STRESS ALLEVIATING MOBILE APPLICATION FOR CAREGIVERS (SAMAC): A FEASIBILITY STUDY
透過手機應用程式緩減照顧者壓力：可行性研究

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Caregivers of persons with dementia (CGPWD) are keen on information sharing, getting to know what is being offered in the community to support their caregiving. Caregivers are in favour of networking through asynchronous communication. This request is understandable because caregiving occurs at different time in different locations, and the demand of care can be different. Asynchronous pattern of communication gives freedom to caregivers to respond to the communication at the time convenient to them. Therefore, we propose to develop a mobile application called "Stress Alleviating Mobile Application for Caregivers (SAMAC)" to support familial caregivers who provide care to persons with dementia (PWD). The mobile application is a platform to alleviate caregivers' stress by providing a social network system.

This is a collaboration project conducted by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Karolinska Institutet. This study is the groundwork of the development of this mobile application, comprising qualitative (focus group discussions) and quantitative (health assessment at pre-and-post intervention) components. Both Hong Kong and Stockholm are the study locations. Each study site carried out focus group discussions (FGDs) before the development of the mobile application. The SAMAC app is now ready for caregivers on a trial basis (Fig. 1). If you are one of the CGPWD for at least one year, we would like to invite you to join our study for an eight-week app testing. Fig. 2 shows the QR code for app registration.

Through the health assessment system, caregivers will be able to conduct self-assessments of such as stress, depressive symptoms, self-rated health, social support and quality of life (Fig. 3). The app allows caregivers to record any events that may be stressful or upsetting for them, their responses, and the actions taken by PWD (Fig. 4). Caregivers can communicate with group members and moderators via the app forum, and exchange ideas on how to deal with PWD's behaviour and where caregivers can get support in their neighbourhoods (Fig. 5). The app also supports moderators to make announcements to caregivers through push-up notice, and set the event reminders in the app calendar.

https://goo.gl/forms/oVAovQHvvjlMsenN2
Fig. 2 QR code for SAMAC App Registration
圖2. 登記試用SAMAC應用程式之二維碼
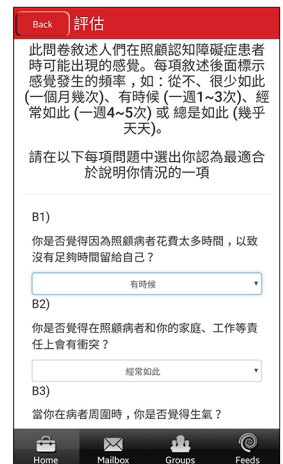

Fig. 1 SAMAC App Interface
圖1. SAMAC應用程式介面

Fig. 3 "Health Assessment System" Function
圖3. 健康評估系統功能

Fig. 4 "Stressful Event" Function
圖4. 壓力事件記錄功能

Fig. 5 SAMAC App Forum
圖5. SAMAC應用程式的討論區

認知障礙症患者的照顧者（CGPWD）熱衷於訊息共享和了解社區提供的服務，以支援他們的恆常照護。照顧者較喜歡以非同步通訊的方式進行交流。這種要求是可以理解的，因為各人看顧的時間和地點各有不同，護理需求亦可能有別。非同步通訊模式使照顧者能夠在方便他們的時間自由地通訊。因此，我們提議開發一種名為"SAMAC"的緩減照顧者壓力流動應用程式，以支援為認知障礙症患者提供照護的家庭照顧者。流動應用程式提供一個平台，透過社交網絡系統來緩減照顧者的壓力。

這個由香港理工大學和卡羅琳學院合作進行的研究項目，包括質性（焦點小組討論）和量性（干預前後的健康評估）部分，旨在為開發流動應用程式提供基礎。研究分別於香港和斯德哥爾摩展開。在開發應用程式之前，每個研究地點進行了焦點小組討論。現在，照顧者可試用SAMAC應用程式（圖1）。如果您是認知障礙症患者的照顧者至少一年，我們想邀請您加入我們的研究，試用此應用程式八星期。圖2展示了報名登記試用SAMAC應用程式之二維碼。

照顧者可使用健康評估系統，進行自我評估，如：測量壓力水平，抑鬱症狀，自評健康，社會支持和生活質素（圖3）。照顧者可運用應用程式來記錄任何可能使他們感到壓力或不快的事件，他們的反應以及認知障礙症患者所採取的行動（圖4）。照顧者可以在應用程式的討論區與其他照顧者和研究團隊溝通，交流如何處理認知障礙症患者行為，及獲得社區內相關支援服務的資訊（圖5）。研究團隊亦可運用應用程式向照顧者發布通知，並在程式日曆中記下事件提醒照顧者。