

Mental health services in Toronto, Ontario, Canada
–Observation of assertive community treatment (ACT) provided
by Mount Sinai Hospital–

Toshiyuki Ueda ^{1)*}

1) Active Visiting Team AOT, NHO Tottori Medical Center

Mitsu 876, Tottori City 689-0203, Japan

*Correspondence: tori.mhc@gmail.com

Abstract

In June 2014, we observed mental health services provided in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. There are many immigrants from Asian countries in Toronto, forming a multiethnic society, and assertive community treatment (ACT) targeting Asians has been employed in the city. In addition to the ACT, residents can access various other community support services, such as psychiatric clinics and day care for Asians. Large-scale psychiatric hospitals, which had been the main provider of mental services in Toronto, were remodeled to become smaller-scale function-specific wards or short-term care facilities. Thus, in Toronto, mental health services are provided while placing importance on service users' community life, and taking their ethnic backgrounds into consideration. Tottori J. Clin. Res. 6(1), 17-22, 2014

Key Words: Toronto, mental health, assertive community treatment (ACT) program, immigrants

Introduction

Ontario is one of the states in Canada (capital: Ottawa), with a population of 13.37 million and an area of 1.07 million square kilometers. Toronto, situated in this state, is one of the largest cities in Canada, and is adjacent to New York State of the U.S., with Lake Ontario in between. Toronto was colonized by France until the first half the 18th century. There was also a time when the city was dominated by the U.K. and U.S. The city government has accepted many immigrants, resulting in the growth of a multiethnic and multicultural society. For instance, when Hong Kong was returned from the U.K. to China in 1997, many residents emigrated to Toronto. Currently, more than half of the citizens in Toronto are Caucasian, and much of the remaining population consists of immigrants from South Asia (e.g., India and Sri Lanka) or Southeastern Asia (e.g., China, Vietnam, and the Philippines), with more than 100

languages spoken in the city.

In June 2014, we visited Canada to observe the country's mental health services, mainly the ACT programs employed by Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto.

ACT of Mount Sinai Hospital

ACT is a program that originated in Madison, Wisconsin, the U.S., and supports the community lives of patients with severe mental disorders in interprofessional cooperation ¹⁾. At present, there are 89 ACT teams in Ontario, and 23 of them are in Toronto and its suburban areas.

In Toronto, where many of the citizens are immigrants, they have various problems due to their ethnic backgrounds, such as immigration-related stress, and difficulty in social integration and the receipt of public services owing to a lack of English skills. Against this background, in September 1999, the ACT of Mount Sinai