



養和醫院

Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital

For immediate release

The 8th Walk For A Vision of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital 'Unfreezing' Gaits for Patients with Parkinson's Disease

(13 March 2016 – Hong Kong) More than 200 runners and well-wishers took part at the 8th Walk For A Vision of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital (Hospital) and raised a total of HK\$360,000 for the Hong Kong Brain Foundation (HKBF) in support of its project to offer laser canes to 300 patients with Parkinson's disease (PD). Until now, laser canes which provide visual cues for patients to initiate steps, have limited use but the donations have now enabled a wider application of the canes for patients in Hong Kong, reducing fall risks and encouraging them to reach out and engage in social lives with self-confidence.

Walkathon to Give Strength to Patients in Stepping Forward

In Hong Kong, there are about 16,000 patients suffering from PD, with an average onset age between 60 to 70 years old. About 10% of patients were diagnosed with the disease before 40 years of age. For younger PD patients, the average onset age is 38. Some of them even suffered from PD in their 20s. Many PD patients are affected by "Freezing of Gait" (FOG), i.e. a sudden arrest of movement that can lead to difficulty stepping forward and disabling falls. Some conditions can even be life-threatening.

"The Hospital is dedicated to offering holistic clinical services," said Dr. Joseph CHAN, Deputy Medical Superintendent of the Hospital and Chief Volunteer Leader of HKSH Village Volunteers. "With an aging population in Hong Kong, it is inevitable that more and more people will be suffering from neurological diseases including Parkinson's disease, dementia, strokes, etc. In view of the needs, the Hospital established the Neurology Centre in 2014 to provide comprehensive services to patients with neurological disorders. This year the Walk For A Vision sets out to raise funds for the HKBF in hopes of helping PD patients to "unfreeze" their gaits and freshen up their lives."

Organised by the HKBF, the project is launched with support from the Hong Kong Parkinson's Disease Association, Hong Kong Physiotherapy Association, Department of Rehabilitation Science of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Community Rehabilitation Network of the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation. Three hundred laser canes will be purchased to help patients "unfreeze" their gaits. Training on the proper use of laser cane will also be provided to facilitate the patients' use of this walking aid and enhance their mobility.



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Each laser cane is equipped with a laser-emitting source with an on/off switch. When activated, a red-laser beam will be projected across the path, providing a visual cue for patients to trace. Research has shown that visual cues reduce fall risk by attracting patients' attention, breaking "freezing" episodes and increasing stride length.

Early Detection of Neurodegenerative Diseases Helps

"We hope to lend a helping hand to PD patients and increase public awareness of the disease through the walkathon," said Dr. LI Chung Ki Patrick, Advisor of the HKBF and Co-Director of Neurology Centre of the Hospital. "Parkinson's disease is a chronic and progressive degenerative neurological disease. If diagnosed early, medication and physical exercises can facilitate disease management and alleviate symptoms, thereon reducing its impact on patients' normal lives. The Hospital is equipped with the only PET/MR (Molecular MR) Scanner in Hong Kong, which helps diagnose the disease at an early stage or with atypical symptoms."

Walk For A Vision is an annual charity event organised by HKSH Village Volunteers. Each year the walkathon raises funds for a medical-related institution and project. Starting from the premises of the Hospital, the 11-km walkathon route passes through Sing Woo Road, Blue Pool Road, Wong Nai Chung Gap Road, and Violet Hill hilltop, routing back to the Hospital. Dr. Walton LI, Medical Superintendent of the Hospital appreciated the support from all participants. "Their participation reflects our will and heart to serve the community," Dr. LI added.

About Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital

Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital is one of the leading private hospitals in Hong Kong. With the motto "Quality in Service Excellence in Care", the Hospital is committed to serving the public as well as promoting medical education and research.

About HKSH Village Volunteers

Established in April 2009, the HKSH Village Volunteers, which consists of HKSH staff members, doctors, nursing students, alumni of the School of Nursing and retired staff, has been taking part in various community and fundraising activities in order to promote the health and wellness of people in Hong Kong through care and love. Its major fundraising events are the annual Walkathon "Walk For A Vision" and "Christmas Party in Benefit of OSC". In recent years, more volunteer programmes and services have been developed, including "HKSH Health Buddies", "HKSH Health Talks", "HKSH Caring Friends", and "HKSH Trekkers". Partners include Ebenezer New Hope School, Ripple Action, Enlighten, and St. James' Settlement.



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About Hong Kong Brain Foundation

Hong Kong Brain Foundation (HKBF) is a charitable organisation founded in 1988. Focusing on brain health and brain diseases, HKBF support related research projects, public education programmes and social services in the community. The missions of HKBF include promoting public awareness of the nervous system, supporting local clinical and scientific researches and providing support to patient groups. HKBF organises regular public seminars and invites professionals to give talks on the causes, treatment and preventive measures of neurological diseases across all age levels, as well as caring for patients with the disease. Topics of health talks held include: stroke, Parkinson's disease, dementia, epilepsy, learning difficulties, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), etc. HKBF maintains a platform to share the latest information and videos on its website (www.brain.org.hk) and social network for public viewing.

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Photos

1. The kick-off ceremony of “Walk for A Vision” organised by HKSH Village Volunteers was officiated by Dr. Walton LI, Medical Superintendent of the Hospital; Dr. Joseph CHAN, Deputy Medical Superintendent of the Hospital and Chief Volunteer Leader of HKSH Village Volunteers; Dr. LI Chung Ki Patrick, Advisor of the HKBF and Co-Director of Neurology Centre of the Hospital; and members of the Clinical Governance Committee and Hospital Management Committee of the Hospital.



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2. Dr. Joseph CHAN (third from right); Ms. Lok Wai Kwan (second from right) and Ms. CHUNG Po Kuen (first from right), Sub Group Leaders of HKSH Village Volunteers, presented the cheque of pledged donation of HK\$360,000 to Dr. LI Chung Ki Patrick (third from left; Dr. CHEUNG Yuk Fai (second from left), Honorary Secretary of the HKBF; and Dr. CHAN Hiu Fai (first from left), Board Member of the HKBF.



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3. Accompanied by Dr. Joseph CHAN (middle), Dr. LI Chung Ki Patrick (third from left), Dr. CHEUNG Yuk Fai (first from left), Dr. CHAN Hiu Fai (third from right) and Mr. CHAU Ka Wai (first from right) from Hong Kong Physiotherapy Association, four patients with Parkinson's Disease held laser canes to "unfreeze" gaits and step forward.



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