

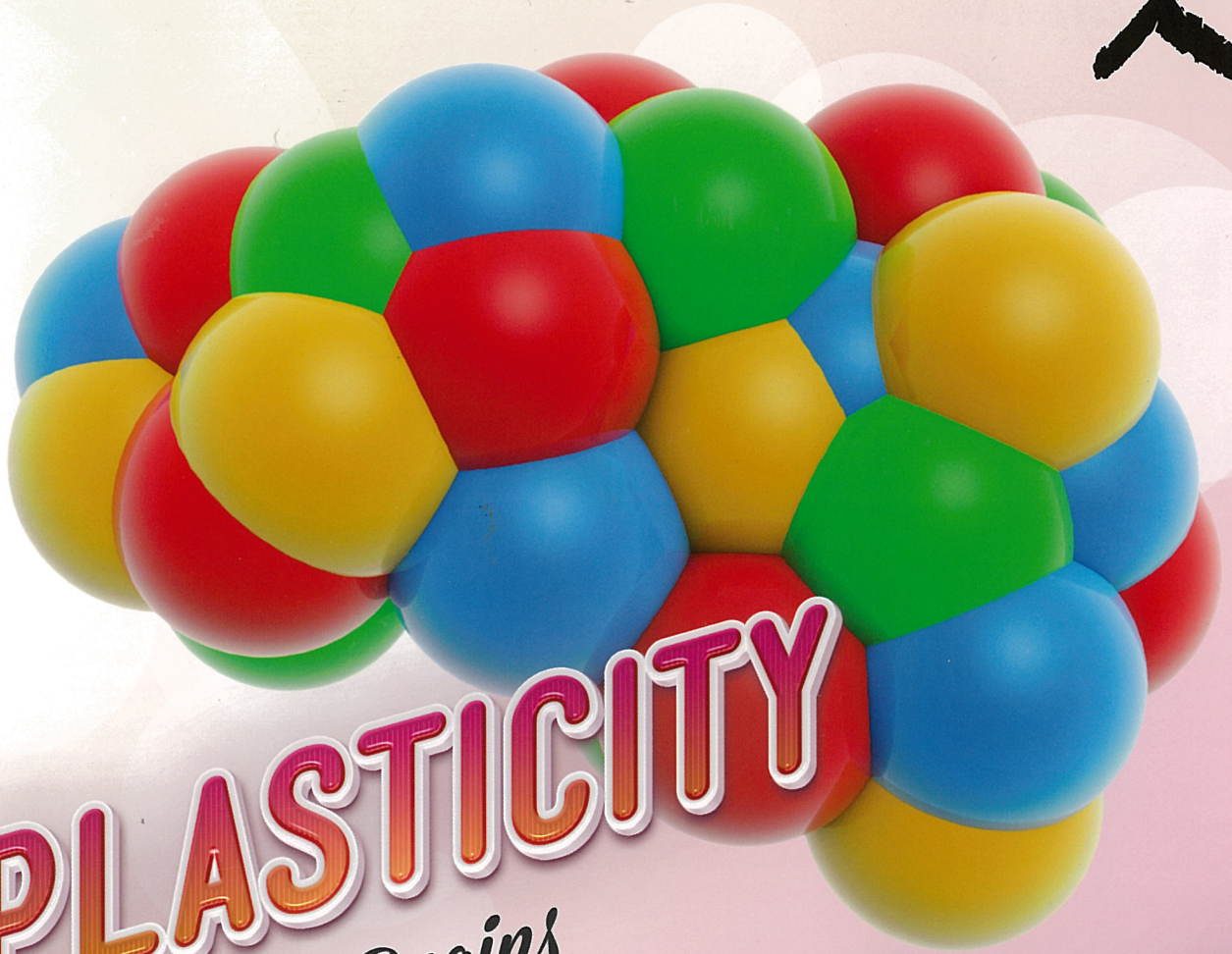
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FACULTY AWARDS



Social Sciences Outstanding Research Output Award – Applied Research **The Effectiveness of Psychoeducational Family Intervention for Patients with Schizophrenia in a 14-year Follow-up Study in a Chinese Rural Area**

It is unclear if the impacts of psychoeducational family interventions for persons with schizophrenia can be sustained over the next ten years. Our earlier research tested the nine-month effectiveness of psychoeducational family intervention in rural China. Even though it is difficult to carry out a long-term follow-up, we firstly explored the fourteen-year effect of psychoeducational family intervention for persons with schizophrenia in a Chinese rural community. The data from a cluster RCT study of psychoeducational family intervention in a prospective fourteen-year follow-up was analysed. All persons with schizophrenia (n=326) who participated in the cluster RCT were drawn from six townships in Xinjin County of Chengdu in 1994, of whom 238 (73.0%) were still alive and their informants were then followed up in 2008. The standardised tools (e.g., PANSS, GAF) were used in the follow-up study.

This study showed that there were no significant differences of marital status, mean scores of the PANSS positive symptoms, negative symptoms, general mental health, and total scores among the psychoeducational family intervention, medication, and control groups in 2008. The psychoeducational family intervention group had significantly higher rates of antipsychotics medication and higher levels of work ability than the other two groups. The control group had significantly higher rates of never treated (26.0%) than the psychoeducational family intervention group (6.5%).

This study indicated that psychoeducational family intervention might still be effective in the 14-year follow-up, especially in patients' treatment adherence and social functioning. The results of this highly original and complex study may foster further development of theory and practice related to psychosocial interventions, and new service models for improving the long-term treatment and prognosis of persons with schizophrenia in China and internationally. Hopefully, these discoveries can support mental health policy makers to develop programmes and to convince the stakeholders on investing in prevention and psychoeducational family intervention in the community during the early stages of the illness.

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