Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling
Overview

Using a practice-based, holistic, bio-psychosocial and person-centred approach, the Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling offered by the Hua Mei Training Academy aims to train counsellors and social workers in the essential gerontological psycho-therapeutic knowledge, skills and attitudes for helping older persons in a community setting.

The training gives recognition to the role of the counsellor or social worker as an adult learner and professional who uses a multitude of learning tools and resources in the implementation of their clinical work.

The comprehensive programme is organised into 11 modules over 3 terms with the objective of imparting the essential skills and knowledge central to community gerontological counselling.

Held over nine months, the course focuses on three key areas:

• Development of a therapeutic worldview necessary for the counsellor/social worker to deliver a person-directed, strength-based, goal-focused systemic psychological intervention

• Implementation of a client-counsellor interactive counselling process from client engagement and assessment to goal-setting, enactment and evaluation

• Skills proficiency particular to working with elders e.g. helping with grief and loss

Each course module incorporates evidence-based approaches that utilise the counselling process as a vehicle for promoting excellent gerontological psycho-emotional care. In addition, the programme fosters independence in critical thinking and the application of essential skills necessary for all gerontological counsellors.

Admission Criteria

Application for enrolment in the Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling is open to social workers, medical social workers, counsellors, psychologists, and case managers with the following minimum qualifications:

• A degree in social work or psychology or counselling

• Minimum 2 years related working experience

OR

• Successful interview for candidates who do not meet the above criteria

Course Objectives

The aim of the training is to equip counsellors and social workers with the knowledge and skills in gerontological counselling in caring for older adults in the community and community-based service delivery settings:

• Understand the role of counselling and the intervention scope of gero-counselling

• Increase awareness of the ageing process, and understand the physiological, psychological and social needs of older persons and their impact in counselling issues

• Apply a person-centred approach and learn to relate to the older person from a strength perspective in counselling

• Appreciate and support the environmental context of the older person and its impact

• Develop skills in navigating the entire counselling process from case conceptualisation, assessment, therapeutic goal-setting and intervention, to progress monitoring and case termination

• Support and help clients to develop skills to manage their issues and emotions such as grief and loss

• Bring about changes in client’s perception and expectations through intra- and inter-psychic intervention

• Help clients to see possibilities and choices in their situations

• Effect the use of self as an intervention tool in the counselling process

The distinguished gero-psychology pioneer, Prof Bob G. Knight, is the lead course advisor.
Course Curriculum

Module 1 (SDGC-1-P1-01)
Gerontological Counselling Foundation I
- Philosophy of Care for Older Persons

Module 2 (SDGC-1-P1-02)
Gerontological Counselling Foundation II
- Approach To Care

Module 3 (SDGC-1-P1-03)
Gerontological Counselling Foundation III
- Understanding the Living Context of the Older Person

Module 4 (SDGC-1-P2-04)
Gerontological Counselling Process I
- Engagement

Module 5 (SDGC-1-P2-05)
Gerontological Counselling Process II
- Assessment

Module 6 (SDGC-1-P2-06)
Gerontological Counselling Process III
- Goal Setting

Module 7 (SDGC-1-P2-07)
Gerontological Counselling Process IV
- Intervention

Module 8 (SDGC-1-P2-08)
Gerontological Counselling Process V
- Closure

Module 9 (SDGC-1-P2-09)
Gerontological Counselling Process VI
- Use of Self in Counselling

Module 10 (SDGC-1-P3-10)
Gerontological Counselling Specialised Practice I
- Grief and Loss

Module 11(SDGC-1-P3-11)
Working with Caregiver

Course Developers and Lecturers

The Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling is developed by the Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, a pioneering collective of person-centred health, psycho-emotional and social care services for community-dwelling elders.

The development team is led by Wang Jing, Assistant Director, Counselling and Coaching, who has been with Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing since 2004, and has more than 19 years of experience in counselling and its supervision and training.

Others on the team are Peh Kim Choo, Chief Executive Officer and Director, HMCSA, who also oversees its counselling, social work and care management practice; Dr. Ng Wai Chong, Chief Clinical Affairs, who also oversees HMCSA’s homecare and dementia care programmes; Jasmine Wong, Senior Social Worker, Hua Mei Mobile Clinic; Yong Leong Ying, Senior Counsellor, Hua Mei Counselling and Social Work Practice; and Tan Ching Yee, who has more than 10 years of experience in medical social work.

The Advisors are Dr. Mary Ann Tsao, gerontologist and Founding Director and Chairperson of the Tsao Foundation; and Prof Bob G. Knight, Ph.D, Board Certified in Geropsychology, American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP); Editor, Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences; and Professor, School of Psychology and Counselling, University of Southern Queensland, Australia. A leading light in his field, Prof Knight has published extensively on mental health and ageing, and his work has been recognised in multiple awards. He is also active in various professional organisations related to psychology and ageing.

Methodology

Teaching methodologies are didactic, experiential and interactive, with case studies, role play and clinical practicum used extensively to facilitate the learning process. The programme also includes an evaluative component with an array of assessment methods to ascertain the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies achieved.

Assessment and Examination

The Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling, accredited by the Council for Private Education, will be awarded to participants who meet the standards set.

Progressive assessment will be used to evaluate and provide feedback on performance throughout the course. The assessment comprises individual written assignments, session records and supervision session records for practicum and tape reviews for counselling session. An attendance of 80% during the course is required.
The Tsao Foundation strives to transform the ageing experience by being a catalyst for constructive systemic and mindset change through three synergistic core initiatives:

- Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, which enables ageing-in-place by pioneering replicable, community-based, integrated health and psycho-social eldercare service models grounded in person-centred principles;

- Hua Mei Training Academy, dedicated to capacity building in professional age care, informal caregiving and personal development though providing practitioner-driven training, education and consultancy services; and

- International Longevity Centre Singapore, which supports policy, practice and community development through initiating high impact research, elder empowerment programmes, and collaborative platforms among key stakeholders.

Established in 1993, the Tsao Foundation is a Singapore registered charity with IPC (Institute of Public Character) status, engaged in the global response to longevity.

With innovation, excellence and constructive change as its core values, the Foundation’s goal is to enable people to age well, regardless of life stage, health status or physical ability.

About Hua Mei Training Academy

The Hua Mei Training Academy (HMTA) is a dedicated provider of training in community-based eldercare, supporting the urgent need for capacity building in that service sector. An initiative of the Tsao Foundation, it also promotes health education and personal development goals to support ageing in place.

In 2012, the Academy launched a ‘Certificate in Community Gerontological Nursing’ programme, the first of its ‘signature courses’ - developed and delivered by practitioners for practitioners - which draws directly on more than two decades of expertise in community-based eldercare accumulated at the Tsao Foundation’s Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing.

In 2014, HMTA launched Singapore’s first training workmap in home-based eldercare, the ‘Advanced Primary Care for Home-Bound Elders’. This current certificate in Gerontological Counselling has been similarly developed to build capacity in the country and meet the needs of professionals who strive to perform at the highest standards to serve the elders in their care.

HMTA was appointed as the Continuing Education and Training (CET) Centre for the Community and Social Services (Senior Services) Sub Sector in 2008 by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency. In 2011, it was registered by the Council for Private Education under the Enhanced Registration Framework.

About Tsao Foundation

For more information on the Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling please contact:

enquiries@tsaofoundation.org  6593 9558

Enquiries
Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling

This is Singapore’s first course in gerontological counselling designed for counsellors and social workers to enable knowledge of a multitude of learning tools and resources in the implementation of their clinical work, essential psychotherapeutic knowledge, skills and attitudes to help older persons in a community setting. The Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling uses a practice-based, holistic, bio-psycho-social and person-centred methodology so that learners can develop essential psychotherapeutic knowledge, skills and attitudes to help older persons in a community setting.

This diploma course draws on the expertise from the Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, a specialist in integrated psycho-social and medical eldercare to enable ageing in place. Its distinguished advisors include Prof Bob G. Knight, Ph.D., Board Certified in Geropsychology, American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP); Editor, Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences; and Professor, School of Psychology & Counselling, University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

Course Objectives
The 11 course modules conducted over 11 months focus on three key areas:

- Development of a therapeutic worldview necessary for the counsellor/social worker to deliver a person-directed, strength-based, goal-focused systemic psychological intervention
- The client-counsellor interactive counselling process from client engagement, assessment to goal setting, implementation and evaluation
- Specialist areas particular to working with elders e.g. grief and loss

Admission Criteria
Application for enrolment in the Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling is open to social workers, medical social workers, counsellors, psychologists, and case managers with the following minimum qualifications:

- A recognized university degree, preferably a degree in social work/psychology/ counselling; and
- At least 2 years of related working experience in eldercare sector

Application is also open to anyone who is already working in eldercare sector and is interested to be a counsellor/associate counsellor but do not meet the criteria listed above. However, he/she must achieve competence in the compulsory bridging course prior to advancement to the core course. Applicants must have the following minimum qualifications:

- A recognized university degree not related to the field of social work, counselling or psychology;
- At least 2 years of related working experience in eldercare sector

* Shortlisted applicants may be required to attend face-to-face interviews for further screening (case-by-case needs basis).

Course Details

Course Dates:
Bridging Course
2 April 2019 to September 2019

Core Course
8 Oct 2019 to Sept 2020

Day:
Every Tuesday

Venue:
To be confirmed

Time:
9.00 am to 5.00pm

Fee:
Fee for the full Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling Course (Bridging and Core Courses) is $18,914.00 (Inclusive of GST).

Fee for the Core Course is $8,025.00 (Inclusive of GST)

Course registration fee of $53.50 (non-refundable) is applicable.

Funding Support:
Candidates may apply to -
Either
- VCF Direct Training Application (DTA) for funding up to $4,500
Or
- Community Care Manpower Development Award (CCMDA) by AIC (MOH) for funding up to 90% of course fees

Both subsidies are subjected to approval. Candidates will be able to enjoy only one of the two subsidies

Enquiries and Registration:
Call: 6593 9558
Email: hmta@tsaofoundation.org

For more on HMTA:
https://tsaofoundation.org/what-we-do/training-educations/about-hmta
For more on our training calendar:
https://tsaofoundation.org/events
Specialist Diploma in Gerontological Counselling

*Course Module Details*
- Participants who do not meet the pre-requisites for the core course have to undergo the bridging course and achieving competence in the assessments before embarking on the core course.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Module Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridging Course</strong>*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Core Course</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Course Outline</strong></th>
<th>1 Term, 4 Modules</th>
<th>3 Terms, 11 Modules</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Counselling Relationship</td>
<td>Gerontological Counselling Foundation</td>
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<td>Counselling Assessment and Engagement Skills</td>
<td>Gerontological Counselling Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific Interventions Skills</td>
<td>Gerontological Counselling Specialized Practice</td>
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<td>The Ethical Counsellor</td>
<td>Clinical Practicum</td>
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<td>Clinical Practicum</td>
<td>Clinical Supervision</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Duration</strong></th>
<th>65 hrs (6 months)</th>
<th>250 hrs (11 months)</th>
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<th>2 April 2019 to September 2019 (Tuesdays)</th>
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