



Press Release
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**Results of the First Survey in HK on Pressure Faced by Elderly's Carers
Show that Over 30% of Carers Lack Elderly Care Knowledge**

With an increasing ageing population in Hong Kong, members of the family who have to take care of the chronically ill elderly often have to face tremendous pressure. A survey conducted by Haven of Hope Christian Service ("the Haven of Hope") found that over 30% of the carers of such elderly lack elderly care knowledge or do not know how to choose suitable and reliable health care services for the elderly. Although they may be supported by domestic maids in looking after the elderly, about half of the survey respondents think that the maids are not properly equipped to take care of the elderly with illnesses. A majority of the respondents also indicated that they are under a lot of pressure in taking care of the elderly, including pressure on their time, daily life and physical health.



(From left) Ms. Mok, Senior Registered Nurse, Hong Kong Baptist Hospital; Dr. Ernest Chui, Director, Sau Po Centre on Ageing, The University of Hong Kong; Dr. Lam Ching-choi, Chief Executive Officer, Haven of Hope Christian Service; Ms. Lee Lai-chan, General Manager, TotalCare and Ms. Ellie Chon, Senior Nursing Officer, St. Paul's Hospital



Commissioned by the Haven of Hope, the Sau Pao Centre on Ageing of The University of Hong Kong conducted the above survey from April to August this year, which examined changes in the elderly's health conditions and the pressure faced by family members. The survey is the first of its kind conducted in Hong Kong and the respondents are family members of elderly who have stayed in the Hong Kong Baptist Hospital, St Paul's Hospital, St Teresa's Hospital and Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital.

Among the 537 people interviewed, over 65% of the respondents spend \$4,000 or above per month in care services for their elderly family members at home. A total of 34.6% of the respondents feel that they lack elderly care knowledge while 34.3% expressed that they do not know how to choose suitable care services for the elderly. Another 34.9% indicated that they lack knowledge on the treatment and medicine required for the elderly. The survey results indicate that there is a general lack of elderly care knowledge and information among elderly's carers in Hong Kong and that support to carers is also inadequate.

Inadequate training for domestic maids

While it is common for a family in Hong Kong to employ a domestic maid to take care of the elderly or children, domestic maids at present are not legally required to undergo any training. The survey found that about half of the respondents expressed that domestic maids are not fully capable of taking care of the elderly.

Pressure on time and physical health

The Chinese people see it as one their filial duties to look after their parents. As the health problems of an elderly person deteriorate with the passage of time, the pressure posed on family members who have not received proper elderly care training comes on all fronts. A majority of the respondents indicated that in taking care of the elderly, the pressure on their time is the greatest, followed by pressure on their physical health and daily life (e.g. adversely affecting their social life). The survey also found that such pressure on family members who live with the elderly is greater than that on family members who do not live with the elderly.

New service launched by the Haven of Hope

Most elderly prefer staying at home. In a study conducted by the Census and Statistics Department in 2008 on the socio-demographic profile, health status and self-care ability of older persons, only 3.6% of the elderly staying in the community had plans to move into a local elderly home, indicating that the elderly generally prefer staying at home. To help lessen the pressure on family members in taking care of their elderly at home, the Haven of Hope has launched a new elderly care service, TotalCare. Through a trans-disciplinary professional team, the new service provides one-stop, professional home care services and elderly home referral service to cater to the elderly's various nursing and rehabilitation needs.



Dr. Lam Ching-choi, Chief Executive Officer, Haven of Hope Christian Service and Ms. Lee Lai-chan, General Manager, TotalCare, together celebrated at the opening ceremony of “TotalCare” service

Dr Lam Ching-choi, Chief Executive Officer of the Haven of Hope, said, “We believe that elderly with chronic illnesses can also lead a quality and enjoyable life. Through TotalCare, we aim to provide flexible and diversified care solutions to the elderly with illnesses staying at home so that they can enjoy quality nursing care and rehabilitation services in a home setting.”

A self-financed service, TotalCare provides one-stop consultation service, home nursing and rehabilitation services, training for carers of the elderly, community rehabilitation services and elderly home and day care referral services. For details, please visit its website at www.totalcare.org.hk or call 2663 3001.

About Haven of Hope Christian Service

Haven of Hope Christian Service was founded over 50 years ago by Sister Annie Skau who saw the needs of the refugees in Tiu Keng Leng at that time and provided them with medical services. In addition to meeting their physical needs, Sister Annie also took care of their psychological, social and spiritual needs. Today, Haven of Hope has developed into a diversified social service organisation offering health care, elderly care, rehabilitation and family services through a “holistic care” approach.

Media Enquiries: Communications and Resource Development Department
Ivan Chan 2703 3236 / 9256 3478
Cecilia Or 2703 3239 / 9100 9225