

Trial shows Thai health program can promote life expectancy of people with early psychosis

September 4 2023



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Professor Richard Gray, Theme Lead (Healthy Peoples Families and Communities) at La Trobe University and study co-author, said many previous physical health interventions for people experiencing severe mental ill-health have focused on a single issue—exercise or diet.

"Life expectancy of people with psychosis is 10–15 years less than the [general population](#) due to [health problems](#) associated with [weight gain](#)," Professor Gray said.

"Many interventions had little or no positive effect at all. The Thai-HIP addresses a comprehensive range of health issues including poor dental health, physical inactivity, diet and smoking."

"The Thai-HIP has been extensively culturally adapted to ensure the intervention addresses the unique lifestyle needs of the Thai people," Professor Gray said.

Careful consideration was given to language and cultural norm in Thailand, including how food is prepared and ways of engaging in physical activity.

Researchers undertook a randomized controlled trial from 2018 to 2021 of participants diagnosed with psychosis within five years of the study period. The work is published in the *International Journal of Nursing Studies*.

Working with the family was another important feature. In Thailand many people experiencing mental ill-health live with their family. Involving [family members](#) in care planning was very important in ensuring that the planned physical health program was adhered to.

Professor Gray said the Thai Health Improvement Profile is showing great promise for patients with psychosis at a time when the [life](#)

[expectancy](#) has been falling consistently.

"Can you imagine any other disease area where over time life expectancy is getting worse—about six months per year—and people haven't thrown their hands up in horror?" Professor Gray said.

"It's estimated that 1% of the population at some point in their lives will have psychosis, which is not a [rare disease](#) but often gets overlooked—there's a lot more that we can do."

More information: Soontareeporn Meepring et al, Evaluating the efficacy of the Thai Health Improvement Profile intervention for preventing weight gain in people with early stage psychosis: A randomized controlled trial, *International Journal of Nursing Studies* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2023.104570](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2023.104570)

Provided by La Trobe University

Citation: Trial shows Thai health program can promote life expectancy of people with early psychosis (2023, September 4) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-09-trial-thai-health-life-people.html>

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