

00244 **Improving Family Relationships:**

Christine Chua, Judith Chew, Tina Tan

KK Women's & Children's Hospital

Aims: Family therapy – an approach that seeks to alter the problematic interactional patterns formed between an individual and their significant others – is a recognized intervention for adolescents with externalizing and internalizing problems such as childhood depression and anxiety disorders, conduct disorders and eating disorders. In 2014, KK Women's and Children's Hospital started a new family therapy clinic for young people who experience crises exacerbated by family and relationship difficulties. The aim of the study was to understand the acceptability of family therapy among adolescents and their family members. Specifically, the study focused on how they viewed therapy, their perceptions of its effectiveness and challenges encountered.

Methodology: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with adolescents and their family members who had at least three sessions with a family therapist. The analytic approach for this study was guided by the 'Framework' analysis method – a thematic approach – was used to analyse the qualitative data obtained from the family interviews.

Result: Overall, participants' feedback regarding family therapy was generally positive. Participants reported improved relationships between family members and change was facilitated by their increased abilities to express individual views and emotions, negotiate differences in viewpoints, improved communication and new collaborative problem-solving methods. Participants also described how their engagement in the therapeutic process allowed them to gain insight to their own and family members' experiences, and this awareness prompted changes within the family.

Conclusion: Preliminary results suggest that family therapy with adolescents and their family members is an acceptable form of intervention within the Singapore context. Findings from this study contributes to the existing literature, which supports that family-based interventions for young people experiences is effective in reducing negative psychosocial outcomes.