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## The effectiveness of a group intervention program “P.STAR: Psycho.somatic treatment for active recovery” of children or teenagers, presenting with severe somatoform disorders in KK Hospital, Singapore

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**Introduction:** Psychological distress causes the brain to unconsciously disable or impair bodily functions, which serve to relieve patients' anxiety. Often children are hospitalized in KK Hospital and referred to Clinical Psychologists for severe complaints of a Somatoform nature.

**Discussion:** Patients' bodily pains have no organic explanations following medical examination and hospitalization reinforces the psychosomatic pattern as children and their families regularly present to Children's Emergency for acute bodily pains. Research has shown that group interventions are effective in facilitating changes especially if parents are involved in the treatment plan.

**Method:** KK Hospital Psychology Service piloted children and adolescents groups in June 2015 and December 2015, each group program being constituted of three group sessions for children only and one session exclusively for parents, using psycho-educational games, CBT techniques and relaxation. Outcome measures, such as anxiety scales and CGAS (Children's Global Assessment Scale), will be administrated to evaluate the effectiveness of the group program.

**Results:** We believe that conducting a friendly and educative group program will reduce re-hospitalization of these children and will become a more effective intervention for children with psychosomatic illness. An informative flyer will be created to educate patients about somatoform symptoms and illnesses and to facilitate doctors' communication with patients presenting with somatoform disorders in Emergency Department or on the wards. Similar group interventions will be offered regularly in KK Hospital during children's holidays.

### Biography

Emmanuelle O'Grady is a Senior Clinical Psychologist for 13 years specialized in Child and Adolescent Psychology. She has worked in countries like France, the USA, Ireland and is presently based in Singapore for the last 3 years, where she works as Senior Clinical Psychologist in KK Women's and Children's Hospital. She works mainly with children and adolescents in the outpatient and inpatient pediatric services. As a Clinical Psychologist in Singapore, she has been developing or initiating programs in Psychodermatology and Psychosomatic medicine.

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