

Community Care Network for Discharged Frail Elderly

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Introduction:

The successful establishment of such program attributes to the HA which integrates clinical services through the development of community care networks collaborating with NGOs such as the **HKEC Volunteer Support Network for the Elderly**. This project was a collaborative effort between the HKEC and six distinctive elderly NGOs in Hong Kong East since 2003.

Purpose of the project:

The aims were of a variety, including raising the health awareness of the frail elderly, strengthening their social support through the mobilization of community volunteers, enhancing the medical knowledge and skills of volunteer in caring of the elderly, and developing community care networks with community partners.

Material and Methods:

Well trained volunteers in the health criterion were required in the project to provide services of a professional standard enforced by the multi-disciplinary support from hospitals. Localized small group visit teams were formed to pay regular visits and telephone calls to needy elderly. The strategies included providing medical social interface, ensuring the cluster wide and cross agencies networking and applying the health check protocols to ensure systematic assessment and early detection.

Results:

A larger number of voluntary project participants were in subsequence of the project promotion, evident by over 500 volunteers completed their training and concern services. A total of 364 frail elders were benefited from the project. Around 95% of the elders visited were living alone and 69% of the elders were suffering from multi-chronic-diseases. There were 1046 home visits and 1596 telephone concern calls provided by the volunteers. Apart from rendering emotional support, the volunteers also educated the elders about the health knowledge on diet, fall prevention, drug management, etc.

Conclusion:

The project was on a positive progress with now more volunteer workers of different quarters of the community. Also, a collaborative team on community care was well established with participation of medical, nursing, allied health professionals, social workers of NGOs and community partners.