

## **First Psychological Treatment Programme with “Mindfulness” for Incarcerated Male Drug Addicts** **Mindfulness Place Programme in HLTC**

### **Service Enhancement with New Elements**

#### **Psychological Treatment Programme Helps**

Over the past years, PSS2 has developed a range of systematic and evidence-based therapeutic programmes, namely REP, AMP and ITP\* under the Drug Abuse and Rehabilitation Programme (DARP), to enhance inmates’ understanding about drug addiction problems; to build up and strengthen treatment motivation; and to prepare them for a pro-social and drug-free life. Findings from recent treatment evaluation study conducted in 2018-2019 indicated treatment effectiveness with significant post-treatment gains on participants’ motivation to change and self-efficacy in preventing relapse.

#### **Mindfulness improves Self-Control**

Latest empirical studies show that drug addicts are more impulsive, emotional and short-sighted due to neurological damage. The practice of mindfulness can help them relieve negative emotions and identify high-risk factors such as cravings more effectively, thus enhancing their self-control.

#### **Bringing Mindfulness to Hei Ling Chau**

To further enhance drug treatment programme for DATC inmates in managing high-risk factors including cravings and negative moods more effectively, mindfulness practice was introduced in the DATCs by setting up the specialized treatment centres for female and male drug users. Followed the successful creation of the first female mindfulness programme namely “Mindfulness Corner” in NKCI in 2017, the first psychological treatment programme with mindfulness for male adult incarcerated drug addicts namely “Mindfulness Place” was set up in HLTC in 2020. Drawing from latest empirical research findings and evidence-based practice, a variety of mindfulness exercises were introduced to enhance inmates’ awareness towards their present moment experience and to cultivate self-compassion so as to help them stay away from drug use.

#### **Mindfulness Incorporated DARP in HLTC**

In the HLTC Mindfulness Place, weekly guided mindfulness practices, which include a variety of mindfulness exercises such as mindful breathing, mindful stretching, and body scanning, are integrated into the cognitive-behavioral based treatment programme to bring about positive changes on motivation enhancement, craving control, negative emotions management and life-style restructuring. The duration of the programme in HLTC will range from 12 to 14 weeks. In order to facilitate regular practice from inmates to develop good habits and strengthen therapeutic gains, they will reside in the same dormitory to facilitate mutual support in mindfulness practices.

\*\*\* REP, AMP and ITP are the programmes in our DARP representing “Responsivity Enhancement Programme,” “Abstinence Maintenance Programme” and “Intensive Treatment Programme” respectively.