

IMPLEMENTING A COMMUNITY-BASED ALCOHOL HARM REDUCTION PROGRAM IN SABAH, MALAYSIA USING THE ALCOHOL TOOL-KIT AND A MODIFIED PEER SUPPORT MODEL.

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Introduction and Aims: Many rural communities in Sabah are known to have problems related to alcohol use. Although there ~~is~~ are limited evidence-based, culturally appropriate treatments available outside the capital.

This project aimed to develop a training manual for community support workers helping people with alcohol use problems. The programs objective was to equip selected community and health staff with the basic skills to provide appropriate and ethical support and referral for members of their community who wish to change their alcohol use behaviour.

Method / Approach: This research used a quasi-experimental, pre-post training approach to assess the effectiveness of the training. The training ran over 3 months with 6 sessions each lasting 3 hours. [The training included basic interview skills, motivational skills based on stages of change, and the referral pathway. The workshops used experiential learning, i.e. a short introduction on the basic theory combined with role plays for each skill.](#)

Results: Preliminary results suggest the program was well received. A community support network was established to assist people with alcohol use disorders. Longitudinal research is currently underway looking at the acceptance of this program and assessing changes in alcohol use behaviour in the community.

Discussions and Conclusions: The initial training was accepted by both health and community members. The training manual is under review and will be trialled further prior to final publication. More research is needed to confirm the usefulness of this program for other communities in Sabah.

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