



看不見的貧窮

從事老人工作多年,昔日接到個案申請,為謹慎利用社會資 源,必常家訪長者,親身視察他們在生活上出現什麼問題,了解 他們的經濟情況和支援網絡等。工作員亦不會單憑申請人所說的 而判斷提供援助與否;因為,有的長者會因尊嚴和不碪求助別人 而表示不需要協助,有的則有其他資源下亦期望找幫忙。所以, 家訪中我們要從不說話的東西來評估申請,如剝落的牆身、破舊 的傢俱、失修的電器、衣衫外觀、面無神色等,加上街坊門提供 的資料,種種提示令我們對個案的生活情況更為掌握;可是,隨 著社會的進步、人民知識水平的提升、個人衛生及儀容改善,再 者鄰舍之間的疏離,從前環境的線索,漸漸被隱藏或美化了,有 些有實質需要的老弱,從外在的環境,已未必能辨別出他們的匱 乏和無助。

記得最近有次家訪一位因突然中風的美容師,五十多歲孤 家寡人,租住在舊唐樓的一小單位。從前有收入時,本可付數千 元的租金,但她為治療中風後的各種問題,傾盡積蓄之餘,更不 能再工作,無奈要領取綜援,以應生活之需;也幸經醫務社工轉 介,獲安排入住剛落成的單人公屋單位。

現時的新公屋,單位雖然細小,但房署在廚房及廁所用牆磚 作粉飾,搬屋公司又幫這位美容師把舊居的薄身電視及手提電腦 搬來,她以有限的能力,把小塊的簡單舊花邊布碎放在床頭,看 來也算精緻。多年從事美容工作,她的外表看來也端莊整齊,故 此從環境外觀來看,與從前家訪所見的困乏盡不是一樣;不過, 當翻查其銀行簿、綜援資料及其家庭背景,便發現她確實與孤老 無異。她沒有能力付錢及找別人協助,分別在廚房及廁所加裝 扶手、改插頭及按鈕位置,為的是來遷就那失去能力的左手和左 腳。

另一位獨居的伯伯從前是裁縫,衣著適體、美觀整齊端正。 他退休時原想可靠五十萬的積蓄省儉度日,閒來與朋友往內地消 這;可惜,好景不常,沒有工作後不久,他被診斷出患有肝癌, 每月要自費購買昂貴藥物以治理病情;五十萬積蓄未夠七十歲就 花光了,最終也要靠綜援金生活。面對人生之跌落,缺乏援助要 自掏鉅額治病,更要依賴政府「救濟」,心感生活無助兼沒有尊 嚴,面談時更一度情緒激動,表示自己也曾是納稅人,如今患重 病,政府卻不施以援手,為了醫病更要向親友借錢。單從他的談 吐和衣著儀表來看,別人實在甚難發現他的貧窮和無助。

時代轉變,社會進步,本是好事;唯每一個年代、每一個社 會上都會有些遭逢不幸的人士,生活在社會的邊緣,抵受著個人 尊嚴與貧窮的痛苦。但正如前所說,踏入新時代,我們漸漸窺視 到貧窮人出現的形態也開始有所不同:衣不襤褸,並不代為他不 缺乏;家中有磚有瓦,並不代表他不匱乏。面對著這班弱勢的社 群,慈惠服務本著救急扶危的精神,靠著善長們的信賴與施善, 為老弱匱乏和「那看不見的貧弱」,繼續努力!

The Unnoticeable Poor

Being a social worker working in the elderly service field for years, in the past, in order to utilize the resources cautiously, we have to arrange home visit frequently in assessing the problem of those poor elderly, understanding their financial situation and support network. Workers will not make approval of the application only rely on the information provided by the cases. The reasons behind are that some elders refuse help because of dignity and shameness while some with resources but still want our help. Thus, we have to assess the cases' situation by all things around, such as the humble wall, old furniture, broken electronic appliances and their clothing. Together with the information provided by their neighbours, we can grasp the situation of those cases more comprehensively. However, with the advanced development of society, higher education level of citizens, improvement of personal hygiene and outlook, plus the distance within neighbours, the clues we used before are now being hidden and beautified; in other words, we no longer can assess their real needs and helplessness only by the external clues.

This phenomenon recalls the memory of my home visit to a stroke cosmetologist, who is around fifty years old, living alone and renting a small unit in a traditional Chinese household. In the past, she is able to pay for the few thousands rent; however, after her stroke, she lost her working ability and used up all of savings which in a result to the need of applying the CSSA. Luckily, with the social worker's referral, she then moved to a single unit of a new public estate.

Regarding to the public estate nowadays, it is small but well equipped with tile in both kitchen and toilet. She also brings along her LCD television and notebook bought in previous years, together with the simple decoration by her limited ability, it is really different from that of those poor we visited before. However, once we checked with her bank statement, CSSA record and background, we found that she is really in need, especially for equipping her with handrails in kitchen and toilet, relocating the electricity plug and button, in order to facilitate her life after losing the left hand as well as left leg ability.

Another old man who was a tailor before cares a lot of his outlook; when he retired, he saved five hundred thousand dollars for living. Originally, he planned to use the saving piece by piece; however, he was then diagnosed with liver cancer. Because of the expensive self-paid medicine each month with the worsen health situation year before, he finally used up all the saving and has to live on CSSA. It makes him feel loss of dignity and when he talked to us, he expressed his feeling to us quite emotionally that he was also a taxpayer before; however, he received no government help when in need and has to rely on relatives loan. Once again, just by his outlook and speaking, his poor condition is really unnoticeable.

The rapid development and change of society are in fact positive; however, there are also people with misfortune encounter in each generation facing lost of dignity and pain. As mentioned before, poverty to be seen nowadays is different from that of the past. The tidy outlook does not represent for his sufficiency while a home for living does not represent for his richness. Facing this group of minority, the services of our charitable project will work even harder to help those "unnoticeable poverty" supported by our belief of providing immediate and accurate help as well as the kind donations.



來自義工的 溫暖心意

受惠者言 Client's Remark

「自入冬後,寒流突然來襲,我身體又差,容易 因著涼引致氣管問題,最後要入院求診,甚感無奈。」90歲身體瘦弱的鄭婆婆說。

「好彩,聖雅各福群會的義工,由港島專程過來 錦田,為我送上善長親自編織的冷頸巾,也特地為我 準備棉被,讓我有足夠禦寒物品保暖。我唔想好似以 前咁,拿住杯熱水保暖,而且熱水好快變冷,在最凍 個幾日,凍到個人不停發抖。」

下月將91歲的鄭婆婆獨自一人居於元朗鄉郊的 村屋,獨力照顧生活上所需。「我一向好鍾意整野 食,往年我會整好多糯米糍分給邨內的鄰居朋友。年 紀大了,身體又唔好,尤其係冬天咁寒冷既天氣,我 實在再沒有能力做食物了。唯有等往後回暖睇下身體 會唔會好一些。」

「送暖行動」計劃得香港長領會的支持,派出義 工協助將禦寒物品送到偏遠地區的長者,並到戶為無 依長者安裝暖風機和送上熱水壺,希望透過探訪,貼 心的關懷他們的家居需要。

「多謝社工告知聖雅各福群會嘅「送暖行動」計 劃,讓我及時獲得這些禦寒物資,這個冬天不再冷 了。」居於同邨的娣婆婆不忘多次道謝,還為居於隔 鄰的謝婆婆著急,重複了解計劃能否同時協助無依的 謝婆婆。

「真係不知怎樣多謝無名善長,你一定要替我向 他們表達感謝!」鄭婆婆再次發自內心感激地說。

Heartfelt warmth from volunteer workers

"As the cold front hit this winter, my poor body caught cold, induced bronchitis and finally sought hospital treatment. Bad and helpless!" said the frail 90 years old granny Cheng.

"Luckily volunteers from SJS made a special trip to Kam Tin delivering me knitted scarf and cotton padded quilt to keep me warm. Gone are the days when in the past, I kept shivering without stop even holding a glass of hot water in my hand in the worst cold days."

Granny Cheng, to be 91 next month, lives alone in a village hut in Yuen Long and handles her daily chores singlehandedly. "I love cooking and would make glutinous rice cakes for my neighbours and friends in the village in the past. Now, I am too old and my body is weak especially under this winter cold. I no longer have the strength to prepare food for them. I just hope my physical will get better after warm weather sets in."

Our Warmth Caring Action Program, supported by Zhang Ling Association, sends out volunteer workers to deliver warmth keeping articles and thermos, install fan heaters to elderly in remote areas and etc. Through which we wish to show them care while meeting their home living needs.

"Thanks to the volunteer telling me the Warmth Caring Action Program of SJS, that enables me getting warm clothing and etc; and I no longer has to stay cold this winter," said granny Ti who kept on thanking us while wondering whether or not we could repeat the same to help her neighbour granny Tse also living alone with no help.



"I don't know how to thank those nameless benefactors giving us all these, you have to thank them for me!" said Cheng once more from the bottom of her heart.

「披上善長親手為我編織的頸巾披肩,這個冬天不再冷了。」 "With the knitted scarf from the donor, this winter is no longer cold!"



根據天文台的預測,拉尼娜(La Nina)現象正逐漸形成,本港冬季會持續寒冷,或會重演往年持續低溫的現象。獨居無依、體弱多病的貧苦長者,勢將於嚴寒下備受氣促、頭痛等痛症折磨,嚴重者更須即時送院。據報於往年氣溫嚴寒之際,一日有逾2千人次按平安鐘,其中130多人因痛症及氣促送院,實在極需社會人士的關懷和慰問。

聖雅各福群會「電器贈長者計劃」主要乃關懷全港獨 居無依長者電器的需要,為匱乏長者送出所需電器,避免 家居意外的發生。特別於嚴冬下,匱乏長者一方面因經濟 困難未能添置如熱水爐的貴價電器;另一方面隨年紀越 大,健康每況愈下,自行用水煲煲熱水沖涼可能會造成家 居意外,更有燙傷的可能。

事實上自入冬後,熱水爐的需求情況隨著本港氣溫逐 漸下降而有急升之勢,致令貧困長者輪候時間增加,被迫 單打獨鬥應付嚴寒天氣,相信當中有個案因禦寒設施不足 冷病。據社聯的資料顯示,110萬匱乏人口當中,其中7萬 人無足夠禦寒衣服,近2萬人在寒冬下無熱水洗澡。貧病交 加的弱老,健康必備受威脅。

「善款沒有增加,未能應付突然急升的個案需求。探 望長者時,眼見輪候的長者於嚴寒中掙扎求存,甚感無 奈。」負責計劃的社工表示,長者沒有熱水爐,通常幾天 才洗澡一次。每次洗澡必須煲大量熱水,以防熱水變涼而 冷倒。「我沒有熱水爐,幾天才洗澡一次。唯靠熱水煲煲 水沖涼,我手腳又慢,熱水很快變涼,一不小心氣管受涼 就病倒了。」獨居的陳伯伯感嘆地說。「因受寒病倒需看 醫生,又是另一筆花費了。」估計整個冬季有超過50名弱 老急需轉贈熱水爐。

事實上,有醫生指出「重病難過大節」,在嚴寒天氣 下感染肺炎、心臟病等急病風險急升。尤其長者普遍年老 體弱,熱水爐是不可缺少的禦寒措施。聖雅各福群會「電 器贈長者計劃」預計將需為超過50位匱乏長者送上電熱水 爐;計劃正急待社會人士在此雪中送炭的好時刻,為貧病 無依的貧弱病者伸援手,助免除發生冷死人的悲劇。施善 熱線:8107 8324。計劃網址:www.thevoice.org.hk。





The Feeble Elderly are prone to fall victim to La Nina Electric Water Heaters in urgent need to subdue the severe cold

"La Nina" climate phenomenon is taking shape, according to the Hong Kong Observatory which has forecasted that there will be a long spell of cold weather this winter, alike the one we had last year. In the freezing cold, the poor, feeble and lone elderly are bound to suffer from more pains triggered by the chill, such as dyspnea and headache. In some serious cases, they had to be hospitalized without any delay. It was reported that during the cold spell last year, the Safety Alarm Services received over 2,000 requests for help in just a single day. Some 130 people were hospitalized after complaining of shortness of breath and physical pains. Indeed, they are in great need of care and comfort from society.

The very goal of the "Electrical Appliances for the Elderly Program" under St. James' Settlement is to address the poor and lone elderly's need of electrical appliances and help them to avoid home accidents with our donated electrical appliances in place. Being unable to afford the expensive electric water heater, some poor elderly have no alternative but to heat up water on a stove and take it to their bathroom for bath. This possibly causes home accidents, which could result in the elderly being scaled. The tragedy is more likely to happen when their health is deteriorating as they are getting on in years, not to mention during the chilly days.

In fact, since the winter set in, the demand for our water heaters has been on a sharp rise with the temperature dropping day by day. As a result, it will take longer for the elderly to get the water heaters they desperately need. Meanwhile, they need to cope with the severe cold all by themselves. It is reckoned that some of them have fallen sick because they failed to get equipped to subdue the freezing cold. According to The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, 70,000 out of the 1.1 million people in poverty have inadequate keep-warm clothing, and nearly 20,000 people have to bath with cold water during chilly winter. It is certainly a threat to the health of those poor and ailing elderly.

"The sharp rise in demand for water heaters cannot be met in the absence of increase in donation. We felt sorry for the elderly when we saw how they struggled to survive the cold during our home visits," the social worker in charge of the Program further said that those elderly with no water heater installed usually take a bath every couple of days. They usually prepare a large amount of hot water for a bath hoping that it will not cool down quickly; otherwise they will catch a chill. "With no water heater, I take a bath every couple of days with water heated up on a stove. As I move slowly, water becomes cold before I finish bathing and I am prone to fall sick if my trachea is not warm enough." The lone Uncle Chan sighed, "If I get sick as a result of the cold weather, the medical fee will add to my financial burden." It is estimated that over 50 feeble elderly are in urgent need of electric water heaters in the course of this winter.

Some doctors indeed have pointed out that the number of patients suffering from acute diseases including pneumonia and heart attack increases significantly during chilly weather. Installation of electric water heater is indispensable for keeping warm in cold weather particularly for the elderly who are generally feeble. The "Electrical Appliances for the Elderly Program" under St. James' Settlement expects to receive over 50 requests for water heaters from the poor elderly in the coming weeks. This is the very time we can help the poor, ailing and lone elderly out of their hardship in the freezing cold by extending to them our warm helping hands. You can help prevent the tragedy of dying resulted from severe cold. Donation hotline: 8107 8324. Website:www. thevoice.org.hk.

「多得善長的捐助,讓我及時安裝熱水爐,洗澡不再怕冷了。」 "With the water heater installed right before the cold winter set in, I no longer feel cold while taking a bath. I am very grateful to the generous donors."





前來惠澤社區藥房購買自費藥物的,都是經政府醫生診 斷後,處方有關藥物治病救命;通常他們都是退休了的長者、 失業或低收入基層人士,生活匱乏,且病情不輕,患上的不是 糖尿、黃斑點病變的頑疾,就是肝腸的癌症,情況確實刻不容 緩。

對於無收入或低收入的人士來說,莫說是付不起幾萬元的 自費藥物,就算是一千幾百,經已是個天文數字。面對無錢醫 病的痛苦,他們被迫選擇做駝鳥、逃避現實、逃避絕望帶來的 痛苦。

陸先生,59歲,現職保安員,居於深水埗的板間房。「 我每月薪金八千多元,租金、車費、水電費已花掉了一大半的 人工,買藥錢了又佔了我僅餘人工的四分一。我還未計算食飯 和雜費,試問我那裡有能力維持生計?不是病死,就是餓死。 你教我如何選擇?!」陸先生向本會藥房的藥劑師陳姑娘道出 來自己背後的悲慘故事。

「早幾年醫生告知我患了乙型肝炎,要自費購買藥物來控 制病情。起初我還以為是一百幾十,原來一盒藥要 \$1600!每 月生活已經好緊絀,憑份糧我豈有能力購買?所以,最初我拒 絕買藥食,怎料數月後再覆診,醫生告知我的肝酵素上升了不 少,再不食藥的話,肝炎會變成肝癌。有頭髮邊個想做癩痢, 我不是不想買藥,我是沒有錢買藥,用錢食藥,又不夠錢食 飯,有苦自己知。單身寡佬一個,我真的好徬惶!」陸先生續 說:「我自己想辦法,就是每次買幾粒,將每日服食的藥物變 成隔日服食。」

藥劑師陳姑娘知悉陸先生的苦衷和健康情況後,一方面 告訴他每日服藥才可控制肝酵素指數,隔日食或斷斷續續服藥 是得不到藥效的;另一方面即時作出轉介,協助陸先生度過難 關。「聖雅各的藥房真的幫左我好多,資助我過萬元的藥物, 暫緩了我這一年的困苦。」

聖雅各福群會「惠澤社區藥房」乃首間非牟利的社區藥 房,以優惠價錢售賣自費藥物給予經濟困難的病人,以舒緩他 們沈重的經濟負擔和壓力。我們接觸了許多曾經接受藥費資助 的個案,具體地向他們作出藥費的資助,大大有助他們積極參 與藥物治療,使病情有效受到控制,他們亦能盡己任繼續工作



Gone is the fear for no meals or medicine

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Patients coming to the Philanthropic Community Pharmacy for self-purchase medication with prescriptions from government doctors are generally retired elderly, unemployed or low-income people having insufficient means with chronic illnesses like diabetes, age-related macular degeneration and liver or intestine cancers, awaiting immediate help.

For those having no or low income, they not only cannot afford medication costing thousands of dollars; even few hundred dollars are astronomical figures to them. Confronted by the pain for lack of treatment fee, they are forced to flee the pain incurred like an ostrich seeking an escape from reality and hopelessness.

Mr. Luk, ages 59, is currently a security guard living in a panel partitioned room in Shum Shui Po. "My monthly wage is some eight thousand dollars with over half spent on rent, transportation and utilities; buying medicine would take away another quarter of my remaining wage, not to mention meals and sundry expenses. How can I maintain my livelihood? If I die not from illness, I would die from starvation. Just tell me what I should do!" Mr. Luk described what was behind his melancholy to Miss Chan, our pharmacist.

"Years before when the doctor told me I had Hepatitis B and need self-purchase medication to control my condition, I initially thought it would only cost perhaps a hundred dollars. Who knows just one pack costs \$1600! I was already financially very tight and how could I afford that? Hence, I refused to take it. On subsequent follow-up consultation, the doctor told me that my liver enzyme has shot up a lot and if I do not take the medication, Hepatitis B can turn into liver cancer. Who wants to be bald if he has hair? Not that I do not want to buy the medicine, I just have no money for that. If I buy the medicine, I have to go hungry. I know my bitter situation being a bachelor and I am really worried!" Luk continues to say, "I tried to take care of that myself by buying few pills, changing a daily dose to every other day."

On knowing Luk's dilemma and health condition, Miss Chan on one hand advised him that only medication could control his liver enzyme index; taking medication every other day or intermittently will not get him the therapeutic benefit. On the other hand, she made referral for him to overcome the difficulty. "The pharmacy of SJS has helped me a lot, financing me thousands of dollars on medication that has temporarily alleviated my hardship this year."

The Philanthropic Community Pharmacy of St James' Settlement is the first non-profit community pharmacy supplying low cost medication to patients having financial difficulties in order to relieve their financial burden and stress. We have subsidized many such cases to greatly help their active participation in getting pharmaceutical treatment in order to effectively control their condition so that they can do their utmost to continue working. We are looking forward to benevolent people sowing the seeds of hope for these poor people. Charity donation can be made by cheque, beneficiary "St. James' Settlement", specifying for Medication Subsidy Program and send to Room 105, 85 Stone Nullah Lane, Wanchai, Hong Kong. Donation hotline: 2835-4321 or 8107-8324.

聖雅各福群會惠澤社區藥房,資助了不少匱乏病人的高昂藥費,暫緩了 他們生存及生活的困苦。

The Philanthropic Community Pharmacy of St James' Settlement subsidized the expensive medication of many poor patients which temporarily alleviated their hardship.





魄贈營養福袋 增癌症病人體重 可繼續治療保命

病,無分貧富,任何一個曾經病患的人都知道,病患到 來,影響健康狀況,輕則就算是傷風感冒,都會令身體疲倦乏 力,抵抗力轉差,不妥善照顧自己,更會令小病變大病,更何 況是癌病重症。身體在打仗期間,體質弱一點都隨時有機會命 送黃泉。所以,通常醫生都會建議這類病人在服藥以外,飲用 營養補充劑增強抵抗力,幫助身體對抗頑疾。

林太是一名清潔工人,早前不幸患上卵巢癌,需要接受化 療。化療期間,體重急跌、行動乏力、食慾不振,並且出現白 血球持續下降等副作用。醫生再三強調,體內的白血球必須增 加,否則依她現時的體質,根本不能再繼續進行化療。於是, 醫生建議林太服用專設予癌症人士飲用的營養補充劑補充體 力,待體質較好時再接受治療。

「我去購買營養補充劑,一問價錢,成個人都嚇到呆左。 一盒補充劑要\$500,每盒只可飲用5日,計一計,每月開支高 達\$2,000。我倆夫婦每月領取約五千多元的綜援金,生活僅 足糊口,試問我豈有能力再購買補充劑?!最後,我沒有買就 走……」林太無奈地說道。

另一個案是王先生,他患有胃癌和大腸癌,經多次手術後,體魄大不如前,胃口亦很差。「醫生見到我愈來愈瘦,建 議我飲用營養補充劑,奈何一個月要\$2,000,這等如我領取綜 援金的總額了,買了補充劑後我如何維生呢?所以,我唯一的 選擇就是不飲,靠食飯,可是,體重卻一直沒有回升。」

根據藥劑師陳羽微表示:「一些身體經歷重創,如手術後 癌症病患者會大量流失蛋白質,造成體重下降式療程後遺症, 導至食慾下降,免疫力減弱。一些含有更重持別安機酸、EPA 等營養補充劑,可增強白血球重生提高免疫力;EPA的添加增 加肌肉質量、增強體力。」有見及此,本會惠澤社區藥房特 設「營養福袋餽贈計劃」,送贈營養補充劑給予經濟有困難 的病人,改善他們的體質,協助他們接受治療及幫助身體復 原。現我們希望能以集腋成裘的方式,資助有關病人購買營 養補充劑;每人捐助\$495,即可幫助病人購買1 盒營養補充 劑。有意施善者,支票請寄:香港灣仔石水渠街85號一字樓 105室。支票背面請指定捐予「營養福袋餽贈計劃」。施善熱 線:2835-4321或

8107-8324 °



Nutritional Baggie for Cancer Patients Increase their declining weight; Strengthen their body health for life

No matter you are rich or poor, illness will attack you and affect your health condition. Even when you suffered from influenza or cold, you would feel extremely exhausted with poor immunity against the viruses. The illness would get more serious if you do not take good care of yourself. Especially for patients suffering from cancer, their weak body health could be life threatening once infected with illnesses. Therefore, most doctors would recommend cancer patients to take nutritional supplement to strengthen their immune system to fight against illnesses.

Mrs. Lam, who is a cleaning worker, was diagnosed as ovarian cancer and required to receive chemotherapy for treatment. In the middle of the therapy, Mrs. Lam lost significant amount of weight within a short timespan, accompanied with loss of appetite and impotent movement. Her white blood cell level showed persistent dropping which could probably be side effects brought by the chemotherapy. Her doctor emphasized that the white blood cell level of Mrs. Lam should increase or else, she failed to afford with the latter part of chemotherapy. Her doctor recommended Mrs. Lam to take nutritional supplement specially for cancer patients and retake the treatment again after her body condition resumed to the normal level.

"I was shocked when I asked for the price of a nutritional baggie. It costs \$500 per box which I could take it for 5 days only. In other words, it costs me \$2,000 per month. We only receive \$5000 and more CSSA from Social Welfare Department which barely covers our daily expenses. How could I afford such extravagant supplement under my deprived financial condition?" Mrs. Lam chose to give up taking these supplements with pity.

Another case Mr. Wong suffered from stomach and intestinal cancer. His health condition deteriorated sharply and he could barely eat. "My doctor suggested me to take nutritional supplement and I failed to afford \$2,000 monthly cost. The nutritional supplement costs the same as my CSSA income and how could I live on after buying these expensive stuffs? I could only choose to live without these supplements; but, I am not able to gain weight from my diet."

Our pharmacist Anita Chan pointed out that the importance of nutritional supplement for cancer patients, "For patients who received surgical treatment, their body undergo trauma and lost significant amount of protein which caused weigh loss, loss of appetite, weakening of immune system etc. For supplement that contains amino acid, EPA etc., it surely could help to reinforce level of white blood cell. The EPA could also strengthen the muscle power and body energy of patients." Thus, the Philanthropic Community Pharmacy introduced "Nutritional Baggie for the Weak" to provide deprived patients with nutritional supplement, to improve their body condition and facilitate betterment in rehabilitation process in order to keep on receiving further treatment. We hope to receive \$495 from you so that we could buy a box of nutritional supplement for each patient. Donation cheque, beneficiary "St. James' Settlement", earmarked at the back "Nutritional Baggie for the Weak"; and send to Room 105, 85 Stone Nullah Lane, Wanchai, Hong Kong. Service and inquiry hotline: 8107 8324 or 2835 4321.

林太身體虛弱,先生代為拿取有關的營養補充劑。

The husband of Mrs. Lam helped to get nutritional supplement for his wife, who is too weak to fight against illness.





莫婆婆今年六十一歲,在馬頭圍邨住了三十年。她年 青時當幼稚園教師,對小朋友很有愛心,但偏偏與自己的兒 子,沒有緣分。原本一家五口,因著種種原因,丈夫和三個 孩子都搬走了,現只剩下她一個以綜援金為生,莫婆婆亦只 能憑舊日照片緬懷過去。

「老來才一個人住,要自己買餸、煮飯、洗衫,個人好 累。屋企其他嘢,一來無錢攪,二來屋企無人幫,三來又唔 想煩人,無必要都唔會做,而家我對生活都唔敢有咩要求。」這是莫婆婆家中環境漸漸殘舊,而又無力改善的原因。

多年來沒有好好保養家居環境,最後便換來一場意外。 一天,婆婆廁所的洗手盆因為日久失修螺絲生銹,用力一按 便「呯」一聲掉了下來!婆婆表示:「當時真係好驚好亂, 但係好驚好亂又點?無人知,呀仔都唔知!」說來悲從中 來。由此看來,兒子與婆婆已沒有往來;所以,當她的洗 手盆掉下來,就好像天塌了下來一樣,不單是生活變得不方 便,更重要的是勾起她狐單無助及被遺棄的感覺!

及後負責莫婆婆的社工黃姑娘得悉此事,便向本會「長 者家居維修服務」作出轉介,希望義工師傅幫助婆婆更換洗 手盆。

經評估後,本會安排經營水務工程公司的何師傅在周六 下午下班後,到訪婆婆家度呎和購買材料,並即日鑽牆掛上 新洗手盆和接駁來去水喉。手工純熟的師傅在個多小時內便 完成工程,並一再小心翼翼、反覆測試確認沒有漏水後,請 婆婆開水喉,為新洗手盆「剪綵」。

莫婆婆扭開水龍頭,看見水順暢地流出,她立刻高興地 把手洗擦起來,說道:「水仲猛過舊嗰個,多謝新界崇德社 善長的資助。我沒有錢買新洗手盆,全靠善長支持,我才有 這個又新又靚的新洗手盆,善長的愛心讓我感到溫暖,還有 多謝好人師傅的幫助,有咁多人來關心我這個孤獨老人,多 謝哂!多謝哂!」

對於「長者家居維修服務」來說,安裝一個洗手盆,不 單只是一個維修工程,更重要的

是透過維修的工作,讓莫婆婆感受到,不論過去生活如何,社會 上仍然有一些人願意真心真意地 去接納她和關心她,令她生活加 添溫暖和希望。



Washbasin makes her feel loved again

Posted in Grandma Mok's home are many black-and-white photos of her with children brimming with happiness. Yet, there isn't one recent photo taken with her family.

Grandma Mok is 61 years old and has lived in Ma Tau Wai Estate for 30 years. She was a kindergarten teacher in her youth and loved children very much. But, somehow she never got along with her own sons. For various reasons, her family of five broke up. Her husband and three children all moved away, leaving her behind to live on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance. Grandma Mok can only rely on old photos to recall the past.

"Left to live by myself in my old age, I have to do everything myself – getting groceries, cooking, laundering. It is very tiring. As for the other things in the house, I have neither money nor help to take care of them. Besides, I hate to trouble other people unless it is absolutely necessary. I now don't dare to demand much of life." That's why her environment is in disrepair; and she hasn't been able to make improvement.

Years of neglect led to an accident that the screws on the washbasin in her bathroom were rotten with rust. A mere push on the basin sent it crashing down with a big bang! Grandma Mok said, "I was really very frightened and upset. But, what's then? My sons wouldn't know!" She was stricken with grief. Apparently, her sons were not seeing her. So, when the washbasin fell, it was like the sky falling down. It was not just inconvenience; what hit her harder was the feeling of loneliness, helplessness and abandonment abandoned.

Miss Wong, the social worker responsible for Grandma Mok, learned of her trouble. She referred the case to our Elderly Home Maintenance Service, hoping our volunteers would replace Grandma Mo's washbasin for her.

After assessing the case, we arranged for Mr. Ho, who runs a plumbing business of his own, to pay a visit to Grandma Mok's home after work on a Saturday afternoon, to take measurements and purchase the necessary material. That very day drills were made on the wall, the new washbasin was installed, and the pipes connected for water supply and drainage. In Mr. Ho's skilled hands the job was finished in just over an hour. After checking and rechecking to make sure there was no leakage, he asked Grandma Mok to turn on the water tap, an "officially inaugurate" the new basin."



When she turned on the tap and saw the running water, she immediately began to wash her hands saying, "It runs better than the old one. Thanks to the Zonta Club of the New Territories for their help. I couldn't afford a new basin. Now,

> I have this handsome new basin, all due to the support of the kind donors. Their concern warms my heart. I also want to thank the kind Mr. Ho for his help. So many people have shown concern to this lonely old person. Thank you so much! Thank you so much!"

> To the Elderly Home Maintenance Service, installing a washbasin is not just a maintenance job. More importantly, the maintenance job let our cases feel that, whatever may have happened in the past, there are still people in the community who are willing to sincerely accept them, to take concern in them and to add warmth and hope to her life.

善長的慷慨捐助,加上師傅的技術,為莫婆婆帶來 一個「又新又靚,充滿愛心」的洗手盆。

The generosity of kind donors and the skills of our volunteer gave Grandma Mok a washbasin that is "handsome, new and full of love."





捐款支持 蘇屋搬邨計劃

舊式公屋建成多年,樓宇結構老化,產生危險。政府 為改善居民生活環境,把老化公屋拆卸重建,並安置居民 到環境較佳的居所。

然而,一些獨居兩老長者,半生在舊邨紮根,突然 要處理搬遷大小事,又要適應新居環境,雖然政府有提供 搬遷津貼協助部分支出,但都不免會感到徬徨無助;特別 是一些體弱、支援網絡薄弱的長者,他們沒有足夠體力為 遷居奔走,也不懂如何尋找協助,因此更加需要我們的照 顧。

有見及此,本會長者家居維修服務過去曾多次聯同地 區組織,協助長者搬邨,每次都出動數十位義工師傅,為 無依長者鋪設防滑膠地板、裝置照明及扶手、刀架、毛巾 架、窗簾路軌等。在香港各邨如富昌邨、何文田邨、白田 邨、牛頭角上邨、元州邨四期等等,都存在義工師傅出汗 出力的片段與受助長者的無言感激。

農曆新年過後,蘇屋邨餘下六座將要拆卸,居民將 分別獲安置到元州邨五期以及石硤尾邨的新公屋。本服務 將繼元州邨四期後,再與救世軍蘇屋邨社區服務隊合作, 協助長者搬邨。該會社工表示,搬遷戶中約有60戶獨居或 兩老無依長者,符合接受本服務的資格,並極需要義工協 助,舒緩老來搬遷帶來的憂慮。

義工師傅們已準備就緒,惟欠善款為受助長者購買材 料物資。我們預算每戶新居裝修需500元,60戶共30,000 元。有善長們的集腋成裘,才能支持義工師傅的無私貢 獻,助長者在安全舒適的環境安享晚年。

施善支票抬頭「聖雅各福群會」,指 定捐予「家居維修服務」,俾本會可依 指令濟助他們;支票請寄:香港灣 仔石水渠街85號一字樓105室。服 務查詢及施善熱線:8107 8324或 2835 4321。

Donation in support of the Rehousing of So Uk Estate

The old style public estates have been constructed for so many years that the structures are aging, leading to danger and risk. In order to improve the living environment for residents, the government demolishes and rebuilds the aging public estate, while the residents will be settled down in public estates with better living environment.

However, for quite a number of living alone elders or old couples, most of their life time is stuck in the old estate. Though rehousing allowance is provided by the government in supporting part of the removal expense, many elderly still feel anxious and helpless when facing the clearance program. Especially for those with physical disabilities and weak support network, they have not enough energy to make arrangement for the removal; more important, they do not know any ways to seek help, which are in need of our help and care.

Regarding to this, with cooperation of the community organization, our Elderly Home Maintenance Service offers the elderly help. Each time, we work with around fifty volunteers in helping the needy elderly to lay skid flooring, equip the lighting and handrail, knife and towel tray and etc. In fact, for many rehousing projects in Hong Kong, such as the Fu Cheong Estate, Ho Man Tin Estate, Pak Tin Estate, Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate, Un Chau Estate Phase 4 and etc, it includes the precious memory of both the hard work of our volunteers and the grateful thanks of the elders being helped.

After the Lunar New Year, the remaining six buildings of So Uk Estate will be cleared; and, residents will be settled down in Un Chau Estate Phase 5 and the new public estate in Shek Kip Mei respectively. Thus, after the project for Un Chau Estate Phase 4, our service will cooperate with the So Uk Estate Community Service Team in helping the elders' removal again. According to the social worker of their team, around 60 units of living alone elders and old couples fulfill the criteria of our service this time. Thus, the help of volunteers is in urgent need in an attempt to release the anxious as well as burden of those elders.

> For our volunteers, they are already ready for the project; however, we are still in need of the kind donations for purchasing the materials. In our prediction, the budget for each unit is \$500; thus, \$30,000 for 60 units in total. We believe that with the kind support of our donor can then support the unselfishness and contribution of our volunteers, which ultimately to provide a safe and comfortable living area for the poor elders.

> > Please kindly send your donation cheque beneficiary "St. James' Settlement", earmarked at the back "Elderly Home Maintenance Service", mailing to Room 105, 1/F, 85 Stone Nullah Street, Wanchai, Hong Kong. Donation and inquiry hotline: 2835-4321 or 8107-8324.

準備入伙的元州邨五期。 The Phase 5 Un Chau Estate ready for moving in.





最好的新年禮物

新年新氣象,家家喜洋洋,但家居失修的長者依舊為 生活惆悵。家居維修服務義工師傅在佳節前夕仍不忘孤老 的苦況,即使過節要處理的事務繁多,仍然抽出時間,維 修孤老家居,為他們帶來溫暖和光明。

黃伯伯今年71歲,獨居於紅磡一唐樓的6樓。伯伯年老 體弱,先後罹患口腔癌、胃癌和大腸癌,不斷進出醫院, 也花光了積蓄。病後,領取綜援的伯伯堅持自費接受中醫 療法調理身體,令其他的開支更為緊絀。

雖然洗手間的鎢絲燈泡火數低,也用了多年,佈滿污 漬,只發出暗淡的一點光,但伯伯不捨得花費更換。伯伯 的廁所水箱有漏水情況,在晚上,伯伯害怕看不清楚水漬 而滑倒,不敢在家如廁,「要步行六層樓梯到公廁,又落 又上,自己兩腳無力,舉步為艱,每次都很辛苦,但又不 去不行,無辦法」。轉介社工恐防伯伯在晚上行樓梯更易 跌倒,向本會家居維修服務求救,希望為伯伯解決照明及 廁所漏水問題。

師傅深知照明對長者安全至關重要,於是在假期加班 出動,到達伯伯家,拿出奧的亮照明國際有限公司捐贈的 LED燈泡,立即為伯伯接駁電線和安裝。伯伯急不及待按 下燈掣,見證新燈泡的光芒。「真的很光亮,我雖然近 乎失明,都看得很清楚!這個燈泡比我從前用的好得多! 」另師傅見伯伯的廁所水箱漏水,也連忙為他檢查,為伯 伯更換了波曲,廁所不再漏水了。「很感激奧的亮和義工 師傅的關懷照顧,我不再怕跌倒了,這真是最好的新年禮 物!」

這年本來又是狐獨的新年,但因有著善長及義工的無 私奉獻,對黃伯伯來說,不是雪上加霜,而是雪中送炭。



The Best New Year Gift

New Year's new atmosphere, families are joyful but elderly living in impaired homes are still worrying for their livelihood. Home Maintenance Service volunteer technicians do not ignore the difficulties of the living alone elderly even though many things remain to be attended by them for the festivity. They still find time to repair homes of the elderly, bringing them warmth and brightness.

Old man Wong, now 71, lives alone on the sixth floor of a Chinese style building in Hung Hom. He is frail and suffered from oral cavity cancer, stomach cancer and colorectal cancer, and constantly in and out hospitals; thus exhausted his saving. After the illnesses, the CSSA receiving Wong insisted on having out-ofpocket traditional Chinese medication treatment, not doing any good to his financial position.

Though the light bulb in the wash room was of low power, wolfram type, used for years, dirt covered, and emitted very dim light, Wong did not change it as that would cost him money. His toilet also leaked and he dared not use it at night for fear of slip falling due to poor sight. "I used to travel six floors walking down and back to the public toilet despite my weak legs, but what else can I do." The referring social worker feared for his fall going up and down the stairs at night came to us for help, hoping we can fix his lighting problem and leaking toilet.

The importance of lighting on safety of the elders is too well known to the master technician. Hence, he worked overtime on vacation, bringing along a LED bulb donated by Optiled Lighting International Ltd for the installation. On flipping the switch old man Wong saw the bright light. "It is very bright though I am almost blind I still can see clearly, much better than my former bulb!" The other master technician went to inspect his leaking toilet and replaced the ball handle to fix the leak. "Thanks to Optiled Lighting International Ltd and the master technicians, I no longer have to fear falling down and this is really my best New Year gift!"

The selfless contribution from well-wishers and the volunteer workers have given Wong timely help, no more feeling being alone and helpless this New Year time.

「感謝奧的亮及師傅的新年關懷[,]令我的洗手間光線充足[,]我不再怕 滑倒了!」

"Thanks to Optiled Lighting International Ltd and the master technicians, my washroom is now equipped with enough lighting; thus, I am not afraid of slipping and falling anymore."





電水堡與匱そ長者

我在探訪一名居住在長沙灣公屋的弱視長者時, 感到萬分驚訝。我看到他廚房內有一個應是幾十年前 製造的古舊水煲。其銀色的外表及橡膠蓋展示了它的 陳舊,並十分危險地放於煮食爐上。「請你喝杯開 水,好嗎?」長者邊說邊摸著牆角往廚房走去。當我 在啜飲這杯熱水時,感到她生活上的苦處,特別覺得 不安。

你可曾想到燒一杯開水是件困難和危險的家務 嗎?看著破損和殘舊的水煲,令我從心底裡發出同情 來。使用該水煲是極危險的,其銀色內層已剝落,會 危害到長者的健康。說得極端一點,該名長者是以玩 命的代價來燒、喝一杯平凡開水。

這宗弱視長者沒有適當電水煲的事例,僅屬冰山 一角。其實,還有更多長者生活在沒有適當及簡便水 煲的環境中。請您伸出援手,幫忙改善這些不幸老 者的生活。每捐助港幣175元,我們便可購買一台安 全、簡便的電水煲以滿足他們所需。這對我們的意 義是很重大的。請將有背書「供電水煲用」的支票 寄到香港仔灣仔石水渠街85號105室。網址:www. thevoice.org.hk,施善熱線: 8107-8324。

Electric Water Boiler for Unprivileged Elderly

I was so shocked when I visited a visually impaired elderly living in a public housing unit in Cheung Sha Wan. I saw an ancient water boiler in the kitchen, which was believed to be made decades ago. The silvery body surface and the rubber lid showed the oldness of boiler. It was on the cooking stove, very dangerously. "May I serve you a glass of hot water?", the elderly said, directing himself to the kitchen by touching the corner of the wall. When I saw how difficult her life was, I felt so embarrassed, especially when sipping the glass of hot water.

How could you imagine that even boiling a glass of water could be a difficult and risky housework? Looking at the worn-out and defective water boiler, the feeling of sympathy rushed out from my heart. The boiler was totally unsafe. The silver lining inside the boiler might be wearing off and hindering the health of the elderly. Extravagantly, the elderly was paying his life to simply make and drink a glass of water.

A case of visually impaired elderly without a proper electric water boiler may just be a tip of an iceberg. Nonetheless, there are still so many elderly that are living a life without a proper and simple water boiler. We need your helping hands and donation to improve the life of the unprivileged ones. Each donation of \$175 will allow us to buy a safe and qualified water boiler to satisfy their need. Your kind donation means a lot to us. Your donation by cheque remarking 'For electric water boiler' can be sent by mail to Room 105, 85 Stone Nullah Lane, Wanchai, Hong Kong. Website: www.thevoice.org.hk. Donation hotline: 8107-8324.



一台安全、簡便的電水煲,便可為長者居家帶來溫暖及安全。 A safe and qualified water boiler can provide the elderly with a warm and safe living environment.





惠澤社區藥房的運作

致慈惠月報編輯:

你好,小姓李。本人知道你們有一個藥房,另外又有 藥物咨詢服務,今次來信,是想了解多一些有關資料,希 望你們能代為解答。

其實,我的朋友早前也曾到訪你們的藥房,得知你 們不是所有藥物均有發售,同時,購買藥物亦需預約,跟 其他藥房有點分別,詳情是怎樣的呢?另外,買藥時,我 又可否帶同其他藥物一併到訪,順道想向藥劑師查詢了解 呢?如行動不便的人士,又有否其他途徑可請藥劑師解答 有關藥物問題?

謝謝解答,等待你們的回覆。

讀者李先生

* * * * * * * *

李先生:

你好!感謝你的來信,讓我們有機會讓大家多了解我 們的服務。

我們的惠澤社區藥房,目的是為有需要同時合乎資格 的匱乏病者,提供優惠價錢以購買經由公立醫院及診所醫 生處方的自費藥物。有關的自費藥物,全賴藥廠的慈惠支 持,故實在難以提供所有藥物種類。然而,我們亦積極與 藥廠溝通,加上他們的善心支持,藥物種類已由最初的三 十多種增加到現時的七十多種,期盼未來能繼續獲得更多 支持,以幫助更多有需要的人士。

至於購買藥物方面,由於所有處方藥物均需由藥劑師 調配,加上我們希望惠澤社區藥房不單只提供售藥服務, 同時亦提供藥療輔導服務,提供專業的用藥知識,增加社 區人士對藥物管理知識,使他們能盡早獲得最適切的藥物 治療,改善病情。為能詳細地解答及提供用藥知識,故每 位前來購藥的人士,均需事前預約。

亦正因此理念,我們設有藥物咨詢熱線,歡迎有需要 人士於辦公時間致電51313638問藥;同時,誠如你所言, 如大家遇有藥物問題,而又未能於電話中詳細解答,我們 亦歡迎致電預約會見藥劑師。另外,服務亦關顧到行動不 便及居於偏遠的人士,附有視像問藥及到戶藥療服務,藥 劑師可透過視像或上門以提供到位的照顧,以使病人達致 「知藥用藥」的目的。

謝謝你的來信!

The Operation of Philanthropic Community Pharmacy

Dear editor,

Hello, I am Lee. I know that there is a Pharmacy in your service building; also, there is medication counseling service. Thus, I am writing to know more about the details for this and thank you for your answer.

In fact, a friend of mine came to your Pharmacy before and discovered that not all kinds of medication are included. Meanwhile, booking is also needed for medication purchase. It seems a bit different from that of others in the community. May I know more about this difference?

In addition, when I come to your Pharmacy, can I also bring along my medicine so that I can understand more from the pharmacist? And apart from coming to the Pharmacy by person, may I also know if there are other ways of medication enquiry for those who have walking disabilities.

Thank you again for your answer and I look forward to hearing from you.

Mr. Lee

* * * * * * * *

Dear Mr. Lee,

Thank you for your letter. This is also a good chance for us to let more people know more about the operation of our Philanthropic Community Pharmacy.

For our Philanthropic Community Pharmacy, we aim to make available self-paid expensive medication, prescribed by hospitals and clinics under the Hospital Authority, at a much affordable price to the patient. Regarding to those self-paid medicine, it relies on the kind support of the pharmaceutical factory; thus, it has difficulties in having all kinds of medicine. However, we keep proactive communication with the factory, together with their kindness, the number of medication provided has increased from around thirty to nearly seventy in total. Of course, we wish to have more support so that more needy can be benefited.

While for the medication purchase, all prescribed medication has to be allotted by pharmacist; also, we hope our pharmacy not only provides selling service, but also provides patience with medication counsel services and professional knowledge of medication usage, in an attempt to increase the medication knowledge between the society and result in the needy having the most suitable treatment for recovery. Thus, anyone coming to our pharmacy for medication purchase has to make booking in advance for a more detailed counseling and information.

All in all, because of this reason behind, we set up a Medicine Advice Hotline (Tel: 5131-3638) for those in need; also, like what you mentioned, for some complicated medication problems which is difficult to explain in phone, we welcome you to make a reservation in visiting our pharmacist. Moreover, taken people with disabilities and living in remote area into concern, we also have Tele Pharmaceutical Consultation Service and Out Reach Pharmaceutical Consultation Service while pharmacist can provide effective care through webcam or even by person to needy home in an attempt to meet our belief "Service to the Needy".

Thank you again for your letter.

Yours faithfully,

慈惠月報編輯上

Editor, Philanthropy Monthly





Ming Pao Yuen Pak Yan

電話送暖 長者後顧無憂 義工定時致電 系統日日保平安

「你可以叫我肥姨,有人叫我阿肥,有些老友記叫我肥妹, 唯獨一個稱呼我不應的……『肥婆』!哈哈哈!」人稱「肥姨」 的程麗鶯,62歲,為聖雅各福群會的「後顧無憂」服務擔任義 工,致電獨居長者噓寒問暖,其爽朗笑聲和爛笑話總逗得一眾老 友記笑不攏嘴,就連不愛說話的老伯,亦因她而十數年來首次開 金口哼唱《風流夢》。「我做義工問候人,從來不當工作,給了 我名單,就多了班朋友!」

「我看着丈夫如何『頹』下來,就覺得要幫長者怎樣站起 來,逗他們談天、東問西問。」肥姨憶述2008年丈夫過世前插着 胃喉時分外抑鬱;長者不願說話,舌頭就會漸漸不靈光,令肥姨 決心與長者打開話匣子。

肥姨的電話傾偈友伴無數,每次致電前,她都會先溫習一遍 對方的檔案,再親切慰問。93歲伯伯訴苦無人跟他聊天,舌頭打 結,肥姨就鼓勵他唱粵曲,對方不肯,肥姨便先哼小明星的《風 流夢》,才哼了兩句「半生佻達任情種 情意加濃」,對方即歌癮 大發,捧着電話哼了全曲,還說有數個音唱不好,承諾多練習, 下次再唱。

老翁無人聊天 電話中唱粵曲

對肥姨來說,名單交到她手上便是朋友,天冷提醒添衣不在 話下,聽到對方咳嗽便教煮雪梨水,下雨天提醒對方檢查鞋底勿 「蝕底」。

肥姨的幽默爽朗令不少長者每次接到來電都興奮道:「肥 姨!為什麼這麼久不來電呀?」不少服務對象亦視肥姨如朋友, 肥姨憶述曾有退休法官反過來關心她喪夫後的生活,親切安慰 她,「大家素未謀面,反而這麼關心我!」肥姨憶述時仍熱淚盈 眶。

肥姨說,自己不怕死,卻「怕死了累街坊」,已是無親無故 的她,2008年報名參加聖雅各福群會「後顧無憂」服務安排身後 事,並開始擔當義工致電登記計劃的長者。

「無憂通」系統 長者按鍵報平安

負責計劃的企業拓展經理岑智榮表示,不少長者參加計劃 後,仍表達擔心「死了無人知」,但人手致電畢竟有時限,去年4 月遂進一步擴展計劃,以免費音頻電話系統,每天定時致電長者 確保他們安康。

長者登記這個「無憂通」計劃後,系統會定時致電長者並確 定長者按下「1」鍵「報平安」,如長者沒按,機構會致電對方及 查詢醫院紀錄、上門尋人,24小時後仍未能成功尋人,便會報警 要求支援。岑智榮憶述,曾有70歲伯伯「失蹤」,致電其手機無 人接應,機構最後決定報警破門,才發現對方只是將手機遺在家 中回鄉,虛驚一場。

岑智榮表示,幸好從未發生不愉快事件,但他相信,隨着人 □老化,相關需求會愈來愈大,而機構亦會安排義工不時親身探 訪長者,讓他們感到溫暖。



Calls to warm elderly hearts and to ensure personal safety

"You may call me Fat Aunt, some just call me Fatty, some pals address me as Fat Sis, but never call me "Old Fat" which I will not respond! Ha, ha, ha!" Whom people call Fat Aunt, Ching Lai Ung, 62 years old, a volunteer worker of SJS Funeral Navigation Services, is responsible for making phone calls to elders living alone. Her frank and open gestures with the laughter have kept her elderly pals' mouths wide open. Her "Dissolute Dream", first song sung by her for over a decade, had sent non-talkative elders singing along for the first time. "I do not treat my volunteered regard sending as work. The name list handed to me has added me a group of friends!"

"In watching how my husband degenerated, I felt the need to help elders getting back up, chit chatting with them." Fat Aunt recalled the time of her extremely depressed, tube-fed husband prior to his death in 2008. Elders' unwillingness to speak will become tongue-tied and Fat Aunt is determined to make them talk.

Fat Aunt talks to lots of phone pals. Each time prior to making her call, she would review the receiver's file and then send her warm regards. A 93 years old man bitterly complained he had nobody to talk to and became tongue-tied. She encouraged him to sing Cantonese song but was being rejected. Thus, she started to murmur "Dissolute Dream" sung by Siu Ming Sing. After the first couple lines of the lyric, she heard him start singing along at the other end, all the way to its end, apologizing he had missed certain tune and promised to do better with more practice and sing again on her next call.

Old man having nobody to chit chat sings Cantonese song over the phone

To Fat Aunt, names on list handed in to her are all her friends. She alerts them to put on more clothes when it gets cold, advise them to prepare pear soup while hearing coughing over the phone and remind them to inspect their shoes for wearing out when it rains.

Fat Aunt's humour and frankness has excited her call receiving elders saying, "Fat Aunt! What happened that not hearing from you so long?" Many of them treat her as a friend. She recalled a retired judge comforting her on the death of her husband. We have never met, but he was so nice sending me his regards and condolence!" when saying, Fat Aunt still with tears in her eyes.

Fat Aunt says she does not fear death but wishes not to bother her neighbours as she has neither kins nor relatives. She joined the SJS Funeral Navigation Services program in 2008 for funeral arrangement after her death and registered as a volunteer caller to phone those participated in the same scheme.

"No Worry Link" ensures elders' safety

Gary Sham, Manager of Corporate Venture, who is responsible for the scheme, explained that after participating in the scheme, many elders still have concern that 'their death not being known'. Owing to limited caller man power, we extended our program last April by launching a toll-free call system, sending out on fixed hour a daily call to the elders in ensuring their existence and well being.

Elders registered for the "No Worry Link" scheme will receive fixed time call and they only need to press button "1" as to report OK. If an elder fails doing that, they will then call him/her by phone, search hospital registration, look for him at his home; and if he/she is still missing after 24 hours, they will then seek police's help. Gary recalled one incident of a 'missing' 70 years old man. While phone call to him was not being answered, they finally decided to seek police's help for breaking in. Luckily, it is discovered that he was just gone visiting his home village leaving behind his mobile in the house, which is a false alarm.

Gary expressed that luckily there has never been any unhappy incidents. However, he believes with the population aging, relevant need will grow and they will keep arranging volunteer workers visiting the elderly frequently in person to give them the warm feeling.

新春時節,肥姨聯同其他義工朋友,帶同應節物品到訪家住偏遠地區的 獨居長者。

In the New Year time, Fat Aunt brings along some festival goods with other volunteers visiting living alone elders in remote area.

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查詢及網址:聖雅各福群會 聯絡人 : 謝文慧女士 電 話 : 2835-4321 / 8107-8324 傳 真 : 3104-3635 電 郵 : thevoice@sjs.org.hk 網 址 : www.thevoice.org.hk 地 址 : 香港灣仔石水渠街85號1樓105室 義務設計:黃志文先生 翻譯義工:梁達仁,黃秀琼,胡友玉 友情印刷:平偉印務有限公司	Con Tele Fax E-m Web Add Volu Tran	tact Person phone No. ail osite ress inteer Design slation Volunteer	: Mr. Edmond Won	7-8324 hk g.hk cone Nullah Lane, Wancha g onstance WONG, Yoyo Hl	5 5	