

# The Chinese University of Hong Kong The Nethersole School of Nursing

## Cadenza Training Programme

**CTP005: Community and Residential Care for Older People**

### **Chapter 7: Living Preferences of older people – choice to stay at home or move to alternative home arrangements**

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# Lecture Outline

- Concerns about where older people should be residing
- Choice of living - views from older people in Hong Kong
- Making the decision to live in an elderly home
- Choice of residential home settings provided in Hong Kong
- Alternative home arrangements
- Conclusion

# Introduction

- In 1997, 'Caring for Older People' was one of the strategic policy objectives of the HKSAR government.
- 'Ageing in Place' is also another important goal.

# Introduction

- Traditionally, Chinese people think that they have the responsibility to care for their parents when they get old.
- In reality, this becomes a challenging task for many Hong Kong people.
- Therefore, the caring, living, psychosocial, health and medical problems particular to older people are becoming more complex.

- Concerns have been raised about the living conditions of older people...
- Older people have to live on their own.
- Older people are being abandoned in unsuitable accommodation.
- Older people are being forcibly moved to homes for the aged.

## Other concerns include ...

- More homes for the aged are opening in response to the ageing population crisis.
- What are the **choices in accommodation** for older people?
- **Who** should make the decision for an older person to live in a home for the aged?

Below are some views of **community-dwelling elders** about the prospect of living in aged homes

**Not for me, if possible**

**Hopefully I am healthy and can live by myself.**

**I am confident that my daughter will care for me at home and not send me to an aged home**

**If I can choose, can I employ a maid to care for me at home rather than putting me in an aged home?**

There are often **conflicts of choice:**

to stay at home...or move into alternative care arrangements (usually care homes)?



If care homes are the ultimate choice,

*we need to ask the question:*

“Why do you choose to live in  
***an aged home?***”

# Below are some answers from residents

**I know I cannot care by myself and my daughter needs to work. I know I need to go to aged home, but I don't like this one.**

**I don't want to live with my daughter-in-law. I asked my son to arrange this aged home for me.**

**I was admitted to this home two years ago after I had a stroke.**

**My son told me I always forgot things, like forgetting the way back home and forgetting to turn off the water tap, so he sent me to an old age home.**

## **Just pause and think awhile**

Can older people choose where they want to live for the later part of their lives?

Is it **necessity** rather than **choice**?

Are there any **other choices** that can be made instead of moving into care homes?

Choosing to live in an aged home  
is an important decision as it will be  
**HOME** to the older person.

**Do our older people  
in Hong Kong  
know what to ask ???**

**Are the older people's decisions  
being undermined or neglected?**

**Do the family members or relatives  
really ask what their wish is?  
Do they respect their wish?**

- In many countries, common questions often arise concerning the choice of residential care
  - Can older people still choose to remain at home if there's help from different community sources?
  - Is it really necessary to move to an aged home?



- Different agencies in many countries provide different sorts of home care services specialised in assisting older people to remain at home instead of going to a home for the aged.

**Are community services in Hong Kong  
sufficient to allow our older people  
to remain at home by themselves?**



Traditionally, Chinese older people may be more submissive. They are afraid to voice out their needs or wishes. They usually obey their children when making such an important decision.

- A very **large scale study on residential care** was performed in Hong Kong in 2005.
- 843 older people in Hong Kong receiving elderly services (residential care) and 89 relatives were recruited.

(Lee & Lo, 2005)

## Aim of study

- To obtain information from the service users, so as to promote the well-being of the older people and to assist them to live in dignity.

(Lee & Lo, 2005)

- One of the questions asked in the study:

“Who made the decision to move into a home for the elderly?”

## Results:

- It was found that more than 50% of the residents in Homes for the Aged were more active in making their own decision whereas less than 50% of the residents in C&A Homes made their own decision to move into the C&A Homes.

(Lee & Lo, 2005)

- The study also showed that the older the resident, the weaker their decision-making power.
- Sons and daughters played the major role in making the choice.

(Lee & Lo, 2005)



It is interesting to know that the study found:

- those with a higher level of instrumental activities of daily living
- female
- higher potential for self-care
- poor relationship with family members

were more likely to make their own decision to enter aged homes.

(Lee & Lo, 2005)

Given that in 2006

the old-age dependency ratio was 168

(i.e., every 1,000 employed persons support 168 older people aged 65 or above).

It is predicted that in 2023

the old-age dependency ratio is expected to increase to 282 in 2023 and 428 in 2033

Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2008)

If support services in Hong Kong cannot meet the caring needs of older people in their own homes, residential homes will **ultimately be a necessity** and not a choice.

# Residential Service in Hong Kong

# Recap: types of residential homes in Hong Kong

- Aged homes run by the private sector
- Aged homes with government subsidies
- Other alternatives

**Do older people or their families  
have a choice?**

- The waiting time for aged home places subsidised by the government varies; availability greatly depends on the level of care required.
- If a family needs to find an aged home quickly, a private aged home is the only choice.

- With effect from 1 January 2003, the Social Welfare Department no longer accepts applications for placement in Hostels for the Elderly.
- Self-care hostels will gradually be phased out and converted into care and attention places providing a continuum of care from 2005-06.

Social Welfare Department (2005b)



# Waiting List for Residential Care Services

- As at 31 October 2012, there were a total of 28,944 applicants on the Central Waiting List for subsidised long term care services. Details are given below.
- Homes for the aged: 15 applicants
- Care and attention homes: 22,452 applicants
- Nursing homes: 6,477 applicants

**Total of 28,944 applicants are waitlisted**

Social Welfare Department (2005a)

# Waiting Time (in months)

Average for the past 3 months  
as at 31 October 2012

## Care and attention homes

- Subvented homes and contract homes (33 months)
- Private homes participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (6 months)

Overall average 21 months

## Nursing homes

- Subvented homes and contract homes (36 months)

Social Welfare Department (2005a)

- In Hong Kong, apart from the long waiting times, the ultimate decision of which subsidised aged home to choose does not really fall to the older person or their family.

- It is the decision of the

**STANDARDISED CARE NEED ASSESSMENT  
MANAGEMENT OFFICES (Elderly services)**

**SCNAMO (ES)s**

# STANDARDISED CARE NEED ASSESSMENT MECHANISM FOR ELDERLY SERVICES

- Commenced November 2000
- In 28 November 2003, the government introduced the assessment tool **Minimum Data Set-Home Care (MDS-HC)** to assess the long term care needs of older people and match them with appropriate services.

Social Welfare Department (2005c)

- SCNAMO covers applications for admission to:
  - homes for the aged
  - care-and-attention homes
  - nursing homes
  - day care centres for older people
  - enhanced home and community care services
  - integrated home care services (for disabled and frail cases)
  - For details, please visit:

[http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_pubsvc/page\\_elderly/sub\\_standardis](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_elderly/sub_standardis)

Social Welfare Department (2008c)

- Canada operates a similar screening process to SCNAMOS. The Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) is responsible for screening applications to determine eligibility and coordinates access to residential homes and home care services.

Ageing population ↑

Vacancies in subsidised aged homes ↓

**OUTCOME?**



The outcome is:

most older people and their families **cannot** choose their desired home.

Some time ago, older people could not even choose a location that was close to their family members; it was only after much negotiation that the problem was ultimately solved.



# Aged Homes run by the Private Sector

## Private Aged Homes

are an alternative  
to limited bed vacancies  
and long waiting times.

# Private Aged Homes

- **Merits:**
  - no or minimal waiting time
  - lots of choices

## **Downside:**

- Care standards vary
- Wide range of fees and charges

- In May 2006, the Consumer Council conducted a survey on the fees, charges and services of 183 private aged homes.
- Great variations were apparent in package content and fees, especially under miscellaneous items.

Consumer Council (2006)

**Dream Home?**

What do older people expect?

# Dream Home

- Close proximity to offspring
- Affordable monthly fees
- Good management
- Courteous staff
- Good quality of food and service
- Spacious

(Lee & Lo, 2005)

# Any Other Choices?

# Senior Citizen Residences Scheme (SEN)

- A Housing Society initiative to serve older people.
  - Aims at **‘Healthy Ageing’**
  - Aims at **‘Independent Life’**
  - Aims at **‘Ageing in Place’**



# SEN

- SEN operates under a 'long lease' arrangement.
- The project was launched by Hong Kong Housing Society
- Please visit:  
[http://www.hkhs.com/sen\\_20040903/index.asp](http://www.hkhs.com/sen_20040903/index.asp)

# Other alternatives from HK Housing Authority

- If an older person (aged 58 or above) wants to live in a flat by him/herself, he/she can apply for:
  - Single Elderly Persons Priority Scheme
  - Elderly Persons Priority Scheme (if two or more people)

# Eligibility

- Please visit the web-site of Hong Kong Housing Authority:

<http://www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/meeting-special-needs/senior-citizens/index.html>

# Housing For Older People

- However, if the older person chooses to live in a flat, there are several points to be considered:
  - Relationship with unrelated housemates
  - Special house design for older people
  - Access to medical and social support
  - Sustainability for healthy living
  - Finance of the housing

Hong Kong Housing Authority (2004)

# Choosing to live in China

Another alternative for older people is to move to China for the later parts of their lives.

- Some older people may prefer to live in China after retirement.
- There are different kinds of aged homes in China; two of them are run by NGOs in Hong Kong.

# Aged Home in Zhaoqing run by NGO in HK

Two-storey building with:

- self-care section (with meals)
- C&A section
- special care section
- central living facilities
- outdoor scenic gardens and ponds
- single rooms, double rooms, 4-people rooms

**Quiet, spacious, cheaper, but...**  
**will it be far away from relatives and friends**  
**and...**

**ONE BIG CONCERN**

Can they retain the welfare as Hong Kong  
citizens if they reside in China  
for the rest of their lives?



# Conclusion

# Conclusion

- Residential care is not solely an issue for older people
- Planning and provision of residential services for older people is certainly not a simple task
- Older people are becoming more educated and more outspoken on their present and future needs.

- Long term residential planning should consider:
  - sustainability
  - variety of services
  - comprehensive services
  - integrated services
  - cost–effectiveness
  - **Last of all.....**

**Older people can make  
their own choices**

**They are able to live the way that  
they expect to live**

**The service providers and family members are willing to listen to their voice**

**THINK** before we end this chapter

As healthcare professionals,  
how can we contribute more?

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