



Converging
PROFESSIONAL WISDOM
FOR Family Well-Being

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Message from Mrs. Patricia CHU, Chairperson, CIFA



First of all, I would like to share the good news that, with the staunch support and enthusiastic involvement from all quarters, the Charity Concert For Family Harmony held on 16 April has been a great success, raising a record high of over HK\$560,000, and attracting over 1500 audience. We are honored to have Dr. Law Chi-kwong, the Secretary of Labour and Welfare to be our officiating guest.

During the quarter, the 3A Committee has been working out the details of Wofoo 3A Project 2020 and has submitted a proposal to Wofoo Social Enterprises for continued support. Another exciting development is the Social Impact Study on 3A Project, conducted in collaboration with Dr. Vivian Lou of The University of Hong Kong. A presentation of the preliminary findings will be made during the Exchange Programme of Wofoo 3A Project 2018 cum Launching Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2020 scheduled to be held on 6 December. A proposal has also been submitted to the Family Council to be a co-organizer and sponsor of the Exchange Programme.

On-going work to prepare for the 6th Regional Symposium in November 2020 in Taiwan is underway. The Council has endorsed the formation of the Organizing and Scientific Committees and confirmed the main theme and sub-themes. Efforts are being made to design the website to provide detailed information and to develop the mechanism for online registration. The formal announcement is scheduled to be made in September this year.

To further strengthen the tie with the international community, I wish to report on the exciting development that an application for Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations has been submitted on 30 May, 2019. The vetting procedure will take about a year to complete.

In this issue, we have included two interesting pieces. First, an article on "Family-Work Balance in Singapore", an abstract of presentation by Ms. Charlotte Beck, Senior Director, Family Development Group, Ministry of Social and Family Development of Singapore at the Asian Family Summit. In this, she shared the policies and practices in Singapore, which have been developed with the collaborative efforts of the government, the employers and the business sector to cultivate an ecosystem to support family life. The other one is on "Persons with Dementia and Family Caregivers Companion Project" of the Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service (Hong Kong), winning the Bronze Award of Wofoo 3A Project 2018, sharing an innovative approach to address the rising phenomenon of dementia amongst the growing elderly population.

As you can see, a lot of exciting development is going on and you are invited to participate actively in these regional initiatives. Mark your diaries and watch out for further information.

Family-Work Balance in Singapore

an Family Summit

Family-Work Balance in Singapore

Senior Director, Family Development Group
Ministry of Social and Family Development, Singapore



Ms. Charlotte BECK

Senior Director, Family Development Group

Ministry of Social and Family Development, Singapore

Introduction

Singapore is facing demographic changes such as falling fertility rates, ageing population, and shrinking family household sizes, resulting in smaller backing networks for families to rely on.

Shifting Landscape of Work and Family

Employees are looking for meaningful employment opportunities and seeking adequate time and space for family life; employers are focusing on productivity and the bottom-line, employee retention as well as talent acquisition; while government is aiming to create demographic sustainability, economic productivity and global attractiveness and to see satisfied citizens.

Trends and Corresponding Demands

There are changing trends and demands from families, including:

1. Female resident labour force participation rate recorded around 60% in 2016-17.
2. Greater equality in sharing of caregiving responsibilities, with 95% married respondents agreed both parents should share equal responsibilities at home while 99% agreed fathers and mother are equally important as caregivers for children.
3. Older Retirement Age with resident labour force aged 65 or above increased from 2.5% in 2006 to 5.8% in 2016.
4. Globalized operations across time-zones has become commonplace nowadays, with more employees choosing to take on part-time, temporary and freelance employment. Thus, life-long employees are decreasing.
5. Singapore is facing declining total fertility rate and decreasing old-age support ratio.

How can Singapore better support families in fulfilling their caregiving needs and responsibilities while ensuring that it can continue to stay competitive as a nation?

This paper will cover the policies and practices which Singapore has put in place, working together with employers and business, to develop family-friendly infrastructure, practices and services to cultivate an ecosystem to support family life and a family-friendly work environment.

A. Integrative Ecosystem for Employees

Key Principles and actions:

Encouraging and supporting the integration of work and caregiving roles to retain broad-based economic participation and supporting families in fulfilling their marriage and parenthood aspirations.

1. Encouraging wider participation beyond traditional female carer such as shared parental leave – working fathers are able to share up to 4 weeks of 16 weeks Maternity leave, and Paternity leave for 2 weeks from 2017 onwards, which is fully funded by the Government and can be taken flexibly. Grandparent Caregiver Relief and Working Mother Child Relief have been put in place to support working mothers and extended families.

2. Modeling Progressive Practices by Government

Parental Leave Scheme has been introduced in public service to care for elderly parents; and pilot scheme on unpaid infant-care within the public service.

B. Integrative Ecosystem for Employers

Key Principles and actions:

Facilitating flexibility and adoption of progressive practices in workplace and ensuring sustainability of practices.

1. Facilitating the adjustment through Partnership and Co-creation strategies by setting up Tripartite Committee on Work-Life Strategy to encourage Tripartite Advisory on Family Work Arrangements; to develop Work-Life Works Portal; to provide training workshops, Biennial Work-Life Conference, as well as Work-Life Excellence Awards. Since the launch of Progressive Employers Scheme in 2017, a total of 412 companies were awarded Progressive Employers.

2. Unpaid Leave for employees with unexpected caregiving needs have been introduced.

3. Efforts on Investing into Practice; enhanced Work Life Grant; FWA Incentive; and Job Sharing Incentive were put in place to support implementation of these solutions.

C. Integrative Ecosystem for All

Key Principles and actions:

1. Cultivating a culture of integration such as My Family Weekend Scheme to encourage families to spend quality time together, employers are encouraged to implement family-friendly workplace practices, and partnering with workplaces to conduct family life education programs; and BCA's Accessibility Fund to provide construction costs of Family Friendly features e.g. diaper changing stations.

2. Building a Family-Friendly Singapore – supportive infrastructure and services such as to increase capacity of centre-based infant care by 2020; Foreign Domestic Worker (FDW) Training and Subsidies for caring of elderly/disabled family members; and to set up AICare Link to provide information on finding care-at-home, centre-based care services, caregiver support, assistance schemes and grants.

Conclusion

Many innovative policies and practices have been delineated to facilitate Singaporeans in their caregiving roles and the setting up of a Tripartite Committee to develop work-life strategies holistically. Over the past years, Singapore has been successful in working towards building a family-friendly country that better caters for the needs of the families. It is recognized that the scale of the problem is big and continuous efforts to engage, co-create and integrate are still deemed necessary in future.

Wofoo 3A Project 2018

Bronze Award:

Persons with Dementia and Family Caregivers Companion Project

Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service

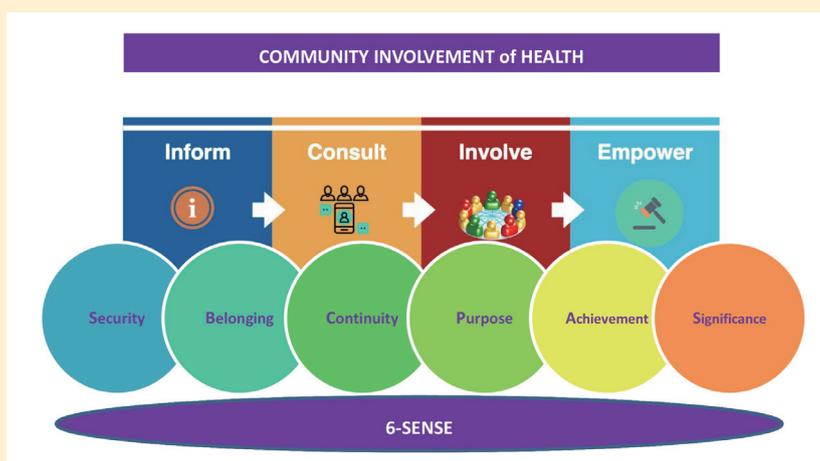
Background

Worldwide, around 50 million people live with dementia (WHO, 2017). In Hong Kong, the prevalence of dementia is estimated to be 5%-8% among elders over 65 (Hospital Authority, 2017). It is estimated that Hong Kong will have 330,000 demented elders in 2039. A person with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) is at an increased risk of developing dementia. It is difficult for families to detect the symptoms of MCI and caring for people with MCI (PwMCI) is stressful and causes physical, emotional and economic burdens on family members.

Current services focus on diagnosed demented elders, and work with an individual-based training approach without catering for the needs of PwMCI and their family caregivers. With the funding support from Ho Cheung Shuk Yuen Charitable Foundation and Fu Tak lam Foundation Limited, the Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service (AKA) launched the "Persons with Dementia and Family Caregivers Companion Project" (the Project) in 2016, aiming to optimize physical and mental health, functional ability and well-being of PwMCI, empowering caring capabilities of family caregivers and building a supportive and friendly community for PwMCI and their family caregivers.

Work Model

The Project took a paradigm shift from remedial to preventive, and a change from individual-based to family-focused and community-supported approach. Embedded in the Community Involvement in Health (CIH) model, the Project actively promoted the involvement and health of the elders by creating an enriched environment. The Project adopted a 6-sense framework to provide high-quality dementia care to enhance positive relationships as shown below:



The implementation process

Family-focused: Based on CIH empowerment model, the Project has adopted a step-by-step approach to engage and support family caregivers, so as to empower their capabilities in providing quality care for PwMCI and to maintain family functioning. A practical Caregiver Care Manual and Individual Care Manual have been published and issued to family members for recording the important life memories, stories and virtues of their senior parents to inherit family wisdom and love.

Community-supported: This Project articulated partnership between family and community to provide the required assistance for PwMCI. Based on CIH empowerment model, the Project has created an inclusive environment and successfully engaged 43 community organizations, Mutual Aid Committees, local kai-fong Stores, forming a caring and supportive atmosphere for the targeted elders and their family members.

Sharing by concerned service users

"One time, my mother-in-law shopped at a dementia-friendly store in the neighbourhood. She bought the same stuff for multiple times on a single day. The shopkeeper was very alert, and suggested that she should seek medical help or talk with a social worker. I believe that is what the Project is trying to achieve, raising public awareness on dementia."

—Ms. Fung, daughter of a PwMCI

Wofoo 3A Project 2018



Outcomes of the Project

The Project successfully engaged 124 PwMCI and 317 caregivers. 90 volunteers and 43 local stakeholders (such as small-and-medium sized enterprises, mutual aids committees, property management companies, schools and local organizations, etc.) and 4,004 residents participated in our dementia friendly events.

AKA commissioned the Sau Po Centre on Ageing, The University of Hong Kong (HKU-COA) to conduct a study on the usability and effectiveness of the Project in enhancing family functioning and achievement of PwMCI. The Project has achieved three key successful impacts including:

At individual level, the percentage of PwMCI whom reported to have better Quality of Life increased from 39.5% to 53.5%. The percentage of PwMCI with no to mild level of depressive symptoms increased from 77.6% to 83.7%. Participants with MCI consisted 61.2% initially and it dropped to 43.5% afterwards.

At family level, a high level of satisfaction was reported by family caregivers. Reported benefits included: (1) alerting families of PwMCI's high risk of conversion to dementia; (2) earlier access to treatment and training for PwMCI to slow disease progression and prevent premature disability; and (3) extending the time window for devising future care plans, helping to improve the quality of life for both PwMCI and themselves.

At community level, building of 43 support networks within housing estate, facilitating identification of PwMCI and assisting PwMCI re-engagement with the community. Focus group interviews showed that community stakeholders were leveraging on their respective expertise, experience and network in building a more dementia-friendly community.

Innovation

Work approach: It adopted family-focused and community-supported approach as intervention strategies for PwMCI and their family caregivers in Hong Kong, creating a dementia-friendly community to meet PwMCI's needs.

New clientele: The Project has identified PwMCI and their adult children caregivers as target groups, a relatively new clientele in dementia-related projects, providing interventions and support to fill the service gap.

Easy-to-remember slogans: The Project has created some easy-to-remember slogans and posted them up in the neighbourhood with the help from SME and other partners.

Sustainability and replicability

The Project was successfully implemented with good practices with detailed documentation which is accessible to all the interested parties, disseminated through conferences and sharing to promote mutual learning. The wide collaborations with SME, hospitals, schools, MACs, NGOs and academia of the Project actively enhanced the benefits of PwMCI and their caregivers.



Charity Concert for Family Harmony 2019

In the last quarter, the Publicity and Fund-raising Committee had successfully organized the Charity Concert for Family Harmony on 16 April, 2019 at the Concert Hall, Hong Kong Cultural Centre which was co-organized with the SAR Philharmonic Orchestra. In order to raise the target amount of HK\$500,000, all promotional means to reach our potential audience, sponsors and donors have been adopted, including appeal letters and promotional materials through email and whatsapp to all those in our network.

The audience had enjoyed the performance by SAR Philharmonic Orchestra, Dr. David Fang, Dr. Michelle Tsui, as well as Ms. Colleen Lee, the award winning pianist in HK. We were honoured that Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek of the Focal Point on the Family of the United Nations had kindly written a message for the Programme Brochure of the Concert while Dr. Law Chi-kwong, Secretary for Labour and Welfare of Hong Kong, came to officiate at the Opening Ceremony of the Concert. We were very encouraged that over 1500 audience had attended the Concert, and with the staunch support from the sponsors, donors, co-organizers, members of CIFA and all other related parties, this Concert has raised over HK\$ 560,000 which was above our target and breaking the record of funds raised through this nature of event.

In producing the Programme Brochure of the Concert, other than Ah Chung, Ven Chang Lim, Mr. Wong Ying Kit and Sui May who had contributed their art pieces to enhance the content of the Brochure, we have attempted to insert several art pieces contributed by social service recipients, sharing their experience and insights through different art forms in the Programme Brochure, making it more attractive and treasured by the audience, as observed by our Chairperson, Mrs. Patricia Chu, "it added much colour and substance to this Brochure."



Exchange Programme of Wofoo 3A Project 2018 cum Launching Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2020

Wofoo 3A Project plays an important role in promoting and coordinating multi-disciplinary sectors to advance family well-being in the Asian Region, gaining growing recognition from the international community. To take this regional initiative forward, we have submitted a proposal to Wofoo Social Enterprises, the Title Sponsor to seek continuous support. We are encouraged to note that the proposal is supported in principle and we are awaiting for a formal approval from WSE. We have also submitted a proposal to the Family Council to co-organize and fund the Exchange Programme of Wofoo 3A Project 2018 scheduled to be held on 6 and 7 December, 2019.

We are also excited with the progress in conducting the Social Impact Study on 3A Project, with the input from Dr. Vivian Lou and her team at the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of The University of Hong Kong. We aim to publish a paper in an international journal to share the experience and wisdom gained through this regional initiative.

The Wofoo 3A Project 2020, the 6th round of competition since 2010, will be launched on 6 December, 2019, together with the Exchange Programme of Wofoo 3A Project 2018, involving sharing session and agency visits. During the session, the 8 finalist teams of Wofoo 3A Project 2018 and Gold, Silver and Bronze award winning teams of 2016 will present their projects and show how they have furthered their work with families, as well as to explore possibilities for replication and adaptation in other organizations and regions. Opportunity will also be taken for the research team from HKU to present the preliminary findings of the Social Impact Study.

Please watch out for further details of the event in the CIFA website at www.cifa-net.org. Meanwhile, please mark your diary and try to join this very exciting and informative programme!