

M6.2

Autistic Spectrum of Diseases

14:30 Room 423 & 424

Application of Developmental, Individual-differences, Relationship-based/Floortime Model in the Psychiatric Service for Very Young Children with Autism in Hong Kong

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In our Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Clinic, there is a recent trend that the age of children referred is getting younger. Current advances in early detection science make ASD markers more observable since toddlerhood. An age-appropriate intervention programme deems necessary that fits these young children's developmental characteristics.

The developmental, individual-differences, relationship-based (DIR)/Floortime model is a relationship-based developmental approach, which encourages caregivers to follow their child's emotions and interests, and to interact with them in a natural social environment. It is tailor-made to each child's individual differences in his/her sensory-motor profile, and helps him/her grow along a roadmap of the functional emotional developmental milestones. The Floortime goal is to promote positive affect with the children so as to re-engage them in co-regulated affective interactions. This lays down the healthy foundation for higher levels of social, emotional, and intellectual capacities.

This presentation will include the principles of DIR/Floortime model, and the theoretical basis of its application to very young children with autism. Worldwide empirical support and local pilot studies will be examined. Besides, it also shares our experiences in applying this model in a local psychiatric setting, and states how it addresses our current service gaps and the challenges we face in our service provision. Future directions for local autism services for very young children will also be discussed.

