

## "Active Mind" Programme Helps 5,339 Senior Citizens Prevent Dementia

In Hong Kong, one in 10 people is suffered from dementia, affecting 5% to 10% people aged over 65. As most people misinterpret early symptoms of dementia as part of the normal ageing process, many sufferers of dementia miss the optimum time for early intervention and become increasingly disoriented and unable to care for themselves. With the progressive ageing of Hong Kong population, dementia is set to exert enormous pressure on the medical and healthcare system and on society as a whole. To meet this service gap, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) and CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP) launched the "Care for the Elderly 2007 – Active Mind" Programme on World Alzheimer's Day last year (21 September 2007) and proudly announce the encouraging result of the Programme today – over 5,000 senior citizens with financial difficulties have received cognitive assessment and memory training to retard the onset of dementia through this programme.

Ms Christine FANG, Chief Executive of HKCSS, said the programme successfully conducted assessment for a total of 5,339 senior citizens (Table 1) after 12 months of dedicated efforts by frontline practitioners from 78 elderly service units (covers 40% of the elderly centre services in Hong Kong) and a team of trained volunteers from CLP. Over 80% of the elderly participants were female and 3,748 met the training criteria. Among them, 1,924 completed an eight-week memory training programme and applied what they had learned to facilitate their daily life.

**Table 1: Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) Result**

MMSE scores	No. of elders	%	Implications
30 (Full mark)	351 elders	6.6%	No follow up is required
26-29	2,042 elders	38.3%	With potentiality in memory problem or even mild cognitive impairment (MCI)
20-25	2,073 elders	38.8%	Suspected to have some difficulties in memory or even MCI

< 20	873 elders	16.3%	Suspected case of dementia, further investigation and medical referral needed
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,339 elders</b>	<b>100%</b>	

"The result of the memory training programme was encouraging. Around 70% of the elderly participants showed improvements in cognitive functioning following the memory training programme," said Dr. Jenny CHUNG, Associate Professor, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Nevertheless, it is of same importance to note that 2,946 elderly participants got scores under 25 in MMSE. That implies 55% of the elders are suspected to have difficulties in memory or even mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

Ms. Anita WONG, member of the Active Mind Steering Committee, pointed out that since there is no specific treatment for MCI, it is important to conduct early identification and prevention. The "Active Mind" programme did help identify and improve cognitive impaired elderly on early stage and thus ease the burdens of patients' families, caregivers and society in general. It is necessary to provide dementia prevention service and network and include MMSE and memory training as regular service provided by all elderly centres in the long run to meet the challenge of ageing society.

CLP's partnership with HKCSS was started by the launch of "Care for the Elderly" programme in 2004. The programme provided free influenza vaccinations for about 40,000 senior citizens. The programme focused on the prevention of dementia in 2007 and over 5,000 cognitive assessments and some 1,500 memory training sessions for 1,900 senior citizens were conducted. "We are pleased that the programme is a proven success, and it is now extended for another 12 months," said Ms Jane LAU, Director - Group Public Affairs of CLP. CLP has pledged to match public donation from now on until 31 July 2009 on a dollar-to-dollar basis, up to a maximum of HK\$400,000.

"As a responsible corporate citizen, CLP sets a good example for the community to follow. The 'Active Mind' programme has successfully established an effective tripartite model in which the business, social service organisations and the community can work together to serve our society," commended Ms Christine FANG.

Public support to the "Active Mind 2008" programme is welcome. Donations can be made online through the campaign site ([www.clpgroup.com/care](http://www.clpgroup.com/care)) · at all 7-Eleven stores, by cheque or credit card. The fund raised will be used to provide cognitive assessment, memory training classes and community education activities for the elderly in need.

### **About CLP**

CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP) is the largest electric utility in Hong Kong serving the business and domestic community in Kowloon, the New Territories, Lantau and most of the outlying islands. Operating a vertically integrated electricity generation, transmission and distribution business, CLP provides a highly reliable supply of electricity and excellent customer services to over 5.5 million people in its supply area.

### **About Hong Kong Council of Social Service**

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) is an umbrella organisation of more than 354 Agency Members that are providing over 90 percent social welfare services. The HKCSS, together with its Agency Members, promotes the betterment of social welfare service development in Hong Kong, facilitates cross-sectoral partnership, advocates equality, justice, social integration and a caring society.



(From left) Ms Christine Fang, Chief Executive, Hong Kong Council of Social Service; Ms Anita Wong, "Active Mind" Steering Committee Member; and Dr. Jenny Chung, Associate Professor of Department of Rehabilitation Science of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, introduced the memory training kit at the press conference.



Participants of the programme and family member of demented patient shared their gains and experiences with the illness, expecting to draw public attention to the rising trend in cases of dementia with their personal stories.



Active Mind Steering Committee pictured with the participant representative at the press conference. Led by HKCSS, the concerted effort comprising of professionals from different aspects of the elderly care field will endeavour to further promote “Early Detection and Early Intervention” to a wider community.



At the press conference, Dr. Jenny Chung, Associate Professor of Department of Rehabilitation Science of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, expressed that the result of the memory training programme was very encouraging. Around 70% of the elderly participants showed improvements in cognitive functioning following the memory training programme.



Ms Christine Fang, Chief Executive, Hong Kong Council of Social Service, commended CLP for their long-standing concern for the underprivileged group and stressed the importance of corporate support on the community during tough time.

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