

# Community Impact

## INTRODUCTION

In the social sciences at The University of Hong Kong we rely in part on peer review and metrics in order to be certain of the academic impact of our research. We use metrics such as impact factors, citation counts, acceptance rates and the prestige of academic presses. These measures and other factors have paved the way for the Faculty of Social Sciences to be ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> in the world by QS.

Less certain, however, is the non-academic impact and measurement of social sciences research. Members of the public, politicians, government officials, businessmen, alumni and potential donors require evidence of our impact on the development of Hong Kong and the lives of Hong Kongers. We must demonstrate the relevance of our research since we depend on the good will and support from both inside and outside the University.

## Understanding Non-Academic Impact

According to a LSE Public Policy Group study, impact implies 'recorded or auditable occasions of influence', that are, however, not the same as outputs or activities or outcomes, and that do not depend for their existence on some kind of social welfare gain (LSE, 2011: 5). The Hong Kong Research Grants Council's (RGC) support for public policy research is specifically designed to fund research that aims at this kind of impact. Measuring impact, however, is difficult in the humanities and social sciences. As my colleague, Professor Joseph Chan Cho-wai, (Department of Politics and Public Administration) has pointed out, 'Those of us working in the humanities and social sciences influence people chiefly through the medium of ideas, not through technology or practical skills (saving lives in medicine, or building bridges in civil engineering). Ideational impact is not only difficult to measure, but also *difficult to occur*. Impact depends to a great extent on how ideas are transmitted and whether people at the receiving end are persuaded. This depends on the relative power of non-ideational factors such as interests, power, and access to information, and people's open-mindedness. If our research fails to influence people in society, does it imply that our research has no practical value? Policy research or academic research *could* add immense practical value to society even if the impact is not clearly visible. Simply stated, the impact of ideas is determined by many factors outside of the control of the researcher. On the contrary, scientists, engineers, and doctors often have direct control over

the subject/material they work on, and hence they can create direct and clear impact' (E-mail, 14 September 2012). And as Davies et al caution: '... much important decision making is diffuse and characterized by "non-decisional processes"...When this is the case, research provides a background of empirical generalizations and ideas that creep into policy deliberation...Thus research can contribute not just to decisional choices, but also to the formation of values, the creation of understandings and possibilities, and to the quality of public and professional discourse and debate' (Davies, et al, 2005, 12).

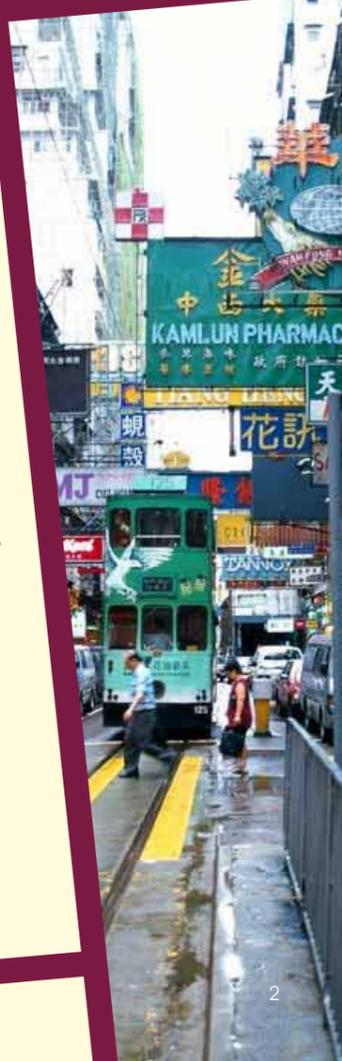
These cautions are well taken, yet we can try to understand the non-academic impact of our research through various channels. First, we can infer indirect impact through the participation and records of our colleagues in the legislature, government and/or NGO advisory committees and think tanks. Academia creates impact by directly advising decision-makers. Second, the impact of lectures, networking, contract work, student placements, joint publications and consultancies outside of the University can also be noted (LSE, 2011: 7). That is, we can look for evidence of impact through a variety of means such as (LSE, 2011: 226):

- Discussions of our research that appear in the *general media* (including print, radio and TV, internet and blogs) and *specialist media* such as the trade press, industry journals, public policy journals and magazines, newsletters of

- professionals, think tanks, consultancies, trade unions, charities and NGOs;
- Debates and proceedings of Legislative Council and its Panels;
- Papers, publications and website coverage of research by the government;
- Financial data available within the university indicating the scope of our activities outside the university such as research grants, consultancies, contracts, licensing income, payments made for training sessions, conferences and so forth; and
- Participation and/or visits by members of the public, business, government, and civil society to Department/Faculty activities indicating that these external actors found (or anticipated finding) something of value. 'The more senior these personnel are, the greater the imputed external value of what the department or lab is providing...' (LSE, 226). Logging the contacts and providing these participants with opportunities to feed back on their experience would be valuable evidence.

The impact of non-academic research focuses on many areas. Faculties of social sciences largely provide research that relates to public policy. Our Faculty of Social Sciences is no exception.

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR JOSEPH CHAN CHO-WAI



### Tracking Impact on Public Policy

We can identify two general approaches to demonstrate the impact of research on public policy in Hong Kong: forward tracking ('producer-push') and backward tracking ('user-pull') (Davies, et al, 2005, 12). Forward tracking (perhaps augmented with user panels) asserts that a particular piece of research has been examined, taken up, incorporated into, or determined a particular public policy. We may understand the RGC's public policy research grants in this light. Under this scheme the government, through the Central Policy Unit (CPU), identifies some general policy areas of interest to the community, and encourages researchers in Hong Kong to submit proposals to a vetting panel in order to solve these public problems. The extent to which the proposals are likely to have an impact on public policy is one of many considerations for funding. In some cases (e.g., strategic public policy research) the proposals are circulated directly to concerned government agencies as part of the vetting process for determination of relevance. When the projects are completed, summaries of the results are published in a newsletter that is distributed to public bodies, including government. Whether government agencies take up these policy ideas is unclear.

Backward tracking involves examining policy decisions or practices to identify research-based influences. We can understand the government's need for public policy research by examining the contract research undertaken by members of our faculty. Tracking backwards can identify the policies on which the government sought research help from the University. The chain of influence can be identified through interviews with the commissioned government agency and with the researcher.

### What We Are doing

Members of the Faculty have been elected to the Legislative Council (Dr Law Chi Kong and Dr Yeung Sum) where they influenced public policy, especially in the provision of social welfare and the furtherance of political reform. Members have also been seconded to the HKSAR Government's Central Policy

Unit (Professor John Bacon-Shone, Dr Peter Cheung Tsan-yin) or have been advisors to or part-time members of the CPU (Dr Simon Zhao Xiaobin, Dr Ng Cho Nam, Dr Richard Hu Weixing). Consultancies to the CPU identifying policy options and evaluating public support; have been provided by Professor Nelson Chow Wing-sun, Professor Paul Yip Siu-fai, Professor Joe Leung Cho-bun, Professor Lui Tai Lok and Professor Cecilia Chan Lai-wan. They have advised on everything from drafting the Chief Executive's Policy Address to handling Hong Kong's cross border relations with Guangdong province. In addition, members of the Faculty influence and serve on many different advisory committees.

Eight colleagues from the Faculty have won competitive public policy grants from the Research Grants Council with published results. Public policy recommendations for government have been provided in the last three years, through these grants by colleagues from Geography (Dr James Wang Jixian, Hong Kong as logistics hub in the global value chain, 2009); Sociology (Professor Lui Tai Lok, life chances and social mobility in Hong Kong, 2009; Professor Wong Siu Lun, locating HK in networks of professional migrants, 2011); and Social Work (Dr Chou Kee Lee, integration of new immigrants to Hong Kong, 2010; Dr Edward Chan Ko-ling, domestic violence in Hong Kong, 2010; Dr Ernest Chui Wing-tak, integrated home care services for the elderly, 2011; Dr Law Chi Kong, consultation processes on public works projects in HK, 2011). (See <http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/publication/ppd/ppd.htm> for write-ups of the impact of their work in the RGC's *Public Policy Digest*).

Finally, the Faculty is a major supplier of contract research to government agencies in Hong Kong and on the Mainland. According to the partial data of HKU's Research Services Section, in 2011/12 members of the Faculty were engaged in 57 contract research projects, mostly conducted in Hong Kong (but also for organizations on the Mainland, Macau, and Taiwan). Of these the Central Policy Unit commissioned the largest number (9), followed by the Social Welfare Department (4). The Faculty's Social Work and Social Administration Department held most of these contracts. We also provided contract research for the Elderly Commission, the Hong Kong

Mortgage Corporation, the Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Fund, public hospitals in Hong Kong, the Housing Society, the Productivity Council, the Airport Authority, MTRC, the Office of the Telecommunications Authority, and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. In addition to SWSA, colleagues in Geography, Sociology, and the Social Sciences Research Centre were actively engaged in public policy related contract research, indicative of the Faculty's non-academic impact.

### Professor John P Burns Dean

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Davies, Huw, Sandra Nutley, Isabel Walter (2005), 'Assessing the Impact of Social Science Research: Conceptual, Methodological and Practical Issues' (A background discussion paper for the ESRC Symposium on Assessing Non-Academic Impact of Research, Research Unit for Research Utilization, School of Management, University of St Andrews, May) (online at: [http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid/Events/ESRC/docs/background\\_paper.pdf](http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid/Events/ESRC/docs/background_paper.pdf), accessed 13 August 2012).

LSE Public Policy Group (2011), 'Maximizing the Impacts of your Research: A Handbook for Social Scientists' (online at: [http://www2.lse.ac.uk/government/research/resgroups/LSEPublicPolicy/Docs/LSE\\_Impact\\_Handbook\\_April\\_2011.pdf](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/government/research/resgroups/LSEPublicPolicy/Docs/LSE_Impact_Handbook_April_2011.pdf), accessed 13 August 2012).





Case Studies of Impact

# Green Roofs to Conserve Energy

The green roof and associated green wall (vertical greening) research projects were initiated in 2006 and sustained by generous donations and grants. Thus far, eight field experiments have been established: (a) a green roof on the University's Runme Shaw Building; (b) a green wall on the Runme Shaw Building; (c) a native woodland on the CLP substation in Lai Chi Kok; (d) a large-scale public building site on the Tai Po Railway Station; (e) a public housing-estate site at Tseung Kwan O; (f) a large-scale plant species trial site on the University's Library Building; (g) a setup to evaluate hydrological benefits on the Library Building; and (h) a large-scale green wall combining environmental assessment and species trial at the Drainage Services Department's Shatin site. These experiments are well equipped with state-of-the-art environmental monitoring sensors and data loggers to acquire long-term data related to microclimatic, thermal, energy and hydrological performance.

The experimental study has been extended to territory-wide assessments based on remote sensing



images, geographic information systems, digital image analysis and field work. They cover: (a) the urban-fabric factors accounting for green roof distribution; (b) the potential sites for green roof establishment; (c) the macro-scale benefits in terms of suppressing the urban heat island effect, enhancing carbon sequestration and hence reducing carbon footprint, curtailing greenhouse gas emission, and trimming energy consumption; and (d) a game-theory simulation to find the best strategy to promote green roof adoption.

The study's impact includes fourteen scientific papers in high-ranking international journals and presentations at eight international conferences. The innovative studies, key research findings and original contributions to knowledge have helped to elevate the University to the status of a world-class centre for green roof research. The impacts include ascertaining the thermal-energy effects of green roofs in relation to critical factors, including vegetation type, biomass structure, soil moisture content, soil thickness, irrigation regime, individual and combined influences of microclimate parameters, diurnal and seasonal meteorological conditions, and energy conservation. The results also identify plant species with good growth performance for use on green roofs and green walls. A city-wide plan has been developed for green roof installation by districts and land use types.

Besides contributions to science, the study aims squarely at linking the gown to the town by transferring the research-based knowledge to the community for direct adoption and application. A popular-science bilingual book was written to disseminate relevant information and advocate the idea. The most notable knowledge-exchange activity is the Green Roof for School Project. A donation from the Hongkong Bank Foundation permitted fourteen green roofs to be given to local schools to promote teaching and learning about nature and healthy outdoor activities. As a result of the pioneering project, over 50 schools and NGOs have obtained grants from the government's Environment and Conservation Fund to establish their own green roofs. Due to the stimulating ripple effect, other green roofs have since been built using alternative resources. It is anticipated that many more schools and organizations will adopt the innovation in due course to realize the multiplier goal.

Other publicity activities were organized from time to time, including nineteen public lectures and seminars on green roofs to professional bodies, corporations, government departments and the general public, three of which were delivered at the Central Library. In addition, the ideas have been publicized through numerous interviews solicited by newspapers, magazines and television stations. The advocacy has drawn the government's attention. In his 2006 policy address, the Chief Executive included in paragraph 55 the following policy statement: "The Government will

adopt the concept of greening of rooftops whenever practicable in the design of new buildings. We are studying the wider application of the concept with a view to encouraging more projects to adopt this approach".

In comparison with a bare roof, a green roof can reduce heat absorption and transmission with a notable passive cooling effect due to three processes: (a) shading by the green roof; (b) thermal insulation due to the green roof material layers; and (c) heat absorption due to the combination of evaporation and transpiration. The magnitude of cooling varies significantly in response to key extrinsic and intrinsic factors such as weather condition, vegetation type, soil thickness, irrigation regime, and thermal behavior of green roof materials. On average, the surface temperature on the green roof on a hot summer sunny day can be reduced by 15-20°C, as well as air temperature above the green roof by about 3-4°C, and indoor temperature by about 1-2°C, resulting in corresponding air conditioning electricity savings of around 10 percent.

The research projects have been recognized by two awards in 2012 in an open competition organized by the HKSAR Government Development Bureau in conjunction with seven professional institutions. They are: (a) Skyrise Greenery Awards 2012: Merit Award for Schools and NGO Projects: Green Roof for Schools Project; and (b) Skyrise Greenery Awards 2012: Merit Award for Planning and Research Project: Study of Climbing Plant Species for Vertical Greening.

**Professor Jim Chi Yung**  
**Department of Geography**



### Case Studies of Impact

# Restricting Charcoal to Reduce Suicide Rates

The use of charcoal burning as a suicide method has increased in Hong Kong from 3 percent in 1998 to 25.4 percent in 2003. In view of this increasing trend, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRП) advocated the reduction of access to charcoal as a way to prevent suicides. An exploratory community intervention was implemented at supermarkets and grocery stores to limit the sales of charcoal for 12 months in two districts (one as an intervention and the other as a control district). The two selected districts are comparable in terms of geographical location, demographic, and socioeconomic characteristics. The suicide rate and suicides by charcoal burning of these two districts are higher than other districts in the same area. The intervention district Tuen Mun, Hong Kong, limited the access to charcoal by locking up bags of charcoal in grocery chain stores. In those stores customers needed to ask a shop assistant to unlock the bags if they wanted to make a purchase. The control district sold bags of charcoal as was their usual practice, that is, without any restrictions. This was a double-blind controlled trial, thus, shopkeepers and the public did not have any information regarding this study. The study began on July 1, 2006 and ended on June 30, 2007. The suicide by charcoal burning rate lowered significantly in the intervention district from 4.3 to 2 (Tuen Mun) and this decrease was not observed in the control district (3 and 4.3) (Yip et al., 2010). The overall suicide rate also decreased in the intervention district, but not in the control district. The researchers conclude that this may suggest the restriction of charcoal sales is the main driver behind the decrease in the overall suicide rate in the intervention district. This measure has not prompted people to switch methods, only to increase the barrier in accessing one of the means to suicide. Subsequently, the supermarkets agreed to place suicide crisis hotline numbers on the charcoal packs but did not continue to lock up the product. The Hong Kong Government has so far failed to take any action based upon this research.

The results of the research in Hong Kong were noted in Taiwan, however, where suicide by charcoal burning was the most common suicide method claiming around 180 lives in New Taipei City (2011), a city of 4 million people, in northern Taiwan. In 2012 the New Taipei City government began to require supermarkets and small shops to remove charcoal packets from open shelves and put them in locked cabinets. The CSRП provided support for this project and published a letter to the editor in the most popular newspaper in Taiwan in April 2012 to support the project, when criticism emerged. The CSRП also participated in a Hong Kong-Taiwan Suicide Prevention Forum in September 2012, hosted by the New Taipei City government. The New Taipei City government restrictions on open shelving of charcoal continue to this day. In August, Tainan City government also placed similar restrictions on charcoal selling.

**Professor Paul Yip Siu-fai,  
Dr Law Yik Wa, Ms Melissa Chan, and  
Dr Chang Shu Sen**

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for  
Suicide Research and Prevention

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For comment or feedback on the impact of social science research on the community or examples, please write to: [editor.socienist@hku.hk](mailto:editor.socienist@hku.hk)

# Community Impact

## Helping Hong Kong's Ageing Population

In September 2011, the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) invited HKU's Sau Po Centre on Ageing (CoA) to conduct a consultancy study. The study was to develop a new ageing-in-place model for the low-income elderly people living in 20 of HKHS's rental housing estates. About 32% of HKHS's rental housing residents are older people, and the property management staff is not trained to help these older tenants. Furthermore, the senior staff of the HKHS also understand that they need to change the scope of the services they offer in order to meet the needs of their rapidly ageing tenant population. Between November 2011 and February 2012, the CoA surveyed 400 elderly residents in four HKHS rental estates, as well as conducted numerous focus groups with elderly tenants, HKHS property management staff, and HKHS senior staff. The CoA also carried out an environmental scan of all four estates. The report, submitted in February 2012, recommended three specific ageing-in-place models that could be implemented in these rental housing estates. The findings and recommendations were presented to the senior management of the HKHS and later, to the Board of Directors of the HKHS. Senior management supported the recommendations, which were then endorsed by the Board of Directors.

**Impact:** The HKHS selected the Cho Yiu Chuen (祖堯邨) Public Housing Estate in Kwai Chung to implement a pilot integrated elderly center/lounge based on the recommendations. The estimated cost of this pilot project is about 6 million dollars. In 2013, the HKHS will do an internal review to examine the implementation and impact of the pilot program on the well being of older residents living in Cho Yiu Chuen. HKHS is prepared to implement this new ageing-in-place model in all 20-rental estates if the outcome is positive.

**Dr Terry Lum Yat-sing**  
Sau Po Centre on Ageing

## Improving Environmental Impact

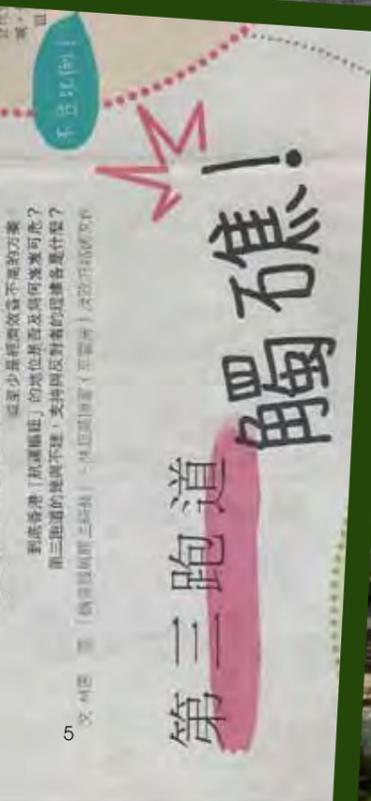
According to Hong Kong Government policy, impact on the environment must be assessed before any major infrastructure project is undertaken in order to reduce or eliminate harm. Beginning in March 2012, as one of the collaborative projects of HKU-HKJC EXCEL3 (Excellence in Capacity-building on Entrepreneurship and Leadership for the Third-sector), a team led by Dr Ng Cho Nam and Dr Frederick Lee Yok-shiu organized a series of technical training sessions and practical workshops for civil society actors. These were organized to enable them to more fully participate in Hong Kong's environmental policy processes. The activities focused on the processes and limitations of Hong Kong's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) system. In April 2012, the organizers held a practical workshop to train participants to produce critical and in-depth comments on the Project Profile of the "Expansion of Hong Kong International Airport into a Three-Runway System".

**Impact:** Partly as a consequence of the workshop, in June 2012 the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a total of 209 public submissions concerning the third runway, the largest number of submissions ever recorded. In response, the Hong Kong Airport Authority (AA), which had proposed the new runway, had to withdraw the Project Profile and re-submit a revised version. The new version included a number of new parameters not covered in the original document. These fresh parameters included the proposed project's impact on marine ecology and the Chinese white dolphin, as well as noise issues and the potential impact on human health. An environmental NGO described the new Project Profile and the associated Study Brief, issued by EPD, as the most detailed EIA study proposal ever produced in the history of Hong Kong's EIA process. This case shows that well-considered public inputs may lead to significant impact on Hong Kong's EIA system. It also demonstrates the importance of building the capacity of environmental NGOs and civil society actors in general so that they are able to make critical and constructive contributions to Hong Kong's overall environmental conditions.

**Dr Ng Cho Nam, Dr Frederick Lee Yok-shiu and Mr Chris Wong Chi-chung**  
Department of Geography

## Exposing the Censors

An impact story entitled *Exposing the Censors* by Journalism and Media Studies Centre has been published in The University of Hong Kong Bulletin February 2013. The online version is available at [http://www4.hku.hk/pubunit/bulletin/cover\\_story/cover\\_story\\_index.html](http://www4.hku.hk/pubunit/bulletin/cover_story/cover_story_index.html)





In our continuing series on the impact of social sciences staff on the community, we profile the work of **Dr Law Chi Kwong** (羅致光博士) who joined HKU's the then called Department of Social Work in 1981. Dr Law has served on the Legislative Council, and on many committees and working groups that have focused on social welfare policy. He is a model of how individuals can have an impact on public policy.

Dr Law writes:

### Putting the Registration of Social Workers on a Legal Basis in Hong Kong

In 1982, the Hong Kong Social Workers Association started to promote the idea of establishing a registration system for social workers in Hong Kong. I joined the Association in 1983; at that time I was a member of the Executive Committee of the Hong Council of Social Service and the Hong Kong Social Workers General Union, and also a Board Member of the Hong Kong Social Workers Association. I basically represented the employers, the employees and the profession of social work. With these overlapping roles, I managed to pull the three organizations together to form a joint working committee. I drafted the first draft of the Social Workers Registration Bill on a HKU mainframe computer word processor in November 1984. I left the joint committee in the summer of 1986 for my PhD studies at UCLA. When I completed my PhD study in 1988 and returned, I discovered not much progress had been made. I re-joined the joint committee and the first completed Code of Ethics of Social Workers was developed on my personal computer using a MultiMate word processor in 1989. By 1990, a provisional Hong Kong Social Welfare Personnel Registration Council was formed and in 1991 the Council registered as a limited company and began with a voluntary registration system. I became the first Registrar for the registration system. In early 1995, a private member's bill was drafted. Before it was tabled at the Legislative Council, the HK Government changed its stance and accepted the responsibility to work on a public bill. I continued as a member of the drafting working group under the then Health and Welfare Branch. On the 23rd of April 1997, as a member of the Legislative Council, I voted yes in the Third Reading of the Social Workers Registration Bill; which became the Social Workers Registration Ordinance (Cap 505).

In another case, Dr Law writes:

### Providing the Single Elderly with Emergency Call Services

The cold spell during the first few days of the Chinese New Year of 1996 claimed the lives of over one hundred elderly people living in Hong Kong. A few months prior to the cold spell, I had collected data from the Social Welfare Department about the number of single elderly that did not have a telephone at home on welfare (Comprehensive Social Security Assistance, CSSA). On the seventh day of the Chinese New Year, I paid a visit to the then Financial Secretary, Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, at his official residence. He accepted my proposal to give every CSSA single elderly person aged 70 or above, or with ill health, a telephone cash grant and the payment for twenty-four hour emergency call services. At that time, two international security companies in Hong Kong had just started twenty-four hour emergency call services as an annex to their basic security alarm system. However, after a discussion with them, I found their security service did not meet the needs of the elderly. I decided to set up a new NGO, the Senior Citizen Home Safety Association (SCHSA) to provide a twenty-four hour emergency call service, closely linked to the NGOs serving the elderly and the Hospital Authority. Operation of the twenty-four hour emergency service of SCHSA began on September 1, 1996. The SCHSA is still known as one of the most successful and profitable social enterprises in Hong Kong, winning a number of reputable regional and internal awards for entrepreneurship and use of technology to serve the needy. By 2012 the SCHSA has served over 100,000 elderly and delivered over 3,000 elderly in ambulances to hospitals monthly.

See the SCHSA webpage:  
<https://www.schsa.org.hk/tc/home/index.html>

We will continue to profile Dr Law's impact in the next issue.

# Community Impact

### Spirituality of Chinese Older Adults: Conceptualization, Assessment, and Intervention

Philosophical and religious concepts such as the meaning of life are culturally specific. Since 2009, **Dr Vivian Lou Weiqun** (樓瑋群博士) from the Department of Social Work and Social Administration in collaboration with the Sau Po Centre on Ageing and the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) has worked on a series of studies on spirituality among Chinese older adults. These pioneering studies examine the underlying conceptual structure of spirituality among older adults and identify effective intervention strategies to enhance spiritual care for the elderly in a non-religious context (Chan, Lou, Fok, & Tsui, 2010a; Chan, Fok, Lou, & Tsui, 2010b; Lou, Chan, Fok, & Tsui, 2010; Lou et al, 2011).

We identified two key cultural factors that affect the perception and practice of spirituality through interviews and focus groups. First, there is a collective tradition that emphasizes relational and/or social life; and secondly, there is value placed on harmony with one's surroundings for understanding the meaning and purpose of life. We formulated a model of Chinese spirituality as a dynamic for harmonious relationships between a person and his/her environment; which includes nature and the surrounding people. In mid-2011 the research team developed and validated a 44-item *Spirituality Scale for Chinese Elders* (SSCE) (Lou et al, 2011). The conceptualization and assessment tool paved the way for examining evidence-based practice in spiritual support and enhancement for Chinese older adults in daily life.

**Impact:** We developed a self-help manual, *Fu Le Man Xin* (full of blessing and happiness), and a professional intervention manual, *Spiritual Enhancement Groups for Chinese Elders*. The self-help manual was disseminated to all local community elderly services centres and to several elderly service centres in the Mainland. We trained more than two hundred professional workers from the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals and other non-government organizations and churches in Hong Kong. The professional manual is designed to enhance the competence of professional workers to provide interventions improving the spiritual well being of Chinese older adults (Lou et al, 2012).

According to the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, the focus on understanding spirituality benefits the Chinese elderly as well as the caseworkers that use the approach for marriage counselling in Hong Kong. Moreover, the instruments developed in this project have 'enabled case workers to identify at-risk populations in spiritual distress who require intervention.' Dr Lou and the TWGHs have established and recommended the effectiveness of the new group intervention, the Spiritual Enhancement Group for Chinese Elders (SEGCE). The SEGCE has been in use in one District Elderly Community Centre for the past two years and is considered the best practice consolidated for publication in another manual (Amy Tsui [TWGHs] letter, September 3, 2013).

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社會工作者註冊局  
SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRAR



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- Subsidiary legislation which specified types of lots (with buildings aged 50 years or over) where the threshold of owner consent to re-develop reached 80% to force a compulsory sale to developers for re-development (Cap 545) was enacted in April 2010. The subsidiary legislation was based on a comparison of international practice, which found that a threshold of 80% was the highest among relevant countries (other buildings in Hong Kong required a 90% threshold to force a sale)<sup>2</sup>.

## The Elderly Community Service Review and Re-engineering Process

In January 2000 the Health and Welfare Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government contracted a review to examine the provision of community care and support services to elderly people living at home and their families. The review focused on the services currently provided by day care centres, multi-service centres and social centres for the elderly. I took up the study and submitted the recommendations in July the same year. Subsequently, the Government took up all the recommendations which they intended to implement in phases. The process was interrupted, however, when in 2003 the Community Chest decided to withdraw its financial support to multi-service centres and social centres. I served as the mediator between NGOs and the Social Welfare Department to re-engineer the implementation of our 2000 study recommendations in one go. Through this process all multi-service centres were converted to District Elderly Community Centres (DECC) and most social centres were converted to Neighbourhood Elderly Centers (NEC) within a few months. The Government provided \$37M per annum of additional resources to cover the loss of \$28M due to the withdrawal of support from Community Chest. The names "DECC" and "NEC" were coined by me.

## The Urban Renewal Strategy (URS) Review

The URS (2001) spelt out that it should be reviewed every two to three years. Yet, the Government hesitated to carry out a review until 2007 when the new Development Bureau was formed. I was consulted on how such a review could be conducted. I recommended a three-stage public engagement process, namely, scoping (subsequently known as the envisioning stage), engagement and consensus building. The review began in August 2008 and I was appointed as the policy consultant for the whole review process. The new URS (2011) was published in February 2011. While I participated in the whole process of formulating the new URS, I can identify several results of the URS review that were directly related to my input:

- The formation of the Urban Renewal Fund Limited to fund and monitor the services provided by social service teams to help those who are affected by urban renewal projects<sup>1</sup>;

## Public Engagement

- I served as the Term Consultant of the Urban Renewal Authority between 2005 and 2009 giving advice on various social and political issues and on various public engagement activities. The public engagement process of the Kwun Tong Town Centre (2006-2007) was considered to be a very successful public engagement process within the Government and I was asked to write a case study on the process for the reference of the Chief Executive. Subsequently

reference to a kind of public engagement appeared in the 2007 October Policy Address. In the Address, Donald Tsang Yam-kuen said "To strengthen interaction between the Government and the community, ...the Third Term Government to (sic) proactively reach out to the community, listen to public views and work with the stakeholders."

<sup>1</sup> Recommendation was made via the study on "The Future Directions of Providing Social Work Services under the New Urban Renewal Strategy" (July, 2010) Development Bureau, HKSAR Government.

<sup>2</sup> Findings that supported the subsidiary legislation were obtained from the *Study Report on Urban Renewal Policies in Asian Cities for the Urban Renewal Strategy Review* (March, 2009) Development Bureau, HKSAR Government.

## Tacloban Notes

Jacky is a nurse and a pastor who works and lives by the eastern shore of the city of Tacloban. His home and clinic doubles as a training center for youth and also serves as a gathering place for his congregation. Many families who were squatting along surrounding walls were crushed by three structures that fell during Typhoon Haiyan. Luckily, Jacky and his family survived. It was a warm, cloudy day when he walked me over fallen coconut trees and over the rubble where bodies had been excavated.

Since December, I have been traveling to the Philippines on a monthly basis in order to provide psychological services to survivors of Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan. I am working primarily with a small Manila-based NGO called Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture (ISACC). Between the four trips that I have made so far, I have given a dozen workshops on post-disaster psychological relief to approximately 300 participants; focusing mostly on psychological first aid, self-care, sleep, and coping. These survivors are themselves service providers; such as doctors, nurses, preschool teachers, pastors, and community health workers. I asked to work with them because they are the "wounded healers." They are devoted to rebuilding their communities, on a dedicated long term basis. Equipping and empowering them can enable them to help more effectively. Indeed, a community doctor was able to teach over 100 youth her new skills after attending the February workshop. Reports like this inspire me to continue moving forward.

In parallel, I have also been sharing my experience and opinion on long-term rehabilitation in a series of policy consultation sessions, attended by local government officials, economists, engineers, doctors, psychologists, as well as representatives from micro-financing NGOs, and international NGOs. The conclusions derived in these collegial meetings were presented to the mayor of Tacloban and his team. They will be put together as a white paper to be presented to the President.

I thank the Faculty and Professor John P. Burns for supporting my work. To be frank, I continue to hesitate every time I book my flights to Manila and Tacloban. The trips have been difficult—with limited electricity and water, and swarms of mosquitos. On top of that, the tenure clock never fails to haunt. I may not always see the fruit of my service, yet I know it is the right thing to do.

**Dr Christian Chan Shaunlyn** (陳濟靈博士)  
Department of Psychology



## Mass Community Expressive Arts Workshops

The Expressive Arts bring us joyful and vivid moments. Based on this fundamental premise, the Centre on Behavioral Health collaborated with the Happy Living Community Campaign organized by the Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung district offices. Expressive arts workshops were conducted between July and October 2014 with the theme "Arts and Happiness". This is the second year that the Centre conducted the workshop series; more than eight hundred people from the general public participate each year.

The workshops were led by Dr Rainbow Ho Tin-hung, a Registered Expressive Arts Therapist and the Director of Centre on Behavioral Health and Master of Expressive Arts Therapy, and Mr Joshua Nan, an Art Therapist and PhD candidate of The University of Hong Kong. They worked together with a team of current students in the Master of Expressive Arts Therapy Program of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration. The workshops incorporated visual arts, music and movement with a goal to bring happiness and wellbeing to the individuals in the community.

The series included two mass community expressive arts workshops held on August 2 and 16, 2014, as well as two art therapy-training workshops for community healthcare professionals held on October 3 and 8, 2014 in two districts. There were more than 300 people from the general public that joined each community workshop, including adolescents, adults, elders and participants with physical and intellectual challenges. In the workshops, Dr Ho and Mr Nan gave mini-talks on the relationship of art making and happiness. They encouraged participants to move, dance, draw, and share their experiences of how to stay happy. Participants were also asked to create drawings together in small groups based on the theme of "something that reminds me of happiness". Some of them drew about their family members, food they enjoyed, flowers and rainbows, beautiful scenes from places they want to travel, and some drew their hands and decorated them with different colours. At the end of the workshop, all the drawings were exhibited in the centre of the venue where everyone could appreciate the art together.

The impact of these community expressive arts workshops was multi-levelled. Through joining the experiential workshops, participants learnt how to relax and have fun through making arts. They all enjoyed the process of moving and art making as well as seeing the art products they created. Better still, the workshops gave opportunities for the students in the master of expressive arts therapy program to apply what they have learnt in the program. Healthcare professionals in the community also had a glimpse into the methods of how to incorporate creative experiences of making arts into their work and daily life.

All the participants, helpers, workers and students experienced a lot of energy and joy during the workshop. Participants were actively engaged in the whole process regardless of the differences in age, physical and intellectual abilities. This demonstrates the benefits of expressive arts therapy for promoting the wellbeing of individuals as well as the community. Everyone can make art and everyone has the right to enjoy the joy and peace that art can bring to our lives!

**Dr Rainbow Ho Tin-hung (何天虹博士)**  
Centre on Behavioral Health



## Our Solution to Better Retirement Security for Senior Citizens

A research team, which I led, was commissioned last year by the Commission on Poverty to study the future development of retirement security in Hong Kong. After more than a year's hard work, our team submitted our report in August 2014. Other than projecting the financing costs of six representative proposals suggested by various political parties and concerned groups, our team has also proposed one of our own, namely, the introduction of a universal old age pension for all present and future generations of senior citizens, aged 65 and above, offering each one \$3,000 a month. Immediately upon the release of our study report, public concern has been aroused and the debates focus mainly on the following two issues: One financial and the other ethical.

The first concern boils down to the question: Where will the money to finance the future new schemes come from? As the population in Hong Kong ages, it is projected that public expenditure on various social security programs for the elderly will go up from around 5% of recurrent public expenditure in 2013 to 8.2% in 2041, as the number of elderly people doubles in less than 30 years. If the improvements suggested by the various proposals are taken into account, the increase in expenditures would be more terrific as they would all involve the injection of additional funds. The sources of new money which the proposals have suggested include: The allocation of funds from the Government reserve; extra contributions from both employers and employees, on top of the 5% each for the Mandatory Provident Fund; the raising of the level of profits tax; or the introduction of new taxes, such as a payroll tax for old age.

Any suggestion to increase the costs of doing business is severely resisted by employers, who already complain that the Government is introducing too many labor reforms to improve the welfare of the workers, like the recent setting of minimum wage, and extra payments for retirement security would add to their burdens. Employees also find the additional payments for better retirement security for the elderly unbearable, as the extra sum would leave them penniless to improve their own lives, especially in view of the high property prices they are facing nowadays.

The ethical issue boils down to the question: Who should be responsible for an individual's retirement needs. The traditional belief is that elderly parents should be supported by their children and that people should save for their rainy days, including their old age financial needs. Those who oppose the introduction of old age pensions would argue that such schemes would encourage the youth not to fulfil their filial responsibility of taking care of the old and people who are now working would also be less mindful of their old age financial needs. If there is no change in the belief that retirement security is a matter of individual concern, it looks unlikely that universal old age pensions would be welcomed by the majority of the public.

However, the hard facts which Hong Kong must face are: The population will age fast and people would normally have more than 20 years to live after reaching old age; the MPF will leave about one-third of the old unprotected as they never have a steady employment record; those who are earning below the median income would have little savings and the sums which they manage to accumulate under the MPF would be so meager that they would hardly be sufficient to enable them to have a living above subsistence; people who are now aged under 50 often have no children or only one or two and their chance of financial support from their children would be slim when they become old. In brief, the age crisis will loom large if nothing is done to improve present retirement security provisions.

The questions which the Government, as well as the general public, has to answer is: Should we leave the present retirement security system untouched and let the poverty problem of the elderly aggravate? If we do want to put in place better retirement security to take care of the present and future generations of the elderly, what would be the most socially acceptable, financially equitable and administratively viable option that we can introduce so as to offer our senior citizens a brighter and more secure old age?

**Professor Nelson Chow Wing-sun (周永新教授)**  
Department of Social Work and Social Administration

Head of Research Team  
A Study on the Future Development of  
Retirement Security in Hong Kong

MC<sup>3</sup>, located in Room 702 of the Jockey Club Tower, is a new creative space for teaching, learning, research and exhibition managed by the Department of Sociology at the University of Hong Kong.

MC<sup>3</sup> (read as MC-cube) – a creative space for **Media, Culture and Creative Cities** – is an extension of our long standing and popular multi-disciplinary undergraduate major, Media and Cultural Studies (MCS), and our newly launched TPG programme in Media, Culture

and Creative Cities (MCCC). It offers a unique space for teachers, students, cultural workers and other concerned parties to experiment and

display their research and creative endeavours. Through a variety of thematic events including exhibitions, seminars, public talks and other forms of interactions with the community, MC<sup>3</sup> provides an excellent platform to nurture students' learning, facilitate intellectual discussion, increase cultural interflows and enhance art appreciation.

Thank you, the Faculty of Social Sciences, for giving us such a wonderful space. Since the establishment of MC<sup>3</sup> in May 2013, we have held a number of exhibitions and seminars. For example, **Changing Lens: An Invitation to Visual Sociology**, brought a group of 'photography minded' local sociologists/researchers together to capture the 'structure of feeling' of dense urban social life in Hong Kong. The exhibition, kicked off with a seminar discussion, exploring with the audience the complexity of meanings of the social world we are now living. Funded by Knowledge Exchange Funding for Impact Project, Travis Kong produced a Chinese book called **男男正傳：香港年長男同志口述史**

**(Oral History of Older Gay Men in Hong Kong)** documented twelve life stories of gay men aged 60 or above living in Hong Kong, capturing the complexity of their lives interwoven with Hong Kong history as well as the difficulties and hardships they have encountered, due to their sexual orientation, from colonial to contemporary times. Accompanying the book was an exhibition in which four local and international artists photographically portrayed the current lives of these men.



# Community Impact



**ID Exchange** is a documentary/photographic initiative in which local artist Cheung Chi Wai invited his friends to swap clothes to explore the symbolic meanings of clothing, fashion and identity. The second phase of his project will invite participation from our MCS and MCCC students. The recent **Discovering Art:**

**The World of Fapopo** featured **Fa Po Po**, an 84-years old Chinese woman who made a living and raised four children by selling flowers. She picked up the paintbrush only recently to create her own unique kaleidoscopic flowering world on abandoned furniture, broken household objects (e.g., wardrobe, mirror, fans), and used card box papers. This exhibition was initiated, curated and operated by our MCCC students.

MC<sup>3</sup> is thus a site dedicated to developing a new kind of Hong Kong study – one with a strong flavour of academic rigor, a sensitivity to local and global social concerns, an awareness of the value of knowledge exchange, and an emphasis on conducting a dialogue with students and the wider community. It goes beyond the conventional boundaries and frameworks of teaching and learning as well as research by underscoring interactions and exchanges among researchers, public intellectuals, cultural practitioners, students, and the general public. Our exhibitions usually attract a few hundred to attend, ranging from students, faculty staff members, NGOs, and the general public. Some exhibitions have received wide media exposure such as in the newspaper, radio, and television. Thus it has three major impacts: students' learning experiences, staff's teaching and research findings dissemination, and on knowledge exchange with the general public.

Hong Kong is emerging as a premiere hub for new media culture and creative industry in Asia and the world. Against this background, MC<sup>3</sup> is a realization of the Department's initiatives in developing media and culture in facing the new challenges and opportunities of Hong Kong society in a globalized context.

We are planning for a series of exciting events for the coming two years. Please check out our website <http://www.sociodep.hku.hk/mccc.html> and ongoing publicity bulk emails. We welcome staff from other departments to use this space for teaching, learning, research, and knowledge exchange.



**Dr Travis Kong Shiu-ki (江紹祺博士)**

Programme Director

Master of Social Sciences in Media, Culture and Creative Cities



Registered as a charity organization in February 2013, Food for Good (FFG) is a small, young, yet distinctive non-governmental organization. It envisions the minimization of food waste in Hong Kong by redistributing surplus food to people in need; thus introducing green and sustainable living. The Executive Committee and its sub-committees, comprise specialists and representatives from different sectors who are committed to the vision of FFG. Funding support comes from private donations and sponsorships.

Admittedly in 2012, Hong Kong generated 3,337 tonnes of food waste, accounting for thirty-six percent of the city's solid waste disposed of at the already overloaded landfills. In recent years, increases of food waste generated from commercial and industrial sources has been substantial.

FFG aims to build up a new culture on food through changing our eating life style and habits, as well as our cooking practices. Reducing and recycling food waste is not only an economic concern, but a cherished social virtue. Food waste reduction projects in schools, private and public housing estates, and shopping malls have been organized in collaboration with our strategic partners which include: supermarkets, community organizations, restaurants, schools, food companies, and non-governmental organizations. Here are some of the examples:

# Community Impact



- **Zero-food Waste School Project:** Currently, twenty-two primary and secondary schools (5,000 students) are involved in recycling their lunch leftovers into fertilizers to be used in school vegetable gardens. Educational resource kits, advising teachers and students on how to implement food recycling projects, have been distributed to all primary schools. Through workshops, seminars and talks given by professional organic farmers, students have increased their awareness and commitment to sustainable eating.

- **Community Kitchen:** The community kitchen in Tuen Mun, funded by a private donation, serves to provide over 1,200 meals each day free of charge to low-income families. About half of the food materials comes from donated surplus from supermarkets, restaurants, hotels, and food retailing companies. Another community kitchen, funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club, will be in operation this spring, eventually providing 3,200 meals a day.

- **Promotional Projects**
  - **Caring Chefs:** Offers live cooking demonstrations by renowned chefs and legislative council members in shopping plazas, utilizing kitchen leftovers to create wonderful dishes. In the events organized at the Disneyland Hotel and the Chinese Cuisine Training Institute, surplus food has been used to provide meals to hundreds of student participants, introducing the message of cherishing food through a variety of entertaining performances.

- **Talks:** Presentations on managing food waste are made to various stakeholders, including the environmental organizations, community organizations, business and restaurant associations, schools, and catering services,

- **Other Promotional Activities:**
  - Participation in environmental protection programmes, such as the annual 'Organic Day' exhibitions;
  - Support of events promoting food waste reduction, such as the International Master Chefs Competition, 2014 and 2015;
  - Collaboration with the Hong Kong Girl Guides Association to establish a badge award scheme on reducing food waste (Eat Wise Ambassadors)
  - The 'Food-forgot' programme invited participants to use food leftovers to make creative dishes; the photos were then placed and voted upon in social media. Participants with popular dishes were invited to compete in a cooking demonstration at a hotel. Over 3,000 people participated in this event.
  - Reducing food waste has also been promoted through road shows and a mobile exhibition truck.

- **Consultations:** consultations are provided to owners' incorporations in private and public housing estates and management companies of commercial malls to collect and recycle food waste, turning it into fertilizer to be used in gardens. Professional advice will be given on how to select and install food waste decomposers.

Reducing food waste is a profound challenge for Hong Kong. Notably, FFG has contributed to the increased awareness of the community and government on the urgent need to reduce food waste. The government implemented the public education programme, 'Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign' (2013) and announced 'A Food Waste & Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022' (2014). The message of reducing food waste needs to be espoused fully by the citizens, government and private sector. We have made a small step in the beginning of a long journey. To learn more about our work, please visit our website: <http://www.foodforgood.org.hk>.



**Professor Joe Leung Cho-bun (梁祖彬教授)**  
 Department of Social Work and Social Administration  
 Chairman, Executive Committee, Food for Good

# Community Impact

Population ageing is a global challenge that disproportionately affects Asian countries for several reasons. First, the sheer speed and scale of the region's population ageing are unprecedented. Asia will become the oldest region of the world by the middle of this century. The unprecedented nature of population ageing in Asia means that earlier experiences from advanced western economies will offer limited guidance to the region. Second, the demographic dividend that contributed substantially to economic growth in the region is rapidly dissipating or even turning to demographic tax, threatening sustainable economic growth and social development. The region's successful adaptations to rapidly changing population structures will be key to its sustainable economic and social development. The region needs to find its path to provide adequate income support and health and social care for the elderly without jeopardizing growth. Governments in the region need unique and innovative solutions developed from an Asian perspective. Researchers at the Sau Po Centre on Ageing (CoA) are helping regional governments to identify innovative solutions to these global challenges.

The CoA is a leading multidisciplinary research centre on ageing in the region. The Centre's research focuses on ageing policy (health care financing, long-term care, social security, labour force participation of older workers, etc.), service delivery models (use of voucher and personalized social services), and health and social care financing. The Centre's research was behind most major ageing policy innovations in Hong Kong since its establishment in 1999. In 2000, the CoA researchers developed the long term care screening system for the Social Welfare Department of the HKSAR Government. Since then, that system has been used to decide eligibility for government funded community and residential care for frail older people. In the early 2000s, the CoA researchers also developed the training and accreditation standard for health workers, creating a new employment category to staff long term care systems in Hong Kong. The first few cohorts of health workers were trained and accredited at the CoA. This new employment category has since been widely adopted by both social welfare and health care sectors. Many health workers are now serving patients in hospitals and residents in nursing homes. In the late 2000s and early 2010s, CoA researchers provided consultation to the HKSAR government, leading to the development of the community care voucher pilot program in 2013. Current work includes a pending residential care voucher pilot program. The CoA researchers are also helping the social welfare department to develop a new long term care infrastructure to help Hong Kong SAR better respond to the challenges of the rapidly aging population. Through research and evaluation, CoA researchers are helping the HKSAR government to understand how to better implement the community care voucher pilot program and the carer allowance program.



During the last three years, the CoA has secured more than HK\$40 million research contracts and donations. In 2013, it was commissioned by HKSAR Government to conduct a series of policy studies to enhance the infrastructure of long term care in Hong Kong and to evaluate the implementation of the Pilot Scheme on the Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly. In 2014, the CoA was commissioned by the government to study how providing cash allowance to carers might affect caregiving behaviour among low-income carers. The CoA also launched its dementia care initiative in 2014 with support from both internal funding sources and external awards. In 2015, the CoA received a HK\$4.5 million donation from the Hong Kong Jockey Club to study age-friendliness of the Wanchai District and the Central and Western District of Hong Kong. It also received a HK\$5.3 million donation from the Simon KY Lee Foundation to develop an evidence based exercise and life style change programme to prevent frailty - a common but reversible health problem of older people.

The impacts of the CoA research have been recognised within the university and in the community. In 2014, the CoA was awarded a centrally funded postdoctoral fellow position to support its work on non-pharmacological intervention for dementia. Subsequently it organized two one-day workshops and an international conference in this area in 2015. The CoA has also been co-organizing the International Alzheimer's Disease Conference with the Alzheimer's Disease Research Network of the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine since 2013. The CoA research team received the Faculty of Social Sciences Knowledge Exchange Award in 2015, for its project on aging-in-place in low-income public rental housing estates.

In sum, during the last three years, the CoA has grown from a small local research centre to a prominent regional research centre on aging. Our research helps shape the aging policy and elder care practice in Hong Kong and the region. While we are very proud of our achievements during the last 16 years, we are looking forward to the exciting path ahead of us.

**Professor Terry Lum Yat-sang (林一星教授)**

Director  
Sau Po Centre on Ageing



香港大學秀圃老年研究中心  
**Sau Po Centre on Ageing**  
**The University of Hong Kong**

## Dance Movement Therapy for Cancer Patients' well-being

Dance is both an artistic and a physical activity from which you can enjoy the beauty of movement and motion while gaining physical benefits such as better flexibility and better blood circulation. It is also a creative art product through which you can express your thoughts and emotion. Dance can also be a medium for change through which a person can know more about himself / herself, connect to other people, the world and the universe. Dance can thus benefit a person's mind and the body, creating chances for growth and healing.

The healing power of dance has been attracting increased attention in recent decades in fields of rehabilitation and healthcare due to its enjoyable process, non-pharmacological nature, and holistic benefits. Dance Movement Therapy (DMT), which uses dance as the medium for change has been applied to different disease and healthy populations, including cancer patients. For cancer patients, while medical treatment helps them improve survival and relieve some symptoms of the illness; it brings about a lot of side effects, both short-term and long-term, affecting patients' physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being. Psychosocial interventions that target at helping cancer patients to cope with different challenges and regain a better quality of life and well-being have been widely encouraged. Dance movement therapy has been recognised as one of the effective interventions in recent years.

DMT programme, which is designed specifically to help breast cancer patients, has been introduced in hospitals and community cancer centres in Hong Kong since 2002. The program is specially designed for improving the blood circulation of the upper arms, and the whole body of breast cancer patients, with particular attention paying to the patients' psychological stress, mood and overall quality of life.

# Community Impact



With the funding support from the GRF grant (HKU 745511H), a large-scale DMT programme with a research component to confirm its effectiveness was conducted for breast cancer patients who are undergoing radiotherapy. Participants met for six 1.5-hour sessions for three weeks during treatment. Sessions were made up of dance movement warm up, improvisational and creative dances, as well as a sharing of movement experience and closure ritual. Participants were encouraged to engage in dancing with other group members, and create their own movements according to different themes. Themes in different sessions included self-care, warmth and love, positive mood, strength and self-confidence, imagination and creativity, as well as life and hope. Sharing and discussion at the end of each session focused on the experiences of dancing and moving. Therapists also facilitated the participants to relate their movement experiences to the themes as well as their real life.

Findings of the project confirmed the effects of DMT, in particular, on buffering patients' stress and pain. Qualitative investigation indicated that patients receiving DMT during radiotherapy treatment resulted in more prominent improvements in cancer and treatment coping as well as better mental well-being and appreciation for their bodies. Participants enjoyed the process greatly and some of them started to learn dancing after the programme.

**Dr Rainbow Ho Tin-hung** (何天虹博士)

Director  
Centre on Behavioral Health

## Rehabilitation Services for Pre-schoolers with Special Education Needs

The provision of professional support services to pre-schoolers with special education needs (SEN) is considered to be meagre in Hong Kong. In the academic year of 2014-15, more than 7,000 children were on the waitlist for government-subsidized preschool rehabilitation services. While waiting, most of the parents of these children had no choice but to enrol their children in regular kindergartens in which most teachers are unprepared for teaching children with SEN. There is a strong need to strengthen the provision of special education services in Hong Kong kindergartens. With the funding from Lee Hysan Foundation, Heep Hong Society has launched a two-year pioneering project that was initiated in August 2014 to support children with SEN in kindergartens. This pioneering project adopted a two-pronged approach that consisted of both school-based support services and centre-based therapeutic training services. To evaluate the effectiveness of these services, Heep Hong Society invited a research team from the University of Hong Kong to conduct an evaluation study.

The research team was headed by Dr Lam Shui Fong, the Director of the professional training programme for educational psychologists in the Department of Psychology. Dr Lam and her colleagues examined the development of sixty children with SEN in the ten kindergartens that received services from Heep Hong Society in the academic year of 2014-15. They adopted a quasi-experimental design and compared the development of these sixty children to another sixty children with SEN from other kindergartens that did not receive any services from the pioneering project. The two groups were not different in their abilities at the beginning but the children in the pioneering project made significant improvement after a year of intervention and performed better than their counterparts who had no services in cognitive skills, receptive language skills, expressive language skills, fine motor skills, gross-motor skills and self-directed skills. In addition, the teachers from the ten kindergartens in the pioneering project experienced improvement of self-efficacy after the intervention.

These encouraging results have significant impact on government policy on rehabilitation services for pre-schoolers with SEN. Shortly after the release of Dr Lam's report, the Chief Secretary, Ms Carrie Lam, announced the launching of a pilot scheme of \$422 million Hong Kong dollars for on-site preschool rehabilitation services in November 2015. The beneficiaries are 2,900 pre-schoolers with SEN in 450 kindergartens.

### Dr Lam Shui Fong (林瑞芳博士)

Associate Professor  
Department of Psychology



# Community Impact