

Press Release

Note to Editors

For Immediate Release

3 November 2008

**First Study in Hong Kong by CADENZA Project on
International Comparison of Well-being of Seniors Reveals
Seniors in Hong Kong Lead a Healthy and Active Life**

“CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors”, a five-year project initiated by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine of The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Faculty of Social Sciences of The University of Hong Kong, today (3 November 2008) reveals the findings of its recent study that seniors in Hong Kong generally live a healthy and active life. International comparisons, conducted in a broad sense, shows that the lifestyle, social engagement and health status of seniors in Hong Kong are comparable to other well developed economies, including Japan, Singapore, Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom. The findings are compiled in a book entitled “*How Well are Seniors in Hong Kong Doing? An International Comparison*”.

The study compared seniors in Hong Kong with those in other well developed economies on a number of aspects:

On nutrition and health-related lifestyle

- generally consumed adequate amount of vegetables;
- should consume more fruits;
- generally had a habit of doing exercise regularly;
- had a relatively lower prevalence of female daily smokers, but relatively higher prevalence of male daily smokers;

On social network and engagement

- were relatively less active in formal employment, voluntary work and lifelong learning;
- were generally active in care giving and social activities;

On health status

- had similar prevalence of hypertension and diabetes as in other countries;
- had relatively lower prevalence of heart diseases;
- had lower mortality rates from cancer and diseases of the heart.

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The study also found that Hong Kong would soon catch up with Japan on the ageing issues. By 2030, seniors are expected to constitute 25% of Hong Kong's population, just slightly less than that in Japan (28%).

To enhance the well-being of seniors, the study recommended seniors to have balanced diet and ample exercise, avoid excessive alcohol drinking and smoking, be active in social life, contribute to family and society and seek suitable assistance on need basis.

“Apart from negative outcomes such as morbidity and disability in the late stage of life, aspects like lifestyle and social engagement are also important in determining the well-being of the seniors. Targeting at the favourable and less favourable aspects, we should improve the current situation and take to a higher standard so as to enhance the well-being of the seniors.” Professor Jean Woo, Director of CADENZA Project said.

Mr William Y Yiu, Executive Director, Charities of The Hong Kong Jockey Club remarked that CADENZA had always had a strong emphasis on research and evidence-based approach. He expected that the findings would provide useful reference for government departments, social welfare agencies, care-givers, elderly and the general public in enhancing the quality of care and quality of life for Hong Kong's elderly.

CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors is a \$380 million and 5-year project initiated and funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust in light of a rapidly ageing population. Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong and Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong are the project partners. It aims at creating an elder-friendly community which fosters positive community attitude towards older people and continuously improves the quality of care and quality of life for Hong Kong's elderly. Please refer to the fact sheet for details of the project.

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About CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors

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CADENZA is an acronym for “Celebrate their Accomplishments: Discover their Effervescence and Never-ending Zest as they Age.” In classical music, a 'Cadenza' is an extended virtuosic section, usually near the end of a movement in a concerto. The word is used here in a figurative context to describe the apex of one's life and the celebration of a lifetime's accomplishments.

CADENZA has 6 major project components:

1. ***Community Projects*** are innovative and sustainable service models to cope with changing needs of seniors.
2. ***Research Training Workshop*** is to nurture academic leadership in social gerontology.
3. ***Research*** is to advance gerontological knowledge and to evaluate the outcomes of different CADENZA projects.
4. ***Public Awareness*** seeks to promote positive ageing and highlight important issues pertaining to elderly population, covering 6 major themes: (i) health promotion and maintenance, (ii) health and social services in Hong Kong, (iii) living environment, (iv) financial and legal issues, (v) quality of life and quality of dying, and (vi) age disparities.
5. ***Symposium*** is to provide a platform where the overseas and local experts can exchange new insights in the understanding of aging issues.
6. ***Training*** includes on-line courses, workshops and public seminars to train different levels of professional front-line workers, care givers and the general public.