Volunteerism of health ambassadors via empowerment approach and time-bank system

透過賦權方法及時間銀行計劃鼓勵耆健大使參與義工服務

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Background

• **Hong Kong is one of the most rapidly ageing societies in the world**

• **Demands on health & social care will continue increasing in the coming decades**

• **Lack of professional manpower in health and social care sectors**
  
  o This is a global shortage (2016 WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030)
  
  o Traditional community care services in Hong Kong typically rely on professional resources such as social workers and medical practitioners for service delivery

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizens aged 65 years or above</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Years</strong></td>
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<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>2036</td>
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<td>2066</td>
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Background

• **Provision of care and services is necessary but insufficient**
  - Many older people remain healthy and active in their 60s and 70s
  - They possess tremendous capacities to contribute meaningfully to the community

• **Volunteering & meaningful engagement**
  - Volunteering reduced mortality among older adults
  - Volunteering also contributes to preventing depression, increased quality of life in later life, and other mental health outcomes
  - The participation rate in voluntary work among retirees is relatively low (7.6% - 17.1% in Hong Kong)

Global attention on Healthy Ageing and Age-friendly City

• Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030)
  o World Health Organization (WHO) defines healthy aging “as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability (FA) that enables wellbeing in older age”
  o Functional ability is about having the capabilities that enable people to be and do what they have reason to value.
  o These are the abilities to: meet basic needs; learn, grow and make decisions; be mobile; build and maintain relationships; and contribute to society

• Age-friendly city
  • World Health Organization (WHO) has made concerted efforts in promoting AFC since 2005
  • In practical terms, “an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities”

The concept of Time Bank

• **A Time Bank is a form of community currency**
  o Time banks reward volunteering by paying one hour for each hour of commitment, which can at any time be 'cashed in' by requesting an hour of work in return from the system

• **Time Banks operate to facilitate exchanges that honors five core values**
  o **Assets** – every human being has something to contribute;
  o **Redefining work** – rewarding the real work in our society by creating a currency which pays people for helping each other and creating better places to live;
  o **Reciprocity** – giving and receiving are basic human needs which help to build relationships and trust with others;
  o **Social Networks** – building people's social capital is very important, belonging to a social network gives our lives more meaning; and
  o **Respect** – encouraging people to respect others in their community.
Time Bank Model

COMMUNITY SOCIAL CAPITAL

Volunteers

Volunteers' family, friends, neighbours

Volunteer Work

Rewards claimed

Donation or discounted goods/services

Private companies

Social enterprise

NGOs

Volunteer service recipient

Volunteer Work

Volunteer Work
Health Ambassadors Time Bank Programme

• Objective
  o To equip and empower local older people (ambassadors) with knowledge and information on various aspects related to health and age-friendliness in their district
  o To promote civic volunteerism and participation among older people via time-bank system

• Core components
  o Training
  o Volunteering matching and management
  o Reward system

• Programme information
  o Started in 2019/2020
  o 120+ retired volunteers
  o Three pilot districts
Component 1 Training

• **Skill based approach**
  - Volunteers are trained and equipped with new knowledge and information on various aspects related to health and age-friendliness in their districts
  - It *empowers* participants with health-related information and awareness

• **Training courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dementia</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Frailty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Basic knowledge on dementia</td>
<td>• Basic knowledge on depression</td>
<td>• Basic knowledge on frailty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dementia screening (Hong Kong version of Montreal Cognitive Assessment; HK-MoCA)</td>
<td>• Depression screening (Patient Health Questionnaire; PHQ-9)</td>
<td>• Frailty screening (frailty scale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Available dementia support service in the district or in HK</td>
<td>• Mental Health First Aid for Older Adults</td>
<td>• Available frailty support service in the district or in HK</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Available depression support service in the district/HK</td>
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Component 2 Volunteering

• Volunteering opportunities matching and management
  o Volunteers mainly serve their own community
  o Volunteer opportunities provided are matching with volunteers’ skill set and knowledge
  o Use of Mobile app

➢ The community capacity of elderly support and care increases with increasing number of volunteers who equip with elderly care and health related knowledge
Component 3 Reward system

- **Reward system design**
  - **Work with the social enterprises**
    - Increase the understanding of the mission of social enterprises
    - Engage with service users from social enterprises
    - Contribute to the development of the social enterprises at the same time
  - **Different types of rewards**
    - Physical training courses, workshops, dining coupons and more
  - **Transferable reward**
    - Share the rewards with friends and family, or even donate to people in need in the community
Future steps

• To scale up the pilot project and get business sectors involved
• To examine the effectiveness of time-bank program in promoting the volunteering participation among older adults in the community
THANK YOU