

Note to Editors
For Immediate Release

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**CADENZA Symposium 2011
Shares Insights on Needs and Services in Caring for People with Dementia**

Dementia care has become an increasing concern to society. Currently, the number of dementia sufferers in Hong Kong is over 70,000 people. With an ageing population, the number of dementia cases is expected to increase to about 280,000 by 2036. It is expected that dementia would create increasing caring burdens to society. To address these issues, CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors organised a symposium on “Caring for People with Dementia: Needs and Services” on 15 September (today) at The University of Hong Kong. It is the fifth symposium jointly organized with the Faculty of Social Sciences at The University of Hong Kong and the Faculty of Medicine at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The event brought together more than 400 participants from different backgrounds, including professional practitioners from government, non-governmental organisations, health care sector, academia and professional bodies, and 11 distinguished overseas and local speakers to share their insights on dementia care.

The symposium was officially opened by **Professor Chan Cheung-ming, Alfred** BBS, JP, Chairman of Elderly Commission, **Dr Rita Fan Hsu Lai Tai** GBM, GBS, JP, Steward of The Hong Kong Jockey Club, and **Professor Roland T Chin**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, The University of Hong Kong. Professor Roland Chin welcomed on behalf of The University of Hong Kong the symposium participants from a wide range of expertise and hoped the partnerships developed would help transfer the knowledge and experiences effectively to society, so that elders, and the whole community, can benefit.

Dr Rita Fan in her opening address said, the Hong Kong Jockey Club’s Charities Trust had been donating to elderly projects for more than 60 years. Over the decade, the contribution in this had exceeded HK\$940 million. To tackle the challenges of ageing in the community, the Club has established the Jockey Club Centre for Positive Ageing (JCCPA), the first integrative dementia care centre in the city and initiated the CADENZA project.

“Given the ageing population, the number of elderly people suffering dementia is expected to more than double by 2036. It is therefore important that we raise public awareness of early assessment services and enhance the city’s carer support network. I believe with overseas and local experts at the symposium, there will be robust discussions on the needs and services for people with dementia,” she added.

Professor Alfred Chan said, the first and foremost task ahead of us was to take dementia out of shadows – to ensure better knowledge about dementia and remove the stigma that sadly still surrounds it.

The symposium started with an overview of dementia care in the United Kingdom and in Hong Kong respectively by **Professor June Andrews**, Director of The Dementia Services Development Centre, University of Stirling, and **Professor Timothy Kwok**, Director of Jockey Club Centre for Positive Ageing. This was followed by **Mrs Kao May Wan Gwen**, Chairman of Board of Governors of Charles K Kao Foundation for Alzheimer’s Disease who shared her personal experience in taking care of Professor Charles Kao Kuen.

Professor Andrews emphasised that education and cultural change was key in improvement of dementia

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care and highlighted some practical works which effectively improved dementia care in the UK. Her counterpart in Hong Kong Professor Timothy Kwok viewed that dementia care has become a major local social issue. He suggested that social and medical service providers should take a dementia perspective and develop evidence-based dementia care services, including training for family caregivers, domestic helpers and staff, quality assurance and cognitive stimulation activities.

Mrs Gwen Kao viewed that the road travelled by a dementia caregiver is long and winding. She stressed the importance of rising public awareness and understanding of dementia and dementia care. As with increasing life expectancy, more and more people will find themselves tread the path with or without another person to help them along the way.

The symposium was also featured by a public forum. Speakers included: **Dr the Hon Leong Che-hung** GBM, GBS, JP, Former Chairman of Elderly Commission, **Dr Fung Yu-kei, Anne**, Principal Medical & Health Officer (Primary Care) in Department of Health, **Ms Christine Fang** BBS, JP, Chief Executive of The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, **Professor Lam Tai-ping**, Department of Family Medicine & Primary Care of The University of Hong Kong, **Professor Linda Lam**, Chairman of Department of Psychiatry in The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and family carer, **Ms Szeto Wai-ping**.

Forum speakers firstly addressed various caregiver needs and the importance of community services, especially the need of providing specialized dementia care service. On sharing their views on medical care, the speakers also highlighted the importance of early detection, and discussed the roles of family physicians and Department of Health in supporting dementia care needs. They all agreed that caring for dementia was a vital issue that requires concerted efforts to combat with.

A dementia themed lunch talk was also held on the same day by **Dr Bernard Kong**, Deputy Cluster Service Director (Community), Hong Kong East Cluster, Hospital Authority, President of The Hong Kong Geriatrics Society and carer of his patient, **Ms Virginia Mok** shared her experience of taking care of her father who suffers from dementia. The talk addressed the experience of practicing medicine, and the relationship of doctor, patient and family in the path of treating dementia.

About CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors

CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors is launched and funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust in light of the rapidly ageing population. It is a HK\$380 million project in partnership with the Faculty of Social Sciences of The University of Hong Kong and the Faculty of Medicine of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The project aims at creating an elder-friendly environment in Hong Kong to foster positive community attitude towards ageing and continuously improve the quality of care and quality of life of older people. CADENZA has four major components: public education, community projects, training, and leadership training programme and research. Details of CADENZA are available at www.cadenza.hk.

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