

# EFFECTIVENESS OF PEDIA HOLISTIC EDUATION Against RHEUMATIC THREATS (H.E.A.R.T) ON THE HEALTH STATUS OF RHD PATIENTS

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## ABSTRACT

### Background

Purposeful yet cost-effective interventions such as health educational programs are geared towards strengthening a person's health behavior, maintaining health status, limiting disability or preventing complications. Today, about 12 million people are currently affected by RHD, many requiring repeated hospitalization, or often, unaffordable heart surgery in the next 5 to 20 years.

### Objective

This 4-month study sought to investigate the effectiveness of a holistic health educational program - "PediaH.E.A.R.T. (Holistic Education Against Rheumatic Threats)" in improving the health status of adolescent outpatients aged 12 -19 with RHD.

### Methods

Utilizing a randomized clinical trial, 35 patients for the intervention group received a 3-hour teaching program, twice a month. Topics were the heart and circulatory system; the nature of RHD, its medical and surgical management for the first session; and diet, exercise, hygiene and coping with illness for the second session. The control group (n=35 patients) received routine health teachings. Outcome measures of health status included variables of health-related quality of life (physical, social and emotional health and general health perceptions); functional capacity tested subjectively through the Specific Activity Scale (SAS) and objectively through the 6-Minute Walk Test (6-MWT). These were assessed at baseline, one and two months.

### Results

Results showed that at 2<sup>nd</sup> evaluation, there was a significant difference in all health status components: health-related quality of life (p=0.000), SAS functional classification (p=0.000) and 6-MWT (p=0.030).

Findings suggest that through implementation of a holistic health educational program, the health status of adolescent RHD patients may improve. In the long run, awareness of these young people to the fact that worst complications can be prevented through self-management, is a cost-effective strategy not only for the health care system but also for the Filipino society as we ensure future productivity among these young adolescents.

**Keywords:** Holistic health education, rheumatic heart disease, health status

