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社工的話
Social Worker's Remark

正視貧窮

最近收到香港社會服務聯會發佈的2001-2010年間香港貧窮統計數字，有關數字及分析讓我們更清楚了解香港貧窮的情況。

現時香港政府沒有設立貧窮線，一般來說領綜援者就是貧窮人。就長者而言，申請的門檻是資產少於\$38,000，政府每月大約發放\$3000左右的綜援金，生病時可帶著豁免紙到公立醫院睇醫生。

根據社聯的統計資料，長者貧窮較兒童、青少年及在職貧窮人數為多，在過去十年間，長者貧窮率一直超過三成，90多萬長者人口中，就有28萬人是貧窮，即3名長者中就有1位生活在貧窮住戶中。

在我們日常服務中，接觸的就是這些匱乏長者，他們大多是兩老無子女，年輕時工作，老來靠積蓄生活，唯物價租金的飛漲，退休後幾年間就花光所有錢，因而要吃綜援；我們也服務過一些有子女的長者，通常他們都是失業或同時領綜援，他們不單無法供養父母，反而要老人家協助照顧孫兒，境況堪虞。現實是家庭對長者的支援漸漸減弱，加劇長者貧困的問題。

曾有位社工前輩，他生活儉樸，一家三口清茶淡飯，有自己的物業，有退休金，但記得在他退休之時分享我知，自己不懂投資，他計算過在無大病之下，積蓄可養活自己到八十歲，一旦自己長命一點，就要拿綜援了！香港現時對長者退休的保障可算是零，強積金對低收入的人士保障不足，對勞碌一生的長者來說，老來無所依，老來無所靠，實在是社會的悲哀。

再且，香港的堅尼系數是全球最高，數值是4.3，比新加坡和美國還要高，這表示香港的貧富懸殊情況最嚴重，那我們可以做些甚麼？

除了政府要正視香港貧窮問題，有清楚長遠人口規劃措施、扶貧政策及良好的退休保障外，社福機構也當敏感於貧者日常生活的需要，除靠政府外，也當努力開拓社會其他資源，著手為一個個貧老，解決他們晚年生活的困難。過去我們及一班義工，見過很多徬徨的長者在接過大家的幫助後，得能重現笑容，這些老弱笑臉正正是推動我們東奔西跑的力量來源。

Proper Address On Poverty

We have recently received the 2001-2010 poverty figures released by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service which allows us to understand the poverty situation in Hong Kong more clearly.

The Hong Kong government has not set a poverty line; general speaking, people receiving CSSA is considered as the poor. The application threshold for an elderly getting roughly \$3,000 CSSA a month is with less than \$38,000 in asset; and the medication fee will be waived by taking the CSSA certificate with them in visiting the public hospital.

According to statistics of The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, elderly poverty is higher in number than children, youngsters and employed poverty. In the past ten years, elderly poverty rate has always been more than 30 percent. Of more than 900,000 elders, 280,000 are poor; in other words, one in three of the elderly are living in poverty.

These poor elders are the group of people we get contact in our daily service. Most of them are elderly couple without children. They worked when young and live on their savings when getting old. However, with the flying inflation in living cost and rent, their savings quickly used up within a few years after retirement, turning to live on CSSA instead. We have also served some elders having children, either unemployed or on CSSA themselves, who are unable to support their parents and even require help for looking after the grand children. What an awful truth. The fact is that the diminishing family support to elders worsens the elderly poverty.

There was a former social worker, living a simple life with a family of three, having their own property and having retirement package. I recalled he told me on his retirement that he made no investment, and after calculation, his saving can only support his living up to his eighty under the condition of having no serious illness. If his life span is longer, he has to apply for CSSA. Currently, there is no protection on elderly retirement; MPF offers inadequate protection to low income earners. What a social sorrow for people not to receive social support nor help in getting old after toiling their entire life.

What is more, the Gini coefficient of Hong Kong is 4.3 which is the highest in the world and is higher than Singapore and the U.S.A. This means the wealth gap in Hong Kong is very serious. What can we do then?

Apart from the government's address to Hong Kong poverty issue, clear long term population planning measure, policy helping ridding poverty and a good retirement protection scheme; social welfare institutions also need to be sensitive to daily needs of the poor people. In addition to seeking help from the government, it also has to work harder in developing other community resources to poor elderly solving the living difficulties. In the past, we and a team of volunteer workers have witnessed the return of smiles of many apprehensive elders after getting help from us. Those smiling faces of the poor elders are the exact driving force keeping us to work hard.



不因患病未能外出而無藥食 「送藥到戶」專程為弱老奉上藥物

“Medication Delivery Services” For Weak Elders

陳伯伯，七十八歲，獨居在長者屋，患上慢性腎衰竭，醫生要他定時打補血針，由於補血針為自費藥物，因經濟困乏的緣故，經醫務社工轉介至本藥房買藥，減輕每月開支。陳伯伯表示：「知道惠澤社區藥房有較平的補血針買，每月慳番百幾蚊，我當時好開心，不過，原來你們在灣仔，我住九龍，要來真的不容易，因為這個病的緣故，我會無故暈倒，有次跌倒傷了頭，要入院住了幾日。所以，我怕路遠，不知怎樣來買藥。自己又無親人，如果返醫院，又要捱貴藥。」

Uncle Chan, 78 years old, lives alone in the elderly home. He suffers from chronic kidney failure, and the doctor asks him to receive regular injections to prevent blood deficiency. Uncle Chan has limited financial resources, but the injections are “Self-financed items”. In order to cut down on his monthly expenditure, medical social worker has referred him to buy the medication from our pharmacy. Uncle Chan said, “I was very happy when I learned that the injections sold at the Philanthropy Community Pharmacy are less expensive, and would save me a few hundred dollars. However, your pharmacy is in Wanchai while I live in Kowloon, so it’s not easy for me to go there. I can easily faint because of my illness. I fell and injured my head once, and had to stay in the hospital for a few days. The pharmacy is too far for me. I don’t know how to get there and I have no relatives who can help me. If I buy the medication from the hospital, it will be more expensive.”

藥劑師得知陳伯伯的情況，於是安排他參加「送藥到戶服務」。這個服務主要為行動不便的長者提供送藥到府上的服務。送藥員於出發前，謹慎地與藥劑師核對相關藥物、藥物配件以及所簽署的文件。

The pharmacist learned of Uncle Chan’s situation, so she arranged for him to join the “Medication Delivery Service”. This service mainly involves the delivery of medication to the homes of elders who have limited mobility. Before setting out, the delivery personnel will cautiously check with the pharmacist the relevant medication, the supplementary items and the signed papers.

陳伯伯第一次接受「送藥到戶服務」時，一早打開大門，等待著送藥員的到訪。「我從未試過有人專程為我送藥，原來香港有這個咁好的服務，幫我地不可以經常外出，成日會暈倒跌傷的老人。」陳伯伯興奮地說。當他見到送藥員到來，他就熱烈地揮著手歡迎：「你是聖雅各的送藥員林姑娘嗎？」送藥員受到如此熱情的接待，心裡想著陳伯伯是多麼期待她的到訪。

When Uncle Chan made use of the “Medication Delivery Service” for the first time, he waited for the arrival of the delivery personnel early in the morning. “I’ve never had the experience of people delivering medicine specially for me,” said Uncle Chan excitedly. “I didn’t know there is such a wonderful service in Hong Kong that helps elders like me who have limited mobility or who easily faint.” When he saw the delivery personnel arrive, he waved his hand ardently to welcome her, saying, “Are you Ms Lam from St James’ Settlement?” Greeted with such a warm welcome, Ms Lam realized how Uncle Chan had been longing for her arrival.

「啊！林姑娘，我剛出院不久你便來了，真有心！」陳伯伯一方面多謝林姑娘，一方面又感慨地說：「我經常暈倒入院真麻煩，自己辛苦，朋友又擔心，醫生話這支針會幫到我，但我雙腳又不聽話，不好走路，要麻煩妳老遠走來，多謝妳！多謝妳！」送藥員按時送來藥物，醫院的護士於下午便來為伯伯打針，這些貼心妥當的安排，無疑大大幫助伯伯改善病情，又不會因他未能外出而影響療程。

“Oh Ms Lam, it’s very kind of you to come here soon after my release from the hospital,” Uncle Chan thanked Ms Lam on the one hand while on the other hand he felt rather sad, “I find it very troublesome that I often faint and have to be sent to the hospital. I myself have a hard time while my friends are worried about me. The doctor says the injection can be of help to me, but my legs are not strong enough to travel far, so I have to bother you to come here all the way. Thank you so much! Thank you so much!” The delivery personnel delivered the medication on time, while a hospital nurse came in the afternoon to administer the injection for Uncle Chan. All these caring and appropriate arrangements have no doubt help improve the health condition of Uncle Chan, and his treatment will not be affected just because he is unable to go out.

陳伯伯在林姑娘手上接受藥物，妥善地進行交收程序，之後林姑娘更再三叮囑陳伯伯補血針要存放在雪櫃的。「林姑娘怕我唔記我，仲幫我親自把補血針放入雪櫃，還幫我檢查雪櫃內的溫度，確保一切存放妥當，我真的很放心。」

陳伯伯感受到別人的關心，在林姑娘離開前說：「因為你們的貼心、細心，我以後會更加關心自己的健康，好好照顧自己。」



After Uncle Chan has received his medication from Ms Lam and undergone the proper handling procedure, Ms Lam repeatedly reminded Uncle Chan to put the injections into the refrigerator. “Ms Lam is concerned that I may be forgetful, so she put the injections into the fridge for me. She also checked the temperature of the fridge to ensure that everything had been kept properly. It really puts my mind at ease.”

Uncle Chan deeply felt the care and concern of the people around him. He told Ms Lam before she left, “Thanks for your tender loving care. I will be more mindful about my health and will take good care of myself.”



「視像問藥」服務 及早找出潛藏個案

「惠澤社區藥房」的服務除了幫助貧困的病患者提供「贈藥治病服務」外，還有藥物的教育及幫助長者檢示服藥的情況。由於資源所限，我們在藥房只有一位註冊藥劑師，為了把服務效果盡量發揮，藥房同事會與不同地區的長者服務中心聯繫，透過電腦技術，以視象形式除去路途及時間的限制，讓藥劑師在藥房內仍可以與住在不同社區的長者提供問藥服務。

上個月，我們透過屯門區的長者中心進行「視像問藥」服務，長者們每人均有直接與藥劑師單獨面談的時間，在地區社工的協助，他們逐一把藥物放在電腦的鏡頭前，讓藥劑師了解每位長者的服藥情況，從而作出建議。是次，藥劑師第一次在視像中接觸到賴婆婆，看過賴婆婆近十種的藥，在言談間藥劑師發現賴婆婆不太瞭解自己如何服用藥物，因而擔心她服藥的準確性，更怕她因忘記服食藥物的劑量和次數，以致錯誤服藥，影響健康。故此，藥劑師決定要上門家訪賴婆婆，更深入了解她的用藥情況，遇有問題，可及時作出糾正。

家訪當天，賴婆婆詳細交了自己的病情，她現時患有高血壓、心臟病、糖尿病、高膽固醇和胃痛，所以，每天需要服用超過十種藥物，相信大家不難想像她在用藥期間所面對的困難。賴婆婆雖然八十多歲，但亦算機靈，向來她懂得用藥盒把該服的藥物分配好，提醒自己準時及準確服藥。可是，當這次藥劑師來訪，逐一仔細地檢查賴婆婆的每一種藥物時，發現原來賴婆婆一直忘記服食高血壓藥物！

賴婆婆無從考究自己幾時開始忘記服用高血壓藥，幸好這次透過「視像問藥」服務，被藥劑師及早發現，家訪當日賴婆婆更告訴藥劑師，她有手痺的情況出現，十分擔心自己會否中風。

隨著年紀漸長，長者的身體機能一步一步衰退，服食的藥物多，加上記憶和認知能力不如前，而忘記服用藥物的機會只會愈來愈大。

事實上，忘記服藥除了白白浪費昂貴的藥物之外，還會削弱藥物在治療疾病中的成效，甚至引來對生命的威脅！故此，「惠澤社區藥房」的藥劑師積極參與長者用藥情況，利用先進科技配合，藉以有限的資源為廣大有需要的長者效力，最終為長者健康謀福。

Tele Pharmaceutical Consultation Service Finding Out Potential Problems In Advance

Other than offering the poor and sick the "Medication Subsidy Program", Philanthropic Community Pharmacy also provides general knowledge on medicines for the elderly as well as supervises them to take their medications. However due to limited resources, we only have one registered pharmacist in the community pharmacy. To maximize the efficiency of the service and overcome the restriction of time and space, our staff would liaise and link up with the elderly service centres in different districts through the use of computer technology to provide audio-visual consultation service where the pharmacist at the community pharmacy can help the needy elderly in different districts.

Last month, we provided Tele Pharmaceutical Consultation Service through the Tuen Mun Elderly Centre where each elderly could have time to talk directly to the pharmacist in private. With the help from district social workers, they put their medicines in front of the camera one by one to let the pharmacist understand more about their conditions to facilitate her to offer suggestions. During this consultation, the pharmacist got in touch with Grandma Lai for the first time and saw the ten different medicines she has been taking. Through the conversation, the pharmacist had the impression that Lai was unsure of how to take the medicines and wondered if she has been taking them accurately. She worried that in case she has forgotten the dosage and frequency of taking the medicines, it might affect her condition. As such, she decided to pay Grandma Lai a visit to understand further the situation of her medicines intake and make remedies if necessary.

On the day of the visit, Grandma Lai told the pharmacist she was currently suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetics, high cholesterol and stomach problem. She has to take over ten different kinds of medicines each day. It is not difficult to foresee the difficulties she will be facing. Grandma Lai is over eighty-years-old, she is still quite smart and knows how to organize the medicines and remind herself to take them on time. However, when the pharmacist went through her medicines one by one carefully, she discovered she has forgotten to take the medicines for high blood pressure all the time! Lai could not recall since when she has done so. It is fortunate the pharmacist discovered this in time through the Tele Pharmaceutical Consultation Service. Grandma Lai also told her during the visit that she has been having some numbness in her arms lately and worried if she might have a stroke.

As one grows older, one's health starts to deteriorate day by day and might need to take more and more medications. While one's memory might not be functioning very well, it is highly possible one might forget to take the medicines. Such an act not only cause waste to the expensive medicines and undermine the effectiveness of treating the illness; it might even be life-threatening.

Therefore, the pharmacist at the Philanthropic Community Pharmacy has actively participated to supervise the elderly's medicine intake situation and with the help of advanced technology, continue to provide effective service to help as many needy ones as possible within the limited resources for the benefit of the elderly.

透過科技配合，「惠澤社區藥房」可以有限的資源幫助更多有需要的長者，積極參與長者用藥情況。

By advanced technology, Philanthropic Community Pharmacy can provide service for more needy elderly in actively supervising the elderly's medicine intake situation.





不再擔心飯菜變壞

當雪櫃成為每戶家庭的必需品，沒想到在繁華社會的背後，仍然有一班居於社區裡的匱乏無依長者，家中缺乏一個性能良好的雪櫃，以致食物不能保存繼而迅速變壞。而這些長者往往為了省錢，更會冒險吃下已經變壞的食物，嚴重者更會造成食物中毒，影響健康。事實上，有多少貧困長者能夠負擔雪櫃這類貴價電器呢？

「家中雪櫃已用了十多年，冷藏功能早已失效。放了隔夜菜進去，完全不能保鮮。」陳婆婆懊惱的對我們說。「天氣未熱之前，還勉強可放在室溫下保鮮。怎知夏天來得這麼快，氣溫更是酷熱難當，飯菜放隔夜就變味了。」陳婆婆依靠綜援金生活，生活費根本不夠糊口，有時還會執紙皮幫補生計，要購買一個雪櫃簡直是妙想天開的事。

現時70歲的陳婆婆，獨居於公共屋邨及需照顧自我生活的一切。患上糖尿病的她，只能少吃多餐，以便控制血糖。一餐的飯菜需分多餐食用，一個雪櫃對她而言，是很重要的。社工家訪了解陳婆婆的需要後，立即向「電器贈長者」計劃求助。計劃獲得新界崇德社的善款資助，為陳婆婆購置了一個小型雙門雪櫃。計劃更派出義工到戶探訪陳婆婆，了解她在雪櫃使用上有没有任何的困難。

「能夠擁有一個新淨雪櫃，我已經好感動了！沒想到義工這麼關心我，上黎探我之餘，仲提醒我唔好擺熱既飯菜入去。」義工探訪時還發現，電掣位於床底，而這款雪櫃需要定期溶雪，陳婆婆拔插蘇時會較為困難。於是，「長者家居維修服務」立即委派義工電力師傅，為陳婆婆安裝一個方便她使用的電掣位，解決她生活上的不便。

「善長的無私慷慨，解決了我生活上的困難。這個雪櫃對我而言具備珍貴的意義，以後我可以冷藏保鮮食物，不用擔心吃下變壞的食物了。」對陳婆婆而言，善長的大德大愛才是最珍貴的禮物。



No Worry of Eating Spoiled Food Anymore

The refrigerator is a necessity for every household. It's hard for us to imagine that, in a prosperous community like ours, there are still some needy old people who don't have a working fridge at home. Without a fridge, food goes bad quickly. Yet, to save money, these elderly people often eat spoiled food, and some have wound up with food poison. In reality, how many needy old people can afford an electrical appliance as expensive as a fridge?

"My fridge is more than ten years old. It doesn't keep cold anymore. It can't keep leftover food fresh at all," said Grandma Chan in despair. "Before the weather turned hot, leftovers could still stay fresh in room temperature. But summer came so soon and the heat is unbearable. Food becomes spoiled overnight." Grandma Chan lives on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance, which is not enough to meet her needs. She sometimes collects cardboards for a little extra income. She is in no position to even dream about buying a refrigerator!

At 70, Grandma Chan lives by herself in public housing and takes care of herself. Being diabetic, she must keep her blood sugar level in check by eating many small meals a day. So food for one meal is divided into several meals. A refrigerator is very important to her. A social worker making a home visit found out her need and immediately contacted our Electric Appliances for the Elderly Program. With donation from the Zonta Club of the New Territories, we bought a small two-door fridge for Grandma Chan. We also sent volunteer workers to call on her and to find out if she has any trouble using the fridge.

"I am already deeply touched that I can have a new fridge! I never expected so much concern from the volunteer workers. During the visit, they even reminded me not to put very hot food into the fridge." The visiting volunteers also discovered that the electric socket was under her bed, which made it very hard for Grandma Chan to unplug the fridge for periodic defrosting. So, the volunteer of "Elderly Home Maintenance Services" helped install a new socket for her within easier reach.

"The kind donors' generosity has solved a big problem for me. This fridge means a lot to me. I will be able to refrigerate my food, and won't have to worry about eating spoiled food anymore." To Grandma Chan, the charity of the donors is a most precious gift.

「多謝善長的雪櫃，以後吃到的食物都是新鮮的！」獨居的陳婆婆說。
"Many thanks for the fridge from the donors. All the food I eat in the future will be fresh." said Grandma Chan who lives by herself.



我們需要你的捐助
We Need Your Donation

我只想要一杯 溫熱的暖水

獨居於藍田公屋邨的招伯伯說：「但願我的手腳還能活動，我就能照顧自己的起居飲食，不用別人照顧。」不幸地，招伯伯之前因中風而行動不便，加上氣管疾病漸趨嚴重，需使用呼吸機協助呼吸。

招伯伯未婚，習慣了一個人的生活，家中事無大小都親力親為去解決。然而，堅強的招伯，未能戰勝健康每況愈下的威脅，上個月更不幸需入院治療頑纏已久的氣管病，氧氣喉不離身。「醫生同我講，唔可以接近明火，唔係會爆炸。」招伯出院回家後，堅持照顧自己的起居生活。招伯想飲杯熱水，於是到廚房用水煲煲水，開爐才發現，插著氧氣喉的他，根本不能接近明火。

「我真係好驚爆炸，最後熄左火唔敢煲，結果全日都無飲過水。」招伯伯感嘆的說：「我只希望不用靠人照顧，最少能為自己煲煲水；我實在不敢奢望其他生活條件，而家只能用電飯煲煲水，沒有其他辦法了。」招伯伯面對沒有溫水喝的日子，只能無奈的問：「我只要一杯熱水，真的這麼困難嗎？」

招伯伯的不幸不是唯一的。欠缺一個性能良好的電熱水壺，還有居於白田邨的梁婆婆。

「我個電熱水壺用左接近十年了，電線已開始霉爛，有時仲有火花出黎，嚇死我了！」梁婆婆未婚無依，依靠微薄綜援金過活。「社工一直勸我買個新淨安全的電熱水壺，一個月得二千多綜援金，食既著既都係靠佢。電器既野用得就算啦，到真係用唔到先睇下點啦。」梁婆婆的節儉，卻忽略了自身的安全。事實上，使用破舊的電器，或會造成漏電的危險，嚴重者更會發生觸電的意外。

你願意伸出慷慨的援手，為匱乏無依的長者，送上一個價值一百八十元的座枱式電熱水壺嗎？這款電水壺擁有恆溫功能，而且操作簡單，適合長者使用。你的慷慨捐助能為匱乏長者提供一杯無憂的溫熱水，讓他們得以解渴。請將支票抬頭「聖雅各福群會」，背書「電熱水壺餽贈」的支票寄到香港灣仔石水渠街85號1樓105室。施善熱線：8107-8324或2835-4321。



I Just Want A Glass Of Hot Water

Mr. Chiu, who lives by himself in Lam Tin public housing estate, said, "I wish my arms and legs are still active and then I can take care of myself." Unfortunately, Mr. Chiu has problem getting around due to a previous stroke. He relies on the oxygen machine in helping him breathe because his bronchitis has got worse.

Mr. Chiu is not married. He is used to living on his own and he takes care of everything in his daily life. Independent though he was, Mr. Chiu was admitted to hospital last month for treatment of chronic bronchitis. He relies on the oxygen machine for breathing. "The doctor told me I had to keep away from fire or else it would explode." After Mr. Chiu was discharged, he went home. When he tried to boil some water for a drink, he then remembered he mustn't switch on the stove because he was carrying the oxygen machine.

"I was very afraid that there would be an explosion. I switched off the stove at last. I ended up having no water to drink the whole day." Mr. Chiu sighed, "I don't want to cause anyone the trouble. I wished I could boil a kettle of water for myself. I dare not hope for anything else. Now I can only boil some water with the electric rice cooker." Confronted by the lack of hot water, Mr. Chiu wondered, "Is it really that hard to get a glass of hot water?"

Mr. Chiu is not the only unlucky one. Leung Por Por, who lives in Pak Tin estate, also lacks an electric kettle that functions well.

"I've had my electric kettle for nearly 10 years. The wires have begun to rot. Sometimes sparks appeared when I plugged it on. I got scared out of my wits. Leung Por Por is not married and she lives on the meager amount of CSSA (Comprehensive Social Security Assistance). "The social worker has been suggesting me buy a new electric kettle all along. My CSSA amounts to a little over two thousand monthly. I use it for food and other things. While for the electric appliances, I'll see what I can do when it's not usable any longer." Leung Por Por tries to live frugally, even at the expense of her safety. There is the danger of short-circuit when one uses a damaged electric appliance. It may result in an electric shock in serious cases.

Will you help the deprived and helpless elderly by giving them generously an electric kettle costing \$180 each? This kettle keeping the water hot constantly, is simple to operate and suits the elderly's need. Your generous donations will quench the thirst of the elderly with a glass of worry-free hot water. Please make out your cheque payable to "St. James' Settlement", specifying "Electric Kettle Donation Program" at the back. Kindly mail your cheque to Rm. 105, 1/F, 85, Stone Nullah Lane, Wanchai, Hong Kong. You can also dial our donation hotline at 8107-8324 or 2835-4321.

義工會攜同電熱水壺親身到戶，教授匱乏長者安全使用方法。
The volunteer is explaining to the elderly the safe way of using the electric kettle.



聖雅各福群會主任：

12th June, 2012

您好，我住蘇屋邨，這次動遷到元洲邨，由於我患腎病乃多年(腎結核)，右腎有一個空洞，里面長了黃豆那樣大的腎石，有時會痛得要命。

今年74歲的我，與一個患有經神障礙的兒子同住，兩人相依為命。

今來信致謝，特向你們聖雅各福群會的職工及義工致謝！謝謝他們無私地為我鋪膠地板，特別要謝謝素不相識的黃鎮邦先生，他不怕累，不怕苦，把膠地板鋪得又平，又靚，技術一流！再一次謝謝黃先生。

男女義工還為我安裝窗簾，毛巾架，廚房用的放刀架。真的感激不盡；為了作實際行動的報答，從今天起我已向救世軍報名參加義工隊伍，向你們學習！助人為樂！

朋友們：再見了。

謝XX 敬上
2012-06-12

Dear St. James' Settlement,

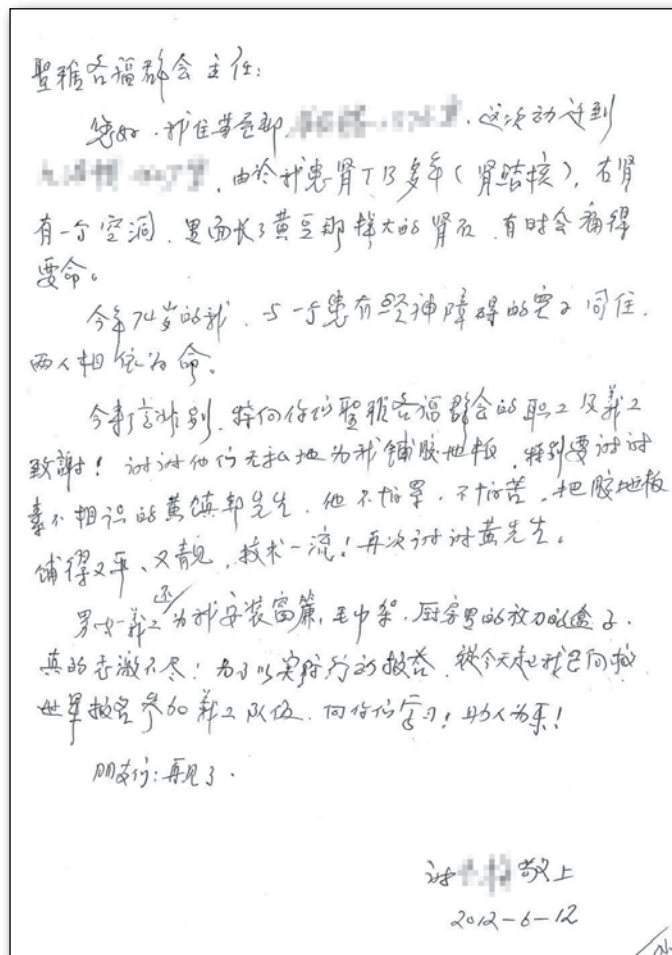
Greetings! I've recently moved to Un Chau Estate from So Uk Esate. I have chronic kidney problems; with a kidney stone the size of a soya bean in my right kidney lodged in an opening, the pain sometimes becomes truly excruciating.

I'm 74 years old and live together with my son. Although he's mentally handicapped, we enjoy keeping each other company.

The purpose of my letter is to express my sincere appreciation towards the St. James' Settlement and its staff and volunteers for all their assistance in helping me complete various fit out works at my home. In particular, I would like to single out Mr. Wong Chun Pong whom I've never met for tirelessly and skillfully laying the floorboards to perfection. Thank you once again, Mr. Wong!

I am also extremely grateful to all the other volunteers who helped with installing curtains, towel holders, kitchen utensil racks and more. Your compassion and selflessness has inspired me to take action myself; I'll be shortly volunteering on behalf of The Salvation Army to help others in need!

Yours sincerely,
Tse XX





繼續支援弱聽孤老 捐贈閃燈門鐘

《慈惠月報》於去年十一月曾刊登《捐款支持造閃燈門鐘 助失聽者不致成隱蔽》一文，呼籲善長捐助費用，製作助弱聽長者應門的「閃燈門鐘」。蒙各位善長慷慨支持，本會籌得足夠善款以落單訂購，供應商於本年年初已造好閃燈門鐘，供義工師傅為弱聽長者安裝。有賴各位善長，弱聽長者不致因聽障而與社會疏遠。

閃燈門鐘功能到位，需求殷切。弱聽長者因怕親友「摸門釘」而主動找社工轉介申請；社工因曾試過送飯落空，建議長者安裝，免長者餓肚。50個閃燈門鐘著實不足應付需求，至今已安裝得八八九九，故我們正籌謀訂購新一批閃燈門鐘，以避免因「斷貨」而不能回應需求之危機。

本會「長者家居維修服務」的義工師傅是閃燈門鐘的設計者，每次訂購新一批門鐘均尋求改善。今次，為了響應環保、順應逐步棄用鎢絲燈泡的潮流，閃燈門鐘的燈泡將轉為LED燈。除了環保，此舉更有效減少閃燈門鐘的體積，減少對長者造成的壓迫感，也免卻了長者更換燈泡的風險，更為體貼弱長者的需要。此外，義工師傅正與供應商研究把閃燈門鐘改裝成「無線閃燈門鐘」的可行性，以免除購買電線的成本，節省一分一毫的善款。

本港超過三成長者有聽力障礙，因此對長者生活造成的不便甚為普遍，如親友到訪不遂，減少了獨居長者的社交生活，又或被誤以為發生意外而被破門入屋。「閃燈門鐘」正針對問題，作為讓長者順利應門，接通外界探訪的橋樑，實在是「到位助人」的恩物。

改良後的「閃燈門鐘」每個\$290，我們希望籌集\$58,000善款，以可落單製造新一批的200個門鐘，以能為更多失聰老者安裝，改善他們的身心健康。我們期盼你的踴躍援手，接通弱聽老者與社會之橋，使其能融入社會。施善支票抬頭「聖雅各福群會」，指定捐予「閃燈門鐘」，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。



Donate Flash Light Door Bells Continuous Support For Hearing Impaired Elderly

In the Nov 2011 issue of "Philanthropy Monthly", we published the article 'Donation for Flashing Light Doorbells, Helps people with hearing loss from seclusion'. Through the article we called for donations to procure 50 flashlight doorbells for the hearing impaired elderly. Thanks to the generous donors, we raised sufficient funds to build our production run. All the doorbells were ready early this year and our volunteers started installing them for the eligible elderly right away. Hearing loss is no longer a hindrance for having a social life.

Feedback on the Flash Light Door Bells are so positive that applications for the service keep coming in — some elderly mentioned that they did not want to miss any visits by their friends ever again while some other were referred by social workers because they were once left starved at home after failing to answer the door upon meal delivery. Now, most of the 50 pieces of flashlight doorbells we ordered have been used up, and we need to get a new production lot to fulfill the upcoming demand.

The doorbells we offered are designed and developed by our volunteers in the "Elderly Home Maintenance Services" team and they are constantly looking for ways to improve the product. In the next production lot, they plan to replace incandescent light bulbs with the LED bulbs. The improved doorbells will not only be energy efficient and compact; the longer lifespan of the LED light bulbs will also save elderly much troubles of replacing broken bulbs. They are also looking to develop a wireless flashlight doorbell and are working closely with the manufacturer to see if the unit cost can be cut further.

Currently 30% of the elderly in Hong Kong reported to be hearing impaired. Many elderly tend to involve less in social activities due to their hearing problems. For example, they can't hear so that they can't answer the door when they have visitors at the door, gradually they become less socially engaged with others. Unknowingly leaving the door unanswered may also lead their friends to think the elderly have accidents at home and cause them to force open the door. A flashlight doorbell lets the elderly avoid all these troubles and helps the elderly stay accessible for visitors.

In addition to the inflation, the adoption of LED light bulbs in new product design is going to push the production costs up. The unit cost of the new doorbells is \$290 per pc, we target to raise \$58,000 for installing flashlight doorbells for 200 hearing impaired elderly and your contributions to this meaningful program will definitely help these elderly reconnect with others. Please make a donation to "St James' Settlement" and specify the sum to the "Flash Light Door Bell for Deaf" project. Donations can be sent to Room 105, 1/F, 85 Stone Nullah Lane, Wanchai. For more details, please call 8107 8324 or 2835 4321.

新款閃燈門鐘的最大改變是把鎢絲燈泡轉為LED燈，更為美觀耐用。The replacement of incandescent light bulbs with the LED bulbs provides the Flash Light Door Bells a more beautiful outlook as well as a longer lifespan.



「無憂通」電聯關顧服務 主動追蹤、關顧生死

「自己一個人住又患有心臟病，經常擔心自己會一睡不醒，如等到屍體發臭腐爛才被人發現，心裡感到很擔心及不舒服。」孤老孔伯伯把內心的擔憂與社工分享。

在「後顧無憂生前規劃服務」中，我們接觸的都是無親人子女的老人家，他們把新後事的安排早早決定，交托本會服務同工作出及時跟進，在家訪面談過程中，無不發現這些孤老像似孔伯伯的憂心宣言，「我希望自己能『靚靚仔仔』地離開世界，又不想嚇到街坊鄰居。」所以，按「以人為本」的服務理念出發，本會在去年開始，推出全港一項嶄新服務 - 「無憂通」。

「無憂通」是一個電聯關顧服務，服務是透過真人錄音以電話形式聯絡長者的系統，參加服務的長者在接過系統定時撥出的電話後，只要按指示作出回應，本會就會知道他們的安全狀況，有關記錄並即時在電腦上出現自動製成報表，負責職員每天兩次查看，便可順利追蹤他們的安危；一旦長者沒有回應系統，職員便會啟動緊急支援機制，及早追尋他們的下落，有需要甚至「上門」跟進。若發現長者入了醫院，便會盡快安排義工或職員探望，進一步為他們提供協助。如果參加服務的長者預早安排外出，例如回鄉、外遊、覆診等，他們亦會盡早通知職員，以避免無端端被人破門之災。

孔伯伯參加了「無憂通」服務後表示：「現在每天早上會有關顧電話打給我，這個鈴聲好像生命呼喚的聲音，晚上睡覺時不再擔心自己明天會不會醒，因為我知道如果自己不幸出了事，你們會有好快來找我。」

「無憂通」是專為六十歲以上、獨居無依、缺乏支援的長者，又或是長期或晚期病患者參加，現時計劃已有五百人登記，此系統全年運作，年中無休。錄音系統亦會因應天氣變化、不同節日而調節，例如在潮濕天氣，我們會利用錄音提醒參加者小心地滑、寒冷天氣就會提醒他們多穿衣服、節日時就為他們送上祝福！



長者只要按1字，代表自己安全，操作十分簡易。
The elderly only has to press "1" to confirm they are safe. It's a very simple system to operate.

“No Worry Link” Telephone Care Service To Track the Wellbeing of the Elderly

“I live alone and have a heart attack, I'm always afraid that I may die in my sleep and remain undiscovered. This thought makes me very sad”, Uncle Hung shared his concerns with the social worker.

All elderly who join the Funeral Navigation Services live alone and have no immediate family close to home. Under the scheme, the elderly will notify St. James' Settlement of their preferred funeral arrangements. During home visits, we have discovered that many elderly also share Uncle Hung's concerns over their funeral arrangements, wanting a proper funeral without inconveniencing neighbours. In an effort to address this concern St. James' have launched a new service for the elderly called “No Worry Link”.

“No Worry Link” represents a telephone based system whereby the registered elderly are contacted through a recorded conversation on a daily basis. The elderly participants are simply required to confirm that they are safe through a push button response. All messages are recorded and presented on a computer report which are reviewed on a twice daily basis and any “no responses” investigated, via another telephone call or alternatively through a home visit to ensure that the individual in question is safe. Where the elderly are unwell and admitted to hospital we will follow up to provide further assistance where necessary. Participants in the scheme are required to provide advance notice if they are likely to be away from home for medical appointments or holidays etc. When concerns are raised and participants fail to respond, our staff will make a home visit and even break into the flat if deemed necessary to ensure that the elderly participant is safe.

Uncle Hung joined “No Worry Link” and says that “After joining the scheme I no longer fear dying alone.”

“No Worry Link” represents a tailor-made service for those over 60 years old who live alone and do not benefit from close family support, those with long term seriously illness or critically ill. At present, we now have 500 registered participants for the service which operates 365 days a year. In addition, the voice mail system can also be used to send elderly participants festival blessings and to alert them of weather changes etc. For example during the high humidity springtime, we often issue messages to caution of slippery floors and during winter of cold weather warnings etc.



負責職員從電腦報表，跟進未報平安的長者情況。

St. James' Settlement's staff regularly check the computer records and follow up on all “non responses”.



義工送「涼」關懷 為長者送上風扇

熱浪來襲，風扇幾乎是家中不可缺少的電器。然而現實裡，社區中還是有不少體弱多病的匱乏長者，必須被迫在家中抵受炎熱高溫來襲。每況愈下的健康狀況，褫奪了體弱長者外出乘涼的機會，風扇成為他們抵抗炎夏的重要伙伴。

「今年好似特別熱，成日都30幾度，加上我單位向西，日落時曬到正一正，到晚上熱氣都未散。」患有痛風的馬婆婆，病發時連落床也有困難。「有時捱到夜晚諗住涼快些，但鄰居冷氣的熱氣會吹入屋裡，我唯有長開住把風扇乘涼，想慳電都唔得了。」不幸地，早前馬婆婆更不小心把風扇推倒在地上，其中一塊扇葉爛了，社工到戶探訪時立即拿走風扇，不准馬婆婆使用，並向「電器贈長者」計劃求助，希望盡快為馬婆婆送上風扇。

馬婆婆的困難並不是唯一。居於深水埗的陳伯伯自中風後不良於行，家中風扇早已被爛不堪，連保護殼也不能蓋上，只有扇葉在轉動，十分危險。「我都唔想麻煩人，自己健康又不爭氣，我要留番份綜援金賞藥同睇醫生呢！」陳伯伯居於一樓，單位對住大廈天井，通風甚不理想。於最炎熱的日子裡，陳伯勉強使用破風扇乘涼。鄰居得知陳伯的苦況，立即透過社工向「電器贈長者」計劃求助，希望可為無依無靠的陳伯送上安全的風扇俾可乘涼。

「電器贈長者」計劃今年得一班香港長領會熱心義工的協助和支持，於八月其中一個星期日全港性為匱乏長者送上風扇，義工並進行到戶探訪，細心為長者安裝善長捐出的座枱風扇，同時物色家中安全位置擺放風扇，避免位置不佳造成家居意外的危險。服務當天，他們分成3隊隊伍，為居於九龍區公屋邨、深水埗公屋邨以及新界鄉郊的匱乏長者「送涼」，一天服務裡受惠人次超過60，希望於炎夏裡為匱乏長者送來涼風。

「我真係好開心，把風扇真係好靚，吹出的風好有力，我唔怕熱了！」馬婆婆不忘多番道謝善長的無私餽贈。而陳伯伯則最感謝義工對自己無微不至的照顧，充滿感動的說：「義工好細心幫我砌好把風扇，仲預備了拖板幫我插好個風扇，真係好關心我！」長者對善長捐贈的風扇珍而重之，也感謝義工的熱心問候為他們帶來相遇的緣份，感受從社區帶來的關懷與愛護。

「電器贈長者」計劃已送出超過400把風扇，受惠長者來自港九新界各區，當中包括偏遠的鄉郊地區。善長對匱乏長者的無私厚愛，加上計劃義工無微不至的關懷問候，讓長者不再備受中暑的威脅，得以在炎夏裡「安居」。



義工於藍田集合，並預備好所需電器，送到居於九龍新界各區的長者。

The volunteer workers assembled in Lam Tin and got necessary appliances ready for delivery to elderly in Kowloon and the New Territories.

Volunteers Care Fans for Elderly

The electric fan is an essential home appliance beating summer heat waves. In reality, quite a number of frail and sick elderly in our community are forced to stay home and live with it as their ever worsening health condition has ripped their chances going out to get cool; so, the fan has become their key partner to fight the summer heat.

"It is awfully hot this summer, mostly over 30 degree celsius. In addition, my unit faces west, receiving direct shining of the setting sun in the whole afternoon, heating up the place and taking long time to cool down in the evening," said granny Ma, suffering from arthritis. When hit by pain, she has difficulty getting out of bed. "Sometimes, I thought it would get cooler at night, however, hot exhausts from nearby air-conditioners blast into the unit and I need to switch on the fan to get cool, lest about cutting power cost." Unfortunately, Ma had earlier knocked her fan onto the floor, breaking one of the blades. Social worker on home visit promptly took the broken fan away and turned to our EAE program for help, hoping a new fan be available to her without delay.

Granny Ma is not alone having such a problem. Old man Chan living in Shum Shui Po has become incapacitated after having a stroke. The fan in his home has long been broken and gone is the guard cover with only the turning blades exposed. It is extremely hazardous. "I don't want to bother others and my poor health has necessitated me to set aside some of my CSSA money for medical treatment!" Chan lives on the first floor facing the courtyard of the building blocking air circulation. In hot summer days, he still reluctantly uses the ungraded fan for cooling down. His neighbour noticing this reported immediately to the social worker who then turned to our EAE program for help, hoping to get his damaged fan replaced.

The EAE program this year has obtained support of enthusiastic volunteer workers from Hong Kong Zhang Ling Association. On one of the Sundays in August, they visited the homes of poor elderly, handing out fan and looking for an appropriate spot to safely install it. That Sunday, they split into three teams, one each serving public housing estates in Kowloon districts, Shum Shui Po and rural areas in the New Territories respectively. They serviced a total of over 60 households that day, with a sole aim to relieve the summer heat to the poor elderly.

"I am really very happy; the fan is really nice with strong winds. No more fear for the heat now!" Granny Ma repeatedly thanked us for it; and Chan did the same to our volunteers for their care and said emotionally, "The volunteer worker helped me to assemble the fan and, took good care of me preparing the extension pad to plug it in. They really took good care of me!" They also express their gratitude to the donors and volunteers' visit, giving them an opportunity to feel for community care and love.

The EAE program has given out more than 400 fans to beneficiary elders in Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories including some remote country areas. The love and care of the benefactors to poor elders plus the meticulously attitude of the volunteer workers have removed the threat of them being hit by heat stroke.

愛心攝影服務

Love & Care Photo Services

在中國社會大都忌諱避談死亡，更遑論在生前叫人拍攝「車頭相」！

In the Chinese society, people are usually reluctant to talk about death, not to mention arranging someone to take one's photo for use in a funeral.

事實上，經過多年推動「後顧無憂規劃服務」，同事們了解多了老人家的心事，其中一樣就是好想在自己離開這個世界前，能拍攝一張令後人有美好回憶的相片，特別是在大家前來追悼的時候，長者都希望以一個活力常在的樣子與各位疼愛他的親友道別。

After years of providing "Funeral Navigation Services", our staff have gained a better understanding of the elderlies' thoughts: one of the last wishes of an elderly is to have someone take a nice photo of him/her, so as to leave behind a good remembrance and an everlasting vibrant image, for bidding relatives and friends farewell to when they attend the funeral.

就是基於這一份心事，本會於2002年起，成立「愛心攝影隊」，負責為各區長者作出服務，特別為綜援及低收入人士免費拍攝「車頭相」。

It was to satisfy this wish that the St. James' Settlement set up the Love & Care Photo Service Team in 2002 to provide free photo-taking service for elderlies, especially Comprehensive Social Security Assistance recipients, taking photos for their funeral use.

前來拍照的文婆婆在拍攝時與義工分享：「年青時雖曾影過無數生活相，但百年歸老時，總想有一張合心水的留作紀念。」在旁的顧伯伯卻說：「我以前不會拍照，只有工作，現在有這班有心影相師傅免費幫我影相，真係求之不得，我會將這張相當作車頭相架！」

Ms. Man, who joined the service, told our social worker: "I have taken numerous photos when I was young, but when my final days are near, I still wish to take a favourite one for remembrance." Mr. Koo, who sat beside, said "I didn't take photos in the past – I just worked and worked. Now I really appreciate the kind-hearted photographers' service. I'll use the photo for my funeral and have it put in front of the funeral van."

不要以為長者在拍照時講生講死，氣氛會否很沉重，相反，每次活動中，會場內是充滿一片歡樂聲，個個長者不論在等候時又或拍照時都是笑逐顏開，毫無顧忌。加上義工們很體貼地為長者整理衣裝，問好，然後才開始拍。近年，「愛心攝影隊」更以破傳統框框的觀念，運用攝影師提供的道具、衣服、飾物及漂亮佈幕，令長者拍出來的照片更具朝氣和色彩。此外，我們有幸被邀請至明愛醫院「舒緩治療科」為末期病患者拍攝家人合照，當天的經驗確實令長者、家屬及義工們擁有難忘的體驗，眼見病患者臨終前感受家人團聚情景，及預備一張「車頭相」作「後事」之用，實在令人感動，簡單的拍照活動卻來得意義深長。

Don't think the elderlies are worried and sad when they talk about death. On the contrary, during every photo-taking session, the venue is filled with laughter. Whether taking photo or waiting for his/her turn, everyone was smiling with no one feeling afraid of anything. The volunteers greeted them and helped them straighten up their clothes before starting to take photos. Recently, the team even uses creative ways to take the photos – using clothes, accessories and beautiful backgrounds provided by the photographers, the photos are even more colourful and vibrant. We were also invited by Caritas Hospital to provide the service for terminal patients at its Palliative Care Unit. It was an unforgettable experience for the elderlies, their families and our volunteers. It was so touching to see the terminal patients sharing their last moments with their loved ones, and preparing a photo for use at their funerals was a simple but very meaning task.

為長者留住美好的一刻，可令長者及家人有個美好回憶，總比在毫無片段下，只有思憶，最終只可惆悵而傷感為佳。人必會死，倘能有一張令長者感到滿意，能留作為後人紀念的相片，確實不但可令長者安心釋懷之餘，也可減掉後人於長者的喪禮時，忙於尋找合意的靈堂相片而費神，倒不如早作親手安排，來得更窩心與體貼。

Helping the elderlies to capture beautiful moments in photos for them and their families' remembrance is better than leaving just a vague memory that would lead to sorrow. Everyone will die, but if there's a photo that the elderly is happy with as a remembrance for his/her decedents, it does not only ease the elderly's mind, but also relieves the children of the need to find a suitable photo for the funeral amidst busy funeral arrangements. It's better to take it into one's own hands when one still can.



悉心的布置及服裝配套，為長者拍出滿意照片。

Carefully arranged decorations and clothes produce satisfactory photos for the elderlies.



Tailor-made 藥物提示板 藥到病除

長者患慢性疾病的狀況很普遍，如果同時患上幾種疾病，服藥數量也自然會多。

由於每種藥物的服用時間、次數、劑量及方法有所不同，以致長者容易感到混亂，甚至有機會錯誤用藥。

有藥劑師為患者Tailor-made一塊個人專屬的藥物提示板，以增加患者用藥依從性，從而及早控制病情。

今年78歲的何伯伯，身患多種慢性疾病，包括心臟病、高血壓、高膽固醇和胃病，每一種病症都有特定藥物來幫助控制病情，計埋他每日要服食超過9款藥物。不久前，他在基督教播道會道真堂愛禮信長者中心，接受由聖雅各福群會提供的藥療輔導服務之視像問藥，當藥劑師跟他進行視像對話時，有感他用藥情況有點混亂，為安全起見，於3周前親自到訪何伯伯的家中，深入了解其用藥實況，結果發現他每日服少兩粒藥。

其實何伯伯本身有一個藥盒，內裏有3格，他用來擺放早、午和晚上要服的藥物，這個做法不錯，但當藥劑師替他執整藥物時，竟發現原來他一直「執漏藥」，午間和晚間各欠服一種血壓藥。發現何伯伯這個案的聖雅各福群會註冊藥劑師陳羽微說：「何伯伯一直看政府醫生，數個月至半年才覆診一次，萬一下次覆診時醫生發現其血壓高的情況加劇，以為之前處方的藥量不足，繼而再增加藥量，有機會令血壓不當地調高，更甚是血壓長期控制不理想，會增加中風的風險。」

跟圖示服藥 包無吃錯

由何伯伯對上一次覆診後取藥至被她發現的時間，大概有2-3星期，換言之他有2-3星期少服了藥物，慶幸發現得早，其血壓未有失控。但為了加強他用藥依從性，特意地為他製作藥物提示板。這塊板如掛牆月曆般大，圖文並茂，頂行（橫向）貼上所患疾病的圖示，左列（直向）是各個時段的圖示，包括上午、午飯、下午、晚飯、晚上（睡前），之後將真實藥物貼在適當的疾病和時段之共同位置，以提示何伯伯在不同時段，服食如圖示一模一樣的藥物。

陳羽微表示，何伯伯所服用的藥物中，有些一日服一次，有些一日服3次，又有些要在不同時段服食，亦有註明某些需餐後或空肚服食，頗為複雜，但只要根據藥物提示板的藥物圖示，幾時要服藥和服哪幾種藥物，一目了然。「舉例說，他在上午時段要服5種藥，午飯時要服7種藥，他每日執藥盒時，起碼藥物要夠數才知沒有執漏。」何伯伯的妻子何太太也是長期病患者（糖尿病），雖然服食藥物數量不多，但藥劑師也為她手作一塊藥物提示板。兩夫婦均表示，現在看圖示服藥，非常方便和感到安心。

一直以來，長者執漏藥、食錯藥、忘記食藥的情況普遍，陳羽微認為，主要是對藥物不理解、或有突發情況出現，如在覆診後突然生病（如傷風感冒等）而需要服食藥物，可會打亂原有的用藥習慣，令長者感到混亂，這促使該會有設計藥物提示板供長者使用的念頭。她補充，每位病人的服藥情況都不同，因此藥物提示板也是度身訂造的，之後按病人的用藥情況改變而有所調整，藥劑師或護理人員務必跟進。現時，該會共印製了500塊藥物提示板基本圖，供稍後接受訓練的各機構護理人員或護老者，為有需要的長者製作個人專用的藥物提示板之用。

Tailor-made Medication Reminder Board

Suffering from chronic diseases is quite common in the aged population. More medications are expected if an elderly has got multiple chronic diseases to treat.

As medication should be taken according to the specific prescription as to when to take, number of times, dosage and method, the elderly would find it confusing and even possibly take the medicines improperly.

Some pharmacists have tailor-made personal Medication Reminder Board for individual elderly patients, hoping to enhance their ability to follow the medication instructions properly and hence keep their illness under control.

Uncle Ho, 78 years old, is suffering from a number of chronic diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, high cholesterol and stomach ailment, each of which is treated with a specific medication to help stabilize his health condition. Hence, Uncle Ho needs to take a total of more than 9 kinds of medicines daily. In a recent Tele Pharmaceutical Consultation, a service provided by Philanthropic Community Pharmacy under St. James' Settlement and conducted in E.F.C.C. - Hing Tin Wendell Church A.L. Foundation Social Centre for the Elderly, the pharmacist found that Uncle Ho seemed unable to take his medicines properly. To play safe, the pharmacist paid a visit to his home three weeks ago to check thoroughly whether he had taken the medicines according to the doctor's instructions. It was then found out that two tablets were missed out every day.

In fact, Uncle Ho has a good practice of keeping his medicines, which is to place his medicines to be taken in the morning, afternoon and evening respectively in the three small chambers of his drug box. But when the registered pharmacist of St James' Settlement, Anita Chan, went through his prescriptions and checked them against the medicines in his drug box, she found that a tablet of medicine for hypertension was missing in each chamber for keeping medicines for afternoon and evening respectively. She said, "Uncle Ho has been relying on public healthcare service and usually gets a medical appointment once every few months or half a year. If in his next medical appointment, his blood pressure is found to be much higher than before, the doctor would infer that the previous prescription may need to be adjusted with a higher dosage. This could have a counter-effect on his hypertension and possibly put him in a greater danger of having a stroke."

Take medicines properly with illustrations

By the time Miss Chan discovered Uncle Ho's mistake in taking his medicines, it had been two to three weeks from his last medical appointment. In other words, he had taken fewer medicines than what he should have taken. Fortunately, it was found soon enough to prevent any adverse effect on his hypertension from coming into being. Nevertheless, it was necessary to enhance his ability to follow the medication instructions properly. She prepared particularly for him a Medication Reminder Board, which was of a size similar to that of a wall calendar comprising illustrations in words and diagrams. Across the top line of the Board were some diagrams representing the various health problems he had while diagrams showing different times of day (such as morning, lunch time, afternoon, dinner time, night "before sleeping") were positioned along the vertical line on the left. The particular medicines were then stuck on different times under the corresponding health problems. It served as a good reminder for Uncle Ho to take medicines exactly the same as the ones shown on the Board at different times of day.

Anita Chan said that Uncle Ho has to follow various instructions for different kinds of medicines, some of which were to be taken once a day or three times a day while others had to be taken at different times of day, before meal or after meal. It was somewhat complicated. However, it would become simpler as long as he followed the reminder on the Board, which showed clearly the times and the kinds of medicines to take. "For instance, he needs to take five kinds of medicines in the morning and seven at lunch time. Every day when he gathers his medicines in his drug box, he will be convinced that nothing is missed out if he gets the exact number of tablets there." Uncle Ho's wife is also a chronic disease patient (with diabetes) with relatively fewer medications, but the pharmacist still prepared for her a personal Medication Reminder Board. The couple said that they found it convenient and are free of worry of making mistakes when taking medicines with the help of the clear Medication Reminder Boards.

It has all along been common for the elderly to take the wrong kinds of medicines by mistake, forget to take them or take fewer than prescribed. Ms Ho pointed out that it might be a result of the elderly lacking of knowledge in medicine or something happening to them unexpectedly. For instance, they fell sick (e.g. cold or influenza) after their last medical appointment and had to take some medicines to treat that particular sickness. The additional medicines would interrupt their normal pattern of taking medicines, causing confusion for the elderly. To address this problem, St. James' Settlement came up with the idea of providing the elderly with Medication Reminder Boards. She added that the Boards should be tailor-made since prescriptions for the elderly vary, and they needed to be modified according to any adjustments of prescriptions made from time to time. The pharmacists or caretakers should attend to it closely. Up to now, St. James' Settlement has printed 500 pieces of basic Medication Reminder Boards, which are to be further tailor-made for the elderly in need by the trained medical personnel in different organizations and caretakers for the elderly.



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