

# The Role of Positive Communication in Hospital Social Work Service

Junjie Dong, Li Liu, Yawen Yang

Department of Social Work, Kunming Children's Hospital, 650228, Kunming, China

\*Corresponding Author: sanuyo@163.com

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**Abstract:**Objective: To study the role of positive communication in the social work service. Method: 82 families who were treated and hospitalized in the hospital were studied through dividing them randomly into an observation group and a control group, each with 41 families. Specifically, the control group was provided with routine social work services, while the observation group involved positive communication by volunteers, medical workers and psychological social workers during services. Then, the satisfactions of both groups were compared. Result: Families in the observation group has significantly higher satisfactions in social work services than families in the control group. The difference is statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ). Conclusion: Using positive communication methods in hospital social work services contributes to effectively enhancing patients and their families' satisfactions of the social work service as well as the hospital.

**Keywords:** Doctor-patient communication; family members of patients; social work; positive psychology

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Social work has been underlined by all parties and vigorously introduced into communities, schools and hospitals in recent years<sup>[1-3]</sup>. To be specific, social work practitioners at hospital are mainly composed of volunteers, medical social worker and psychological social worker. On the one hand, they assist patients to connect to social resources, such as applying for charity aid funds, and organizing volunteer activities; on the other hand, they also act as mediators between doctors and patients, facilitating patients and family members to undergo the outpatient and the period of hospitalization in a more comfortable manner through providing psychological counseling and spreading health knowledge with family members<sup>[3-5]</sup>. In that case, communication skills are essential for social workers who frequently communicate with patients and family members in the hospital. Apparently, positive communication is conducive to bridging the distance between people as well as to mitigating unpleasant experience<sup>[6-8]</sup>. Based on this, the ways of utilizing positive communication to clinical social work services and the consequent effects are discussed in this study.

## 1. Methods

### 1.1 Participants

82 families were selected from patients and their families who received services provided by medical social workers, psychological social workers and volunteer social workers in Kunming Children's Hospital from December 2019 to December 2020 with the family as a vital unit. Family selection criteria for the study include possessing the knowledge reserves required to participate in the questionnaire (graduated from primary school), physical condition (to be capable of filling out the questionnaire with clear thinking), psychological health, and being informed and agreeing to join the study. Of which, 41 families were regarded as the control group, while another 41 families as the observation

group. Precisely, the average ages of the child patients and the parents in the control group were  $8.52\pm 3.21$  years, and  $27.61\pm 5.97$  years, respectively. There are 21 males and 20 females in the control group. Besides, the average ages of the child patients and the parents in the observation group were  $7.85\pm 3.69$  years and  $26.92\pm 5.13$  years, respectively. There are 22 males and 19 females in the observation group. Differences in age and gender of families in both groups are not statistically significant ( $P>0.05$ ).

## **1.2 Method**

Families in the control group were treated with routine social work services, namely, social workers and volunteers communicate with the patients and their families in an ordinary manner. Besides, social workers and volunteers served the observation group with positive communication. Specifically, positive communication incorporates (1) active communication: Social workers and volunteers are proactive to communicate with patients and their families to know more about the difficulties and needs of the patients and their families, and assist patients and their families, as well as answer questions raised by patients and their families. In other words, social workers and volunteers take the initiative to communicate with patients and their families in the ward, and actively provide social work services in cooperation with the medical staff. (2) Maintaining a positive attitude: Social workers and volunteers shall always be positive in communication, maximize patience with neither complaints nor impatience, keep smiling, concern patients and their families from a positive perspective, and answer patients and their families' questions with positive words as well as avoid negative emotions in front of patients and family members. (3) Establishing a positive psychology: Social workers and volunteers shall also help patients and their families to establish a positive psychological state, instruct them to treat the disease positively, and provide psychological counseling and emotion comforting to families in stress periods, guide them to face the disease correctly, and maintain their hopes for the future<sup>[7-10]</sup>.

Surveys concerning the satisfactions with social work service and hospital were conducted on families in both groups by the end of the social work service, so as to find out the difference between both groups through comparing data obtained.

## **1.3 Tools**

Satisfaction with social worker service: A self-made social work service satisfaction questionnaire was used in the form of scores ranging from 0 to 10. The higher the score, the higher the degree of satisfaction would be witnessed. And the served family could score the personnel who provide social work services as well as the overall social work services via the questionnaire.

## **1.4 Statistics**

Data are processed by using Microsoft SPSS 32.0. And data of the control group and the observation group are compared with the t test. Setting that the difference is statistically significant when  $P<0.05$ .

# **2. Results**

## **2.1 Comparison of the satisfaction of families in the two groups with social work services**

As can be observed from Table 1, the observation group with positive communication has higher satisfaction with social work services than the control group with routine services over the satisfaction with social workers and volunteers as well as the overall satisfaction. Hence, data difference is statistically significance ( $P<0.05$ ).

**Table 1 Comparison of satisfaction of families in the two groups with social work services ( $\bar{x} \pm s$ )**

Group	Cases	Satisfactions of social workers and volunteers	Overall satisfaction with the social work service
Observation group	41	7.90±1.30	8±1.26
Control group	41	6.10±1.67	5.95±1.69
t value		3.92	4.45
P value		P < 0.05	P < 0.05

## 2.2 Comparison of hospital satisfaction between the two groups

As can be seen from Table 2, the observation group with positive communication has higher satisfaction with the hospital, departments and the social work team than the control group with routine services. Data difference is statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table 2 Comparison of hospital satisfaction between the two groups ( $\pm s$ )**

Group	Cases	Hospital satisfaction	Dept. satisfaction	Satisfaction with social work group
Observation group	41	7.48±1.08	7.67±0.97	8±0.89
Control group	41	5.71±1.49	6.10±1.55	6.43±1.25
t value		4.39	3.95	4.69
P value		P < 0.05	P < 0.05	P < 0.05

## 3. Discussion

Performing the social work service in the hospital is beneficial to the hospital, departments, patients and their families. In particular, the implementation of positive communication has considerably enhanced patients and their families' satisfaction with the hospital. United volunteers consisting of medical social workers and psychological social workers serve patients and their families in the hospital, which can not only compensate for deficient communication between medical staff and patients and their families, alleviates doctor-patient contradictions, but also provide a new service model for patients and their families to release negative emotions during treatment. In this way, patients and their families can have a better medical treatment experience. In addition, medical social workers, psychological social workers, and volunteers providing services with positive communication methods can accomplish social work services effectively with half the effort, and accelerate the construction of humanistic hospitals, changing the hospital into a warm place. By doing so, hospitals can get more satisfactions from patients and their families, whilst patients and their families have a favorable medical treatment experience.

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