knowledge on mental health*
  - *Practical Skills*
  - *Understanding on Service Users*
  - *Reflection of own values*
  - .....



# *Personal Reflection (3)*

- Learning from **Service Program**:
- *Knowledge on mental health*
- *Program Planning and Development*
- *Organizing and training of volunteers*
- .....



# *Personal Reflection (4)*

- Learning from **Service Users**:
- *Life Experience*
- *Mental health literacy*
- *Practical Skills*
- *Understanding on elderly in their perspectives*
- .....



# Conclusion

- *“The experience in joining this service program is meaningful to me as a grand-daughter. I could understand my grand parents more in their perspective.” (Student A)*
- *“After learning mental health in the classroom, I could practice the skills in assessing elderly in this project!” (Student B)*
- *“Thank you very much for the people concerned to provide a good experience to me.” (Student C)*



# Acknowledgment

- Neighborhood Advice-Action Council



***Thank you!***

