



養和醫療
HKSH MEDICAL GROUP

For Immediate Release

HKSH Village Volunteers Successfully Raise HK\$500,000 through "Walk For A Vision" Event to Sponsor Students in Need for Emotional Health Programme

(25 March 2024, Hong Kong) Over 200 staff and friends of HKSH Medical Group (HKSH) took part in the 16th "Walk for a Vision" event organised by HKSH Village Volunteers yesterday and successfully raised almost half a million for Sweet Home Psychological Wellness Centre (Sweet Home). The fund raised will be utilised to sponsor 38 emotionally distressed children, ranging from Primary 1 to Secondary 6, to receive comprehensive psychological and emotional support services. These services will be provided by psychiatrists, play and creative arts therapists, psychological counsellors as well as social workers as part of Sweet Home's "We Are Here – Multi-professional Emotional Health Programme for Students". "Walk For A Vision" is an annual charity event that has been held since 2009. Organised by HKSH Village Volunteers, the walkathon aims to provide support to various underprivileged communities by offering medical and health-related services through selected charity organisations. The funds raised during the walkathon are used to sponsor these NGOs and their initiatives. This year, HKSH Village Volunteers has chosen Sweet Home as the beneficiary of the event.

Dr. Joseph CHAN, Chief Medical Officer of HKSH Medical Group, Deputy Medical Superintendent of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital, and Chief Volunteer Leader of HKSH Village Volunteers, said, "Throughout the years, our colleagues have consistently demonstrated care and support for the underprivileged through different means, and the walkathon is one of them. The funds raised primarily go towards addressing the medical-related needs of families facing financial constraints, elderly people living alone, individuals with physical disabilities, or children with critical illnesses. In the past, we have made donations to beneficiaries to purchase equipment to support their daily needs. We have also sponsored medical escort and pickup services, as well as offered funding for medical treatments and non-medical expenses for paediatric patients."

"As medical professionals, we not only attend to people's physical illnesses but also deeply care about the emotional well-being of the community. There has been a notable increase in instances of student suicide in Hong Kong in recent years, attributed to emotional difficulties. Particularly for children and adolescents hailing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, owing to resource constraints, they frequently face challenges in accessing prompt professional emotional counseling when confronted with emotional distress. Given the above concern, the HKSH Village Volunteers have decided to raise funds for Sweet Home in the current year with the aim of providing support for its multi-professional emotional health programme designed for students. Through their services, we hope to identify students who require assistance and provide timely interventions and support to help them manage their emotions and effectively handle challenges with a positive mindset," added Dr. Chan.

Ms. Athen CHUNG, Chief Executive Officer of Sweet Home Psychological Wellness Centre and Certified Play Therapist (U.K.), is appreciative of the generous support of HKSH Village Volunteers. "Some children may lose 'happiness' due to stress and trauma," she remarked. "Verbal communication only accounts for less than 10% of the total modes of interpersonal communication, or even less for children. The objective of the 'We Are Here – Multi-Professional Emotional Health Programme for Students' is to establish a secure and trusting environment where children feel accepted and understood. By offering multi-professional therapy activities and utilising non-verbal communication means such as games, music, movement, and creative arts, we hope to improve students' emotional well-being, enhance their positive psychology, and help them foster a holistic, healthy lifestyle," stated Ms. Chung.

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Commenting on the emotional distress caused by challenges faced by children and adolescents during their growth, **Dr. Amy FUNG, Deputy Director of Clinical Health Psychology Centre of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital**, said, “Children entering adolescence tend to develop a rebellious mentality. They face various shocks and pressures from multiple aspects, and are particularly susceptible to the influence of peers and social media. The parent-child bond plays a crucial role in facilitating the child’s ability to surmount and adjust to obstacles encountered during this stage of development. Parents should bear in mind the importance of fostering a strong parent-child relationship and cultivating effective communication with their children during their formative years. Parents can ascertain their children’s character traits and strengths by involving them in activities that promote their physical and mental well-being. It is essential to monitor the daily lives, behaviours, and peer relationships of your children, and to address their emotions in a timely manner. When communicating with your children, make an effort to attentively listen, comprehend their thoughts, provide empathy and appropriate support, and guide them towards resolving difficulties through life experiences so as to foster a positive perspective on life.”

About studies on the mental health conditions of children and youths

Commissioned by the Hong Kong government, the Chinese University of Hong Kong conducted a survey between 2019 and 2023 with a total of 6,082 schoolchildren and adolescents aged 6 to 17. It was found that nearly 25% of the participants had experienced at least one mental health issue in the past year, such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, disruptive impulse control and conduct disorders, anxiety disorders, and depressive disorders, while close to 50% of the caregivers were reluctant to seek professional assistance.¹ According to the self-administered questionnaire collected from primary and secondary school students attending annual health assessment services provided by the Department of Health’s Student Health Service Centres in the 2022/23 school year, 2.8% and 1.3% of all students had planned to commit suicide or attempted suicide in the past 12 months, respectively, with a higher percentage among secondary students (3.7% and 1.6%, respectively).² Last year, 31 suspected fatal student suicide cases were reported by primary and secondary schools to the Education Bureau, which was the most in five years.³

About “Walk for a Vision” and HKSH’s charity medical works

“Walk For A Vision” is an annual charity event organised by HKSH Village Volunteers since 2009, with the aim of supporting medical-related institutions and charity projects. Over the past 15 years, the event has successfully raised over HK\$8.1 million for 13 beneficiary organisations, supporting various health and medical-related initiatives. Beneficiaries in the past include Children’s Thalassaemia Foundation, Families of SMA (Spinal Muscular Atrophy) Charitable Trust, Children’s Cancer Foundation, St. James’ Settlement, Ronald McDonald House Charities Hong Kong, Ebenezer School and Home for the Visually Impaired, among others.

The 8-km walkathon route began at the Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital and passed through Sing Woo Road, Tai Hang Road, Wong Nai Chung Gap Road, and Violet Hill hilltop before concluding back at the Hospital. This year’s event received generous donations from platinum sponsor **FWD Hong Kong** and gold sponsor, **Siemens Healthineers. Olympus Hong Kong and China Limited** and **Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital Nurses Alumni Association** are also supporting organisations of the walkathon.

¹ The Chinese University of Hong Kong. (2023, November 29). CUHK announces survey results on the mental health of local child, adolescent, and elderly populations. <https://www.cpr.cuhk.edu.hk/en/press/cuhk-announces-survey-results-on-the-mental-health-of-local-child-adolescent-and-elderly-populations/>

² The Government of the HKSAR Press Releases. (2024, January 3). DH announces the key findings of the annual health assessment of the Student Health Service. <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202401/03/P2024010300236.htm>

³ The Government of the HKSAR Press Releases. (2023, December 6). LCQ19: Mental health of students. <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202312/06/P2023120600278.htm>



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Over the years, HKSH has actively fulfilled its corporate social responsibility through different forms of charitable medical services and activities. HKSH Village Volunteers offers various volunteering opportunities to encourage staff to contribute to the community with their medical expertise. In recent years, HKSH has also collaborated with different foundations to subsidise patients with financial needs to receive medical services at HKSH. For instance, HKSH introduced Hong Kong's first proton therapy system last year, and Mr. Li Ka Shing generously sponsored several paediatric cancer patients referred by the Hong Kong Children's Hospital to receive proton therapy with minimal side effects. HKSH is dedicated to collaborating with authorities and generous donors within the community to ensure that patients in need can receive timely and appropriate medical care.

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Corporate Affairs Department, HKSH Medical Group

About HKSH Medical Group

Officially launched in September 2017, HKSH Medical Group, through its operating members, adopts a multi-faceted, coordinated approach to promote public health and advanced medicine through relentless efforts in clinical excellence, medical training and research as well as public health education. Members of the HKSH Medical Group include Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital, HKSH Healthcare, HKSH Eastern Medical Centre and future affiliates. All members are dedicated to providing quality care to patients.

About Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital

Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital is one of the leading private hospitals in Hong Kong. Living up to its motto of "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 and became an approved charitable organisation in July 2018, HKSH Village Volunteers, which consists of HKSH staff members, doctors, nurses, nursing students, alumni of the School of Nursing and retired staff, has taken part in various community and fundraising activities to promote the health and wellness of people in Hong Kong through care and love. Two main fundraising events are the annual "Walk For A Vision" and "HKSH Christmas Party in Benefit of OSC". In recent years, more volunteer programmes and services have been developed, i.e., "HKSH Health Buddies", "HKSH Health Talks", "HKSH Caring Friends", "HKSH Trekkers", and "Village Green Rangers".

About Sweet Home Psychological Wellness Centre

Sweet Home Psychological Wellness Centre Limited is a Registered Charity Organisation of HKSAR. Through the use of play therapy and counselling service, Sweet Home strives to bring out the positive energy in children to build their psychological wellbeing. Funding of the Sweet Home is supported by public, groups and commercial organisations. Among which, O-I-C project was granted funding by the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund with 18-month service period in 2019/2020.

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Photo Captions:

1. Organised by HKSH Village Volunteers, the kick-off ceremony of the “Walk For A Vision” is officiated by Dr. Walton LI, Chief Executive Officer of HKSH Medical Group and Medical Superintendent of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital (sixth from right) ; Dr. Joseph CHAN, Chief Medical Officer of HKSH Medical Group, Deputy Medical Superintendent of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital and Chief Volunteer Leader of HKSH Village Volunteers (fourth from right); and members of Clinical Governance Committee and Hospital Management Committee of HKSH.



2. Dr. Joseph CHAN, Chief Medical Officer of HKSH Medical Group, Deputy Medical Superintendent of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital and Chief Volunteer Leader of HKSH Village Volunteers (second from left), presents the cheque of pledged donation of HK\$494,000 to Ms. Athen CHUNG, Chief Executive Officer of Sweet Home Psychological Wellness Centre and Certified Play Therapist (second from right).



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3. The distinguished guests joined together to call for public attention on the emotional well-being of schoolchildren and encouraged proactive support to help them tackle challenges with a positive and resilient mindset.



4. Addressing at the kick off ceremony, Dr. Joseph CHAN, Chief Medical Officer of HKSH Medical Group, Deputy Medical Superintendent of Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital and Chief Volunteer Leader of HKSH Village Volunteers said HKSH has consistently supported medical charity and activities in various forms, such as providing free medical consultation and health talks, aiming to encourage staff to serve the community with their healthcare profession.



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