POLICY BRIEF

Building an Age-friendly Community in Hong Kong

Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project

Policy Brief

Submitted by

Sau Po Centre on Ageing
The University of Hong Kong

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Background

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust ("the Trust") has taken a proactive role to tackle the challenges of the ageing population in Hong Kong through the overarching strategic theme of building an age-friendly city. The Trust has implemented the *Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project* ("JCAFC Project") in partnership with four gerontology research institutes in Hong Kong, including the Sau Po Centre on Ageing at the University of Hong Kong and three other institutions since 2015. The project aimed to build momentum in districts to develop age-friendly communities by recommending a framework for districts to undertake continual improvement, raise public awareness and encourage community participation. The JCAFC Project was firstly piloted in eight districts[1] from July 2015 and extended to all 18 districts in Hong Kong from January 2017 to cover the remaining 10 districts[2].

To assess the age-friendliness of communities and identify areas for improvement, a baseline[3] and a final assessment[4] study was carried out in each district by the four gerontology research institutes using both quantitative and qualitative approaches based on the eight domains of an age-friendly city (AFC) suggested by the World Health Organization ("WHO") (World Health Organization, 2007). The baseline and final assessments collected 19,892 completed questionnaires and conducted 181 focus groups with 1,385 participants in total. This policy brief consolidates participants' opinions and proposes policy recommendations for the Government, policy makers and other stakeholders when advancing appropriate age-friendly initiatives.

This policy brief consists of nine Chapters based on the eight AFC domains as suggested by the WHO. Chapters one to eight provide policy suggestions on 1) Outdoor spaces and buildings; 2) Transportation; 3) Housing; 4) Social participation; 5) Respect and social inclusion; 6) Civic participation and employment; 7) Communication and information and 8) Community support and health services respectively. Finally, a conclusion is drawn in Chapter nine.

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[1] Eight pilot districts include: Central and Western, Islands, Kowloon City, Kwun Tong, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Tsuen Wan and Wan Chai Districts

[2] Ten districts in the second phase include: Eastern, Kwai Tsing, North, Sai Kung, Sham Shui Po, Southern, Tuen Mun, Wong Tai Sin, Yau Tsim Mong and Yuen Long Districts

[3] From July 2015 to February 2016 for the pilot phase and from March to September 2017 for the second phase

[4] From June to November 2018 for the pilot phase and from May 2020 to September 2021 for the second phase

Chapter 1. Outdoor spaces and buildings

Vision

We aim to create enabling and supportive outdoor environments (i.e., outdoor spaces and buildings) that enable people to be and do what they value throughout their lives and achieve ageing-in-place.

Definition of Outdoor spaces and buildings

Outdoor spaces and buildings are one of the eight domains of the WHO's AFC framework. The WHO defines Outdoor spaces and buildings as pleasant, clean and secure environments for older adults to achieve ageing-in-place (World Health Organization, 2007). This domain covers many elements such as green spaces, walkways, outdoor seating, pavements, roads, public toilets and barrier-free facilities (World Health Organization, 2007).

The Challenges

The baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, showed that Outdoor spaces and buildings ranked 5th among eight AFC domains (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019). The sub-domains – "outdoor spaces" and "buildings" ranked 8th and 12th respectively among the 19 sub-domains of the AFC, which indicated that people were generally more satisfied with outdoor spaces than buildings in Hong Kong (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019). Older adults were generally appreciative of the availability of parks, green spaces, spacious outdoor spaces and barrier-free facilities. However, they had many concerns regarding the design of unfriendly outdoor spaces and buildings in Hong Kong, such as inadequate shelters in parks and outdoor areas, insufficient lighting in rural areas and unsafe pedestrian walkways. Some participants complained about poor environmental hygiene (e.g., litter, noise pollution and dripping water problems) and insufficient law enforcement regarding pollution (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

Causes of the Challenges

1. **Age-friendly design is not well known and poorly implemented by urban/community designers and developers**
   - Age-friendly environment and design is a relatively new concept proposed by the WHO in 2005 (World Health Organization, 2007). Its importance is acknowledged by the Hong Kong Government and was advocated in the 2016 policy address (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2016). Therefore, urban/community designers and developers may need more time to understand the concept and implement it into their design.
   - Moreover, existing outdoor spaces and buildings can only be slightly enhanced or modified to achieve age-friendliness as they are restricted by existing environments and building structures. Only future large-scale urban re-development can further enhance age-friendliness at the district level.

2. **Limited channels for older adults to express their needs and concerns to the Government and related departments**
   - A top-down approach of urban planning and design by the Government and private developers may overlook older adults' needs.
   - There are insufficient opportunities and channels for older adults to express their needs regarding development and maintenance of outdoor spaces and buildings in the community (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

Policy Recommendations

1. **Incorporate the age-friendly concept when building outdoor spaces and facilities**
   Future outdoor space and building designs should incorporate the concept of age-friendliness and the goal of ageing-in-place. The Government can encourage developers, designers and related stakeholders to understand the concept of ageing-in-place and age-friendliness. This can be achieved by utilising the Elderly-friendly Design Guidelines and organising public seminars to raise public awareness of the age-friendly design:

   a. Elderly-friendly Design Guidelines: The Architectural Services Department commissioned an agency to develop the Elderly-friendly Design Guidelines in 2019. These guidelines help designers and developers make design decisions to improve the built environment to support healthy and active ageing.
      - We suggest the Government apply these age-friendly design guidelines in future developments of outdoor spaces by different governmental departments (e.g., Urban Renewal Authority, Development Bureau, Highways Department). The Architectural Services Department could also develop a simple age-friendly outdoor spaces design checklist based on the guidelines to ease follow up.

   b. Public seminars or forums on age-friendly design: we also suggest the Government and related departments organise public seminars and forums for different stakeholders to raise awareness of age-friendly concepts and design. These age-friendly forums can facilitate discussions and initiatives between different stakeholders for building an age-friendly city. This also encourages different sectors of society to discover the challenges and solutions for improving age-friendliness.

   Box 1-1: Example 1: Annual age-friendly forum in Waterloo, Canada

2. **Enhance older adults' participation**
    The Government can enhance older adults' participation in developing age-friendly communities by 1) including older adults in the planning stage for community development/re-development through a participatory design approach and 2) setting up an age-friendly working group with older adults as representatives in the District Council.

    a. Participatory design approach: the Government could invite older adults to comment on future community development and re-development.
        *   A participatory design approach actively involves all stakeholders in the design process to understand and meet people's needs. Community participation is necessary for community development since users can offer insight into what is important for the local neighbourhood. By involving older adults throughout the design process, the Government and related stakeholders can adequately address older adults' needs and concerns to develop an age-friendly outdoor environment that better suits their needs.

    Box 1-2: Example 2: The Seniors, The Designers – A design experience to create an age-friendly open space with older adults in Morse Park, Hong Kong

    Box 1-3: Example 3: Mobility Scouts: Engaging older adults in Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands

    b. To facilitate communication between policymakers, urban planners, law enforcers and older adults, District Councils could arrange age-friendly working groups with older adults as representatives in the District Council.
        *   Older adult representatives can be selected from community concern groups or representatives of different elderly centres. These representatives will regularly participate in the age-friendly working group and exchange opinions regarding community facilities and design. This platform could further facilitate mutual understanding between the Government, urban planners and community residents.
        *   The working group can monitor the working progress of different community infrastructures and maintenance works. It also addresses community needs by prioritising work that benefits residents the most.

    Box 1-4: Example 4: Working Group on Rehabilitation and Age-friendly Community in the Southern District

Conclusion

In general, outdoor spaces and buildings in Hong Kong have begun to include age-friendly design elements. Although older adults generally appreciate the facilities provided by their communities (e.g., parks, green spaces and barrier-free facilities), certain adjustments are needed, including 1) incorporating age-friendly concepts in building outdoor spaces and facilities and 2) enhancing older adults' participation in developing age-friendly communities.

Box 1-1: Example 1: Annual age-friendly forum in Waterloo, Canada[5]

The City of Waterloo set up an age-friendly Waterloo multi-agency committee. This committee established a mechanism to include older adults, developed and administered a baseline assessment tool of the city's age-friendliness and a city-wide action plan based on the findings. The committee and city staff work in partnership with the University of Waterloo to continually assess and improve age-friendliness in the community. One of the outcomes is an annual forum on age-friendliness. The forum has been operating for the past six years, covering a range of topics from housing and the value of life-long learning.

Box 1-2: Example 2: The Seniors, The Designers – A design experience to create an age-friendly open space with older adults in Morse Park, Hong Kong

Designers applied the participatory design approach to build age-friendly public furniture in Morse Park in Hong Kong from November 2016 to December 2017. Eighteen older adults from 4 districts were recruited for the design process and received training in basic design skills. Each older adult participated in formulating the park furniture layout and sketching the concept of benches.

(1) Mock furniture was built and set in the park to allow older adults and other users to give detailed feedback on site.
(2) Architects and designers were the facilitators who transformed older adults' sketches into specific design solutions.
(3) Through liaison and engagement with these older adults, different age-friendly details and elements were included in the public furniture design to ensure it would be safe and comfortable.
(4) Following site work completion, older adults and their families joined a celebration event to share their design experience with other park users and showcase the community's age-friendly park furniture design.

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[5] World Health Organization. (2010). Annual age-friendly forum. Retrieved 1 Nov, 2021, from
https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/annual-age-friendly-forum/

Box 1-3: Example 3: Mobility Scouts: Engaging older adults in Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands[6]

The overall objective of the Mobility Scouts project was to involve older men and women in decision-making processes to enable and empower them to contribute as co-producers of age-friendly environments and services. Older men and women in all partner countries were trained to initiate and participate in co-production processes at all stages, from identifying and evaluating age-inappropriate environmental features and spaces to redesigning community spaces and public environments, and the communication of research findings and age-friendly principles.

The project's training thus resulted in environmental changes and improvements, which were sensitive to older adults' needs, local specificities and any involved partners' interests. In doing so, Mobility Scouts brought together older citizens, local authorities and service providers to cooperate in the development of age-friendly environments and services, which were defined in broad terms as ranging from the design and organisation of public spaces to mobility or the accessibility of services (e.g., transportation).

Box 1-4: Example 4: Working Group on Rehabilitation and Age-friendly Community in the Southern District

The Southern District Council actively promotes the concept of an age-friendly city in the community. The Working Group on Rehabilitation and Age-friendly Community in the Southern District ("the Working Group") has been the designated platform for discussing age-friendly city initiatives.

The working group invites older adults' representatives as group members. They participate in the meetings and share the views collected from district residents on various older adults-related issues. Even though these older adults' representatives do not have the right to vote in the meetings, they share valuable opinions with stakeholders and help to build a community that can better address older adults' needs.

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[6] World Health Organization. (2016). Mobility Scouts: Engaging older people. Retrieved 11 Nov, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/mobility-scouts-engaging-older-people/

Chapter 2. Transportation

Vision

We aim to promote an accessible and affordable transportation network to enable older adults to actively engage in local and wider communities.

Definition of Transportation

Transportation refers to the public transport system available to the general public, operating on established routes with a posted fee for each trip. Transportation has a strong influence on personal mobility and social participation. The WHO (2007) defines age-friendly transportation as accessible, affordable and safe public transport that enables people to age actively, remain engaged with their community and gain access to health and social services.

The Challenges

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that transportation ranked 2nd among the eight domains. It reflected that older adults, in general, were satisfied with the affordable and accessible public transport in their district. However, some older adults faced barriers in this domain, including 1) unfriendly public transportation system and 2) insufficient transport connection in some regions.

Causes of the Challenges

1. **Unfriendly public transportation system**
    The design of the public transport system focuses on efficiency rather than equality for different age groups in Hong Kong.
    *   Public transportation planning in Hong Kong focuses more on efficiency than equality (Chui et al., 2019), which uses Massive Transit Rail (MTR) as the backbone of the public transport system (Transport and Housing Bureau, 2017). It overlooks older adults' travel needs (e.g., frequency, timetables and routes). Indeed, older adults prefer the aboveground public transport system because it caters better to their declining functional abilities and travel needs (Chui et al., 2019). Moreover, the bus route rationalisation accompanied by a new MTR station in the district will reduce some aboveground bus routes that previously enabled participants to travel conveniently without needing to walk long distances to reach the underground railway platforms (Chui et al., 2019).

2. **Insufficient transport connections in specific regions or for wheelchairs users**
    *   Older adults living in remote areas have limited public transportation options (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project). Although some of the areas may be connected by shuttle buses, wheelchairs users cannot enjoy these services because the shuttle buses are not wheelchair-friendly. Moreover, participants found that some taxi drivers refuse to serve wheelchair users, making it even harder to connect with outside communities (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).

Policy Recommendations

1. **Incorporate and promote the age-friendly concept in transportation**
   We suggest the Transport Department organise regular consultations and seminars with different stakeholders to collect their perspectives and promote the concept of age-friendly transportation. We also suggest organising community auditing on transportation to collect older adults' opinions regarding age-friendly transportation using a bottom-up approach.

   a. Regular consultation and seminars: The Transport Department can organise age-friendly transportation consultations and seminars with related stakeholders (e.g., bus companies, MTR and older adults' representatives) and arouse their attention concerning age-friendly concepts and design in transportation. Consultation sessions can facilitate information exchange and mutual understanding between the Transport Department, transportation service providers and the general public through discussing transportation problems in some regions, opening up access to instant replies from representatives of the Transport Department and service providers.

   b. Community auditing on transportation: District Councils can allocate funding to NGOs and support them to organise community auditing of age-friendly transportation in the district. Older adults will travel in the district to evaluate the problems and recommend improvements around its accessibility and facilities. Older adults' representatives can present their findings to the Transport Department and corresponding service providers through regular consultations and seminars.

   > *Box 2-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Age Friendly Community Care Programme for Age-friendly Transportation*

2. **Encouraging the provision and use of multiple transportation services for older adults**
   To enhance accessibility for older adults living in remote areas or wheelchairs users, the Transport Department or District Councils can consider facilitating alternative transportation options, such as volunteer transportation programmes connecting older adults with services and facilities in the district.

   a. Volunteer transportation programmes: The Transport Department or District Councils can allocate funding and appoint an organisation to create and support a volunteer transportation programme. The programme organiser will recruit volunteer drivers, undertake standard background and insurance checks for the drivers and their automobiles and provide short training courses. Older adults and their family members can call in advance to schedule a free round trip from the older adults' homes to the selected destination.

   > *Box 2-2. Example 2: Free transportation for older adults (Prostofer) in Slovenia*

   > *Box 2-3. Example 3: Call A Ride Sausalito Seniors (CARSS) – Free rides for persons aged 60 or older in Sausalito, USA*

Conclusion

To sum up, public transportation in Hong Kong is generally affordable and accessible. However, the unfriendly public transportation system and poor transport connections in remote areas create barriers for older adults to connect with wider communities. We perceive that these two problems can be further improved by 1) incorporating and promoting the age-friendly concept in transportation and 2) encouraging the provision and use of multiple transportation services for older adults.

Box 2-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Age Friendly Community Care Programme for Age-friendly Transportation[7]

The Wan Chai Methodist Centre for Seniors organised the "Age Friendly Community Care Programme for Age-friendly Transportation" to improve age-friendliness of the district's transportation system, under the JCAFC Project. The programme encouraged older adults to share their opinions about public transportation and promote a culture of offering seats to those in need (seat offering culture).

The Age-friendly Community Care Programme organised a series of activities in collaboration with local elderly centres, including transportation inspection visits and sharing sessions, short films on priority seats, a tram parade and school talks. The transportation inspection visit invited older adults to Wan Chai MTR Station and the Hong Kong Tramways, during which they could highlight the strengths and limitations of these transportation methods from an age-friendly perspective. The visits were followed by a sharing session during which participants made suggestions for improvements to representatives of the Wan Chai District Council, Social Welfare Department and the Home Affairs Department of the Hong Kong SAR Government. Following these activities, older participants reported an increase in their motivation to contribute to developing a more age-friendly city and district.

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[7] World Health Organization. (2017). Age Friendly Community Care Programme for Age-friendly Transportation. Retrieved 11 Nov, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/age-friendly-community-care-programme-age-friendly-transportation/

Box 2-2. Example 2: Free transportation for older adults (Prostofer) in Slovenia[8]

As part of the "Age-friendly Zreče Municipality" project, the implementation of free transport for older adults (Prostofer) was started in May 2019, which is fully financed from the municipal budget. The primary users of "Prostofer" are older citizens in the municipality who need transportation to medical institutions, public institutions and shopping centres. Prospective users simply call the communication centre, named the "Golden network", which collects their information and requested destination and assigns a volunteer driver.

The main aim of "Prostofer" is to increase older adults' access to road transportation and improve their mobility. It also improves road safety, fosters older adults' general social inclusion and increases transport affordability.

From May 2019 until the end of 2019, the 6 volunteers performed 62 trips for the citizens, who needed transportation mainly to the General Hospital Celje and other health care institutions in Vojnik, Ljubljana and Slovenska Bistrica.

Box 2-3. Example 3: Call A Ride Sausalito Seniors (CARSS) – Free rides for persons aged 60 or older in Sausalito, USA[9]

CARSS is a volunteer driver programme providing up to two free one-way rides per day for older adults and persons with disabilities in driver-owned passenger cars. Riders can call up to a week ahead, or the same day, to confirm rides anywhere within the boundaries of the town and floating home community.

CARSS provides a door-to-door service, including assistance carrying shopping bags. CARSS allows passengers to quickly and easily access shops in the town to buy groceries, a last-minute gift, attend a class, meet a friend for lunch at a local restaurant, peruse the books on the shelves at the library or meet face-to-face with their banker.

Volunteer drivers are vetted through standard background checks, provided with a short training course and supply proof of insurance for their automobile. The Sausalito AF Taskforce secured funds through a competitive County Transit grant to cover the most basic costs, including a part-time coordinator and virtual telephone number, which can be forwarded to the driver on duty for last-minute ride requests. Other costs have been covered mostly through in-kind and small cash contributions from local businesses, service groups and the City for important elements such as printing flyers and creating a large street banner announcing the programme.

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[8] World Health Organization. (2019). Free transportation for older adults (Prostofer). Retrieved 1 Oct, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/free-transportation-for-older-adults-prostofer/

[9] World Health Organization. (2015). Call A Ride Sausalito Seniors (CARSS) – Free rides for persons age 60 or older. Retrieved 1 Nov, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/call-a-ride-sausalito-seniors-carss-free-rides-for-persons-age-60-or-older/

Chapter 3. Housing

Vision

We aim to achieve ageing-in-place by providing older adults with suitable age-friendly housing, a better living environment and necessary support to adapt to their changing needs that accompany ageing.

Definition of Housing

Housing is a basic need, as people spend around 70% of their time at home (Baker, Keall, Au, & Howden-Chapman, 2007). The WHO developed guidelines on housing and health in 2018 and defined healthy housing as a "shelter that supports a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being" (World Health Organization, 2018). Affordable housing with appropriate housing design and good connectivity to social and health services allows older adults to live comfortably and safely, which empower them to age in their own homes and familiar communities for as long as possible (World Health Organization, 2020a).

The Challenges

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that older adults, in general, were not satisfied with the housing design and maintenance in their district. As reflected in the baseline assessment, the housing domain is one of the two domains with the lowest scores in the survey (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019). Older adults generally found their house failed to support their changing needs. In particular, they are concerned about home maintenance and found the housing environment was not age-friendly enough to support ageing-in-place (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

Causes of the Challenges

1. **The housing environment is not age-friendly enough to support ageing-in-place**
   The age-friendly housing concept is not well implemented in existing housing designs for public and private housing.
   - Even though the Housing Authority has adopted universal design principles in its public rental housing estates since 2002 (Housing Authority, 2018), the design of the redeveloped public rental housing estates in Hong Kong cannot fulfil the needs of older adults. In particular, older residents emphasised the lack of a sense of home and privacy in their residences (Jayantha, Qian, & Yi, 2018).
   - A growing number of new private residential units were built with less than 20 square metres (HKSAR Government, 2017). The small living area limits the possibility for future home modifications to address the changing needs of older adults (e.g., difficulties in installing handrails in a small toilet area; older adult wheelchair users may be unable to enter the bathroom).

2. **Insufficient support and information in home maintenance**
   Older adults have difficulties with high maintenance costs of private housing and long waiting times for maintenance of public housing.
   - Older adults living in private housing found home maintenance expensive for their aged buildings, which costs around $300-$500 per inspection and more to fix the problem (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).
   - Moreover, the Buildings Department commenced the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme on 30 June 2012 to tackle building neglect problems (Building Department, 2018). Older adults

(owners) living in these buildings must pay the inspection fee, which would create a substantial financial and psychological burden for them (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

- Even though older adults living in public rental housing can apply for necessary home maintenance or modifications from the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) or the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS), they complained about the lengthy wait (weeks to months) to get the problem fixed (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).

Furthermore, older adults have difficulty acquiring information concerning home maintenance and modifications.

- Older adults lack information on reliable and reasonably priced home modifications and maintenance services, which results in frustration and worry (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).
- Older adults showed little knowledge of existing home maintenance support schemes provided by the Government and NGOs, including financial assistance (e.g., Building Maintenance Grant Scheme for Needy Owners (BMGSNO)) (Urban Renewal Authority, 2021) and volunteering home maintenance service (e.g., Repair Fairy).

> *Box 3-1: Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Territory-wide Programme on Home Modification*

Policy Recommendations

1. **Incorporate and promote the age-friendly concept in housing design**
   To further promote age-friendly housing and support ageing-in-place, we suggest the Government develop an age-friendly housing design manual or guidelines for housing designers and developers and organise public seminars to promote the concept of age-friendly housing.

   a. Age-friendly housing design manual/guidelines: The Buildings Department can develop a design manual/guideline with the HA and HKHS to set out design requirements for providing adequate age-friendly housing in Hong Kong. These guidelines are co-produced by older adults, occupational therapists, housing designers and developers, covering accessible design, technology to aid ageing-in-place and housing for older adults with special needs. The Buildings Department can also identify certain important elements in age-friendly housing design and become the code of practice for future developers to follow.

   b. Public seminars: We suggest the Buildings Department or the HA organise age-friendly housing design seminars based on the age-friendly housing design manual/guidelines for related stakeholders (e.g., designers and housing developers) and the public to raise awareness of age-friendly concepts and design.

> *Box 3-2: Example 2: Online age-friendly housing "Design Hub" in the UK*

> *Box 3-3: Example 3: Housing for Older Adults: Evidence-based Decision Making in Fingal, Ireland*

2. **Support older adults' home maintenance**

   We suggest District Councils provide funding to NGOs and social enterprises to set up home maintenance service teams for older adults living in private housing with home maintenance needs. Moreover, we suggest District Councils consider setting up a one-stop online platform to disseminate information relating to home maintenance.

   a. Home maintenance service team: District Councils can provide NGOs and social enterprises funding to set up home maintenance service teams for older adults. These service teams are formulated by volunteers or paid home maintenance workers. They accept individual applications and referrals from medical officers/social workers via social institutions or hospitals. Providing low-cost home maintenance for older adults living in private housing, such as replacing light bulbs or simple carpentry maintenance, can largely enhance the home environment of older adults to achieve ageing-in-place.

   > *Box 3-4: Example 4: CHORE Handyman Service–Older Adults Helping Older Adults in New Jersey, USA*

   > *Box 3-5: Example 5: NeighborLink Indianapolis Low-Income Senior Home Repairs in Indiana, USA*

   b. One-stop online platform for home maintenance: We suggest District Councils consider setting up a one-stop online platform to disseminate information related to home maintenance in the district. The online platform provides older adults and their families with necessary age-friendly housing and home maintenance-related information, such as a self-assessment guide of age-friendly housing, videos of minor home maintenance skills, available home maintenance service teams in the district and information related to housing grants and loan applications. Older adults and their family members can access this online platform to learn home modification skills and obtain useful information regarding available resources for home maintenance in their district.

   > *Box 3-6: Example 6: Berkshire County Residential Aging in Place Workbook & Video in Berkshires, USA*

   > *Box 3-7: Example 7: Tool Table: Devices to make everyday life a little easier in Bowdoinham, USA*

Conclusion

In sum, providing an age-friendly housing environment for older adults to achieve ageing-in-place is crucial. Given the current challenges older adults face in terms of housing design and home maintenance, we suggest the Government adopt the following four strategies to provide older adults with an age-friendly housing environment. These strategies include 1) developing an age-friendly housing design manual/guideline; 2) organising age-friendly housing design seminars for the stakeholders; 3) setting up home maintenance service teams and 4) setting up a one-stop online platform for home maintenance.

Box 3-1: Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Territory-wide Programme on Home Modification

To address the concern on home maintenance, various district-based programmes were implemented by NGOs to provide home modification services to the elderly in need under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project. The successful programmes were scaled up to a territory-wide programme, which aims to enhance the age-friendliness and safety of the elderly's homes through:

(1) Conducting assessments on the physical fitness and home environment of the older people by social workers and occupational therapists / physiotherapists to identify cases in need in the eighteen districts in Hong Kong.
(2) Carrying out home modification/ improvement work, installing home devices or improving hygiene to provide a safe living environment for older people, and arrange home cleaning after the work, if needed.
(3) Providing assessment and intervention solutions by occupational therapists / physiotherapists for older people with rehabilitation needs.
(4) Recruiting volunteers as AFC ambassadors and provide training on home visit skills and knowledge of home safety.
(5) Organising community education activities to promote the importance of home safety and age-friendliness through various channels such as printed materials, online platforms and promotion booths.

Box 3-2: Example 2: Online age-friendly housing "Design Hub" in the UK[10]

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network bringing together over 40,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England and Wales to exemplify innovative age-friendly housing solutions for older adults and people with chronic conditions. For example, well-designed, accessible housing and neighbourhoods offer an attractive lifestyle choice in later life and "care ready" accommodation that can be adapted to meet people's health and well-being.

Recognised by the Government and industry as a leading "knowledge hub" on specialised housing, the Housing LIN's "go to" online and regional networking activities:

(1) Connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing choices that enable older and disabled people to live independently
(2) Curate and provide intelligence on the latest age-friendly funding, research, policy and adaptive practice developments, and
(3) Raise the profile of specialised housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population

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[10] World Health Organization. (2011). Online age-friendly housing "Design Hub". Retrieved 1 Jul, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/online-age-friendly-housing-design-hub/

Box 3-3: Example 3: Housing for Older Adults: Evidence-based Decision Making in Fingal, Ireland[11]

Fingal Age Friendly Alliance established an interagency Housing Sub-Committee to ascertain the housing needs of older adults and promote the development of Age Friendly Housing. Consultations with older adults during the development of Fingal's Age Friendly Strategy highlighted their wish to remain living in their own home and uncertainties around the availability of local social, health and care support as they age. The research was undertaken to ensure the rationale for an interagency approach for housing development was clear and provided evidence for effective decision making. Research on best practice and mapping the demographic profile, services and facilities in Fingal, demand by over 55s for housing together with "empty nesters" and alternative accommodation was undertaken. Data from research undertaken by the "Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative" in Fingal was analysed to ascertain older adults' attitudes to adapting their homes, moving to alternative accommodation and social engagements.

Box 3-4: Example 4: CHORE Handyman Service–Older Adults Helping Older Adults in New Jersey, USA[12]

Established in 1977 by the Bergen Volunteer Centre, the CHORE Volunteer Handyman Service helps Bergen County, New Jersey residents 60 years and older and/or adults with permanent disabilities remain safe in their own homes by performing minor repairs for only the cost of parts. Repairs include installing grab bars, railings and smoke detectors, minor plumbing/electrical work, weather stripping and light bulb changes. The programme enables seniors with financial challenges and individuals with disabilities to live more safely and independently while avoiding costly and often unwanted institutionalization.

As CHORE volunteers are all retirees, the programme has a dual purpose: it provides enriching and meaningful volunteer experiences. There are currently 44 CHORE volunteers, the average age is 70, who utilise life skills developed from maintaining their own homes.

Through grants from the County Division of Senior Services and Community Development, and support from local corporations, foundations and individual donors, CHORE crews travel to clients every working day of the year in three vans. CHORE serves about 1,400 clients each year, and in the past 41 years, it is estimated CHORE has helped more than 50,000 older residents.

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[11] World Health Organization. (2016b). Housing for Older People: Evidence based Decision Making. Retrieved 27 Jul, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/housing-older-people-evidence-based-decision-making/

[12] World Health Organization. (2021). CHORE Handyman Service–Older Adults Helping Older Adults. Retrieved 27 Jul, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/chore-handyman-service-older-adults-helping-older-adults/

Box 3-5: Example 5: NeighborLink Indianapolis Low-Income Senior Home Repairs in Indiana, USA[13]

The mission of NeighborLink Indianapolis is to offer an improved quality of life to very low-income senior homeowners and homeowners with disabilities in Indianapolis, Indiana, by providing free home repairs and modifications necessary to allow older adults to remain in their own homes safely and with dignity.

The programme is volunteer-based and community-supported through churches, schools and businesses that offer 12 home repair and modification services. These include plumbing, heating, electrical safety, ceiling and wall repair, floor and tripping hazard issues, roofing problems, water penetration, maintenance-related painting, yard work, major clean-up services, safety and accessibility and resolving Health Department citations.

Skilled volunteers are recruited through contractors and contracting associations, such as plumbing, heating and electrical contractors. Non-skilled volunteers are recruited from schools, churches and businesses. In 2017, the programme completed nearly 400 projects using volunteers and donated funding.

Box 3-6: Example 6: Berkshire County Residential Aging in Place Workbook & Video in Berkshires, USA[14]

A guide to assessing and planning residential renovations was created to allow older adults to age independently, safely and comfortably in their own homes. The workbook is geared to homeowners wishing to conduct a self-assessment of their home property through an age-friendly lens. There is no special skill needed to conduct the home assessment – the workbook is meant to be used with a pencil or pen, where a homeowner can make notes of areas of their home that need improvement. Then, homeowners can work with local home improvement contractors for more complicated changes (like adding grab bars in the bath or changing the height of kitchen counters) to estimate the cost of making the desired improvement. Some improvements, like additional lighting, changing the drawer pulls to a more comfortable type, or removing clutter to prevent tripping hazards, are low or no-cost strategies that any homeowner can achieve.

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[13] World Health Organization. (2013). NeighborLink Indianapolis Low-Income Senior Home Repairs. Retrieved 3 Jun, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/neighborlink-indianapolis-low-income-senior-home-repairs/

[14] World Health Organization. (2016). Berkshire County Residential Aging In Place Workbook & Video. Retrieved 28 Jul, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/berkshire-county-residential-aging-place-workbook-video/

Box 3-7: Example 7: Tool Table: Devices to make everyday life a little easier in Bowdoinham, USA[15]

Bowdoinham's age-friendly action plan aims to increase the availability of information about simple changes and appliances in the home and car that can make everyday life easier.

The latest initiative of the Bowdoinham Advisory Committee on Aging's (ACOA) Safety and Accessibility committee is a "tool table" of devices that can make everyday life at home and in the car a little easier. The tool table includes more than 30 items, including pillboxes, four different jar openers, two can openers, a few tab-top openers, stretchable shoelaces, shoe horns, strobe doorbell and a strobe smoke detector, a variety of devices to help people get in and out of the car or use a seat belt safely and several types of grabbers. Having several different types of devices for one task allows people to try different innovations and find the one that best meets their needs.

The tool table is available for residents of Bowdoinham and the surrounding area to look at and try whenever the town office is open. The tool table has been a popular stop for residents of all ages who visit the town office. The one-touch can opener that makes life easier for an older person with arthritis is also helpful for a mom holding a toddler while she opens a can.

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[15] World Health Organization. (2012). Tool Table: Devices to make everyday life a little easier. Retrieved 1 May, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/tool-table-devices-to-make-everyday-life-a-little-easier/

Chapter 4. Social participation

Vision

We aim to 1) facilitate older adults' social participation in formal and informal activities and 2) build community capacity to provide diverse and sustainable activities for older adults.

Definition of Social participation

Social participation is one of the eight domains of the WHO's Age-friendly City framework. The WHO defines Social participation as involvement in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities (social activities hereafter) in the community that fosters older adults' continued integration with society and helps them remain engaged and informed (World Health Organization, 2020b). Active social participation enhances physical health, mental health and the overall well-being of older adults. Older adults can participate in formal social activities by joining organisations' programmes, such as elderly centres and churches. They can also participate in informal activities through their friends and social networks. In this chapter, we do not include volunteering in social participation as it is included in the chapter for Civic participation and employment. Instead, we focus on formal social activities as they are shaped by social policy to a larger extent.

The Challenges

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that older adults were generally satisfied with the affordability and variety of formal social activities provided in their community. However, some older adults faced barriers to social participation, including 1) difficulty in acquiring activity information; 2) activities did not meet their heterogeneous needs and interests; and 3) limited opportunity for caregivers and older adults living in remote areas to participate, which negatively affected their well-being.

Causes of the Challenges

1. **Difficulty in acquiring activities information**
    Older adults with limited education and non-members of elderly centres may have difficulty in accessing timely programme information.
    *   Some older adults have low literacy and do not understand promotion materials for formal social activities. A recent report from the Census and Statistics Department (2018) found that 60% of older adults had primary education and below, and 23.3% received no formal education. As a result, they may not read the promotional materials distributed by centre staff.
    *   Most formal social activities are promoted and recruited through members of elderly centres and non-members may not have access to these materials and miss the opportunity to participate.

2. **Unmet heterogeneous needs and interests**
    Social activities organised in elderly centres may not fulfil the heterogeneous needs and interests of older adults with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnicity.
    *   Some older adults with higher education found that the activities provided in elderly centres were too simple. Most of the existing activities target members with limited education (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).

- Existing programmes and services organised by elderly centres failed to meet the needs of ethnic minorities, who constitute 8% of the HK population (Census and Statistics Department, 2017). In addition, language barriers and limited support restricted access to formal social participation.

3. **Limited opportunity for caregivers and older adults living in remote areas**
   - Caregivers may not participate in social activities due to demanding caregiving tasks (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).
   - Older adults living in remote areas may not participate in activities provided by elderly centres due to the absence of elderly centres in their communities and limited transportation options (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).

Policy Recommendations

1. **Enhance dissemination of programme information**
   To break the informational barrier, we suggest District Councils consider setting up a one-stop multichannel platform to disseminate information related to various social activities in the district. This multichannel platform can include an online platform and a smartphone app for older adults with higher literacy who are not members of elderly centres and a district ambassadors programme tailored to help older adults with limited literacy.

   a. One-stop multichannel district information system: District Councils can allocate funding and appoint an organisation to create and support a new one-stop multichannel platform to disseminate district-related information to its residents, including social activities organised by various NGOs and other social organisations. Older adults and their families can subscribe to this platform and decide what information they want to receive. Elderly centres and NGOs can announce their upcoming social activities on this platform, reaching more older residents in the district.

   b. District ambassadors programme: We suggest that District Councils provide funding for a district ambassadors programme to provide information to older adults with limited education and limited digital literacy.
      - NGOs will train ambassadors in face-to-face information dissemination using the mobile app or the online platform. These trained ambassadors will disseminate programme information to their neighbours and other older adults in the districts. They will visit places where older adults congregate and/or reside regularly (e.g., town halls, libraries, community centres, faith groups, exercise programmes and senior residences) and share with them updated information related to social participation opportunities in the district.

> *Box 4-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Tsuen Wan AFC Ambassador Training Programme in Hong Kong*

2. **Enhance programme heterogeneity and coverage**
   We suggest that District Councils increase programme diversity by encouraging a bottom-up approach to support informal groups in the district to organise programmes not usually offered by NGOs or other formal platforms. These activities should be open to all older residents.
   a. We suggest that District Councils provide financial support to interest groups in the community and support them to organise activities for residents. For example, the District Council may create a small funding scheme for informal groups (e.g., older adults running club/dancing club) to offer diverse activities to older residents in the district. These interest groups could apply the funding to promotion or venue booking. In addition, the District Council may encourage informal groups from diverse ethnicities to use the new funding scheme to organise activities for older adults from different ethnic backgrounds. We also suggest that the new funding scheme supports more inclusive activities regarding participants' capability, mobility and availability.

3. **Expand programme delivering channels**
   To engage older adults living in remote areas or with caregiving duties, we suggest setting up community activity groups and facilitating technology use to provide social participation opportunities.

   a. We suggest that the Government sets up a small funding scheme to support the formation of community activity groups run by residents.
      - Instead of organising activities directly through NGOs, helping residents set up a regular social participation platform in their community and providing regular activities could create stable and sustainable social participation opportunities for older adults living in remote areas.

Box 4-2. Example 2: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Shek O dementia-friendly support group in Hong Kong

   b. The Government may also facilitate the use of technology to enhance the programme accessibility delivered by NGOs.
      - Using an online platform to deliver programmes can overcome geographic boundaries so that older adults in remote areas and caregivers can participate in the activities at home. In addition, the platform could lessen the need to travel, allowing more flexibility to participate in the activities. The Government may support NGOs to enhance their hardware, internet networks and human resources to facilitate future online programme development.

Box 4-3. Example 3: Virtual Club 55 in the USA

Conclusion

Although Hong Kong has done very well in providing opportunities for older adults to participate in social activities, there is still room for improvement in accessibility and diversity of activities. To further enhance older adults' social participation in Hong Kong, we suggest the Government and District Councils 1) set up a one-stop multichannel platform to disseminate information related to various social activities in the district; 2) provide financial support to interest groups in the community; 3) support the formation of

community activity groups run by residents; and 4) facilitate the use of technology to enhance programme accessibility.

Box 4-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Tsuen Wan AFC Ambassador Training Programme [16]

This was one of the district-based programmes implemented by NGOs in the Tsuen Wan District. The ambassador programme recruited older adults to become Age-friendly City ("AFC") ambassadors and provided them with training on dementia-related knowledge, cognitive stimulation and home safety. Trained ambassadors conducted home visits with older adults in the Tsuen Wan District to promote healthy eating and home safety. Ambassadors were also engaged in different activities to promote an age-friendly culture and encourage community members to understand the actual needs of the elderly.

Training elderly ambassadors to promote the AFC concept is useful as they better understand older adults' needs than the younger generation. Face-to-face interaction also helps ambassadors communicate with other older adults without limitations from their education level and visual or hearing impairment.

Box 4-2. Example 2: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Shek O dementia-friendly support group in Hong Kong

Under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project, Centre on Ageing (COA), the University of Hong Kong collaborated with the Shek O Resident Association in Shek O to set up a regular cognitive stimulation support station in the community. COA provided training for six to eight residents in Shek O about dementia, cognitive stimulation and organisation of activities. These residents became ambassadors who organised weekly cognitive stimulation activities for Shek O residents. Residents could participate in cognitive stimulation related activities, obtain dementia-related information and support in this station when needed. This could build the dementia support mechanism and provide sustainable cognitive intervention in the community.

Box 4-3 Example 3: Virtual Club 55 in the USA [17]

With the impact of COVID-19, the City of Fort Lauderdale has offered 80% of their Club 55 age-friendly group virtual classes.

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[16] Jockey Club Age-friendly City. (2018b). Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Tsuen Wan AFC Ambassador Training Programme. Retrieved 1 Feb, 2021, from https://www.jcafc.hk/en/Events/Jockey-Club-Age-Friendly-City-Project-4.html

[17] World Health Organization. (2020). Club 55 has gone virtual. Retrieved 1 Feb, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/club-55-has-gone-virtual/

Chapter 5. Respect and social inclusion

Vision

We aim to foster respect and social inclusion by reducing ageism and age-related stereotypes in our society and by building an inclusive society that encourages older adults to participate more in social, civic and economic life.

Definition of Respect and social inclusion

Respect and social inclusion is defined as enhancing the opportunities for people of all ages to (i) cultivate social relationships, (ii) have access to resources and support, (iii) feel valued and respected and (iv) feel part of their community (Ronzi, Orton, Buckner, Bruce, & Pope, 2020). Supporting a community to foster Respect and social inclusion is crucial because it is positively associated with various health outcomes such as well-being, quality of life and physical and mental health among older adults (Ronzi, Orton, Pope, Valtorta, & Bruce, 2018).

The Challenges

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that the Respect and social inclusion domain ranked 3rd among the eight domains (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019). Older adults, in general, agreed that Hong Kong is a respectful and inclusive society as reflected by close neighbourhoods and intergenerational relationships, respectful culture and inclusive services. However, some older adults reported ageism at times, such as inconsiderate and impolite attitudes/behaviour among service providers and negative images of older adults presented in the media. Moreover, some older adults felt there were inadequate channels to express their needs and concerns (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

Causes of the Challenges

1. **Ageism in Hong Kong**
    There is insufficient education on ageing to debunk age-related stereotypes of older adults in Hong Kong. Therefore, people lack a reliable channel and platform to acquire accurate information about older adults' ageing process.
    *   According to the recent equal opportunities awareness survey 2021, 49.9% of respondents regarded age discrimination as "very/quite serious" in Hong Kong (compared with 41% in 2012), which represented a rise of 8.9% over the last 10 years (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2021).
    *   There is no specific curriculum on ageing in primary and secondary schools. Therefore, students may mainly learn about ageing and older adults through mass media, where information could be biased and ageing stereotyped.
    *   Hong Kong lacks appropriate education and guidelines on depicting older adults' images in mass media. Therefore, the biased and stereotypical image of older adults may be consistently reflected in the media. It is evident in the COVID-19 pandemic that older adults are misrepresented and undervalued, which posits them as vulnerable and helpless against COVID-19 (Fraser et al., 2020).
    *   Moreover, older adults are under-represented in both traditional and digital media. Older adults are assumed to have low purchasing power and intention to purchase, so they are not the prioritised target for traditional media and their advertisement systems (Li, 2021). On the other hand, the low proportion of older adults who have access to the Internet (Census and Statistic Department, 2021) results in fewer opportunities for them to voice their opinions when facing distorted images on traditional and digital media (Li, 2021).

2. **Inadequate channels to express older adults' needs**
   - The policymaking process and service provision in Hong Kong adopt the top-down approach, which relies heavily on professional resources and posits older adults as passive service recipients instead of co-creators. Therefore, this results in limited opportunities for older adults to engage and express their needs and hinders productive engagement (Morrow-Howell, Halvorsen, Hovmand, Lee, & Ballard, 2017).

Policy Recommendations

1. **Enhance public education on ageing and facilitate older adults as co-producers in HK**

   We suggest the Government organise campaigns and activities that help combat ageism and debunk age-related stereotypes at the city level (by the Equal Opportunities Commission, Education Bureau and Office of the Communications Authority) and district level (by District Councils). To provide the public with a realistic understanding of ageing, the Government could enhance public education on ageing, support intergenerational activities and provide guidelines on depicting older adults' images in mass media.

   a. Interventions to reduce ageism and promote respect could be achieved through education. Educational activities help enhance empathy, dispel misconceptions about different age groups and reduce prejudice and discrimination by providing accurate information and counter-stereotypical examples (World Health Organization, 2021).
      - The Education Bureau can include ageing in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. In addition, the Equal Opportunities Commission or Education Bureau could facilitate social inclusion activities and produce ageing-related TV programmes for students and the general public. In doing so, this can debunk age-related stereotypes and combat ageism by providing students and the public with a realistic understanding of the ageing process.
      - Moreover, District Councils can allocate funding to NGOs to organise programmes on intergroup and intergenerational contact within the district. It allows individuals to have an opportunity to challenge prejudices and stereotypes through ongoing interaction, familiarity and personal knowledge with other groups (Pettigrew, 1998).
      - Finally, the Office of the Communications Authority could provide guidelines to the media on depicting older adults' images. These guidelines list the general negative stereotypes of older adults in mass media and encourage the media to provide a balanced image of older adults to our society.

   Box 5-1: Example 1: Selfie with A Senior Competition and Exhibition in Rockingham, Australia

   Box 5-2: Example 2: Age-friendly Cities Committee Intergenerational Project in Summerside, Canada

To create an inclusive society, we need to acknowledge the value of older adults. Older adults are assets because they have knowledge, ability and desire to contribute to society. Therefore, a paradigm shift should be promoted, from viewing older adults as passive recipients to active learners and co-producers. This could be achieved in two ways, including empowering older adults with education and creating job and service opportunities for them to contribute continuously to society.

b. Empower older adults with education: We suggest the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Elderly Commission could enhance the existing Elder Academy (長者學苑) and provide older adults with different skill-enhancing courses such as dementia caregiving, escorting and emotional support for people with depression. Older adults with this training would become an important asset to support professionals in delivering related services.

c. Create job and service opportunities for older adults: We suggest the Government amend the employment policy and encourage retirees to return to the workplace if they are so minded. In addition, we suggest District Councils support NGOs or social enterprises through financial resources to provide different community services with the support of these trained older adults.

> *Box 5-3: Example 3: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Aged Friendly in Eastern - Versatile Friendly Project*

2. Set up platforms/channels for older adults to express their needs
We suggest District Councils and service providers can become more aware of the needs and preferences of older adults in policy and service development by adopting comprehensive and inclusive approaches to consultation. This can be done via a bottom-up approach, such as integrating older adults in the advisory committee for future policy-making or service planning or forming focus groups with the older population for policy and service evaluation.

a. Specifically, we suggest District Councils provide a platform for older adults as representatives to express their needs and concerns regarding community policy, facilities and programmes in the designated working group under the District Council. Older adult representatives can be elected from elderly centres (e.g., DECCs and NECs) and the community concern groups. They will attend the working group meetings regularly and express their views on issues related to older adults.

> *Box 5-4: Example 4: Jeju Senior Policy Monitoring Group in Korea*

> *Box 5-5: Example 5: Elderly Council in Muratpaşa Municipality, Turkey*

Conclusion

Although older adults generally agree that Hong Kong is a respectful and inclusive society, growing concern on ageism in the last 10 years in Hong Kong reveals a need to reduce ageism further and provide the public with a more balanced view of older adults and the ageing process. Therefore, we suggest the Government and District Councils 1) enhance public education on ageing; 2) facilitate older adults as co-producers in our society and 3) set up platforms/channels for older adults to express their needs.

Box 5-1: Example 1: Selfie with A Senior Competition and Exhibition in Rockingham, Australia[18]

Community members of all ages celebrated seniors by participating in a fun competition designed to address ageism. The City of Rockingham's second Selfie with a Senior competition encouraged participants to submit selfies with older adults and include a short description of why that person was so special to them. A judging panel (which included young people and seniors) selected one winner who received a cash price of AUD500 and a framed picture of their selfie. The winner was selected because of her dedication to honouring seniors and breaking down the stigma and stereotypes of old age.

The selfies and descriptions were shared with the community on the City's Facebook page and website during Western Australia's Seniors Week. All selfies were professionally framed and exhibited for two weeks in a prominent public space where they stimulated and generated further conversations around ageing. The City partnered with a local community arts group responsible for hanging the individually framed selfies and professionally printed didactic panels.

Box 5-2: Example 2: Age-friendly Cities Committee Intergenerational Project in Summerside, Canada[19]

The project was designed to cultivate and promote interest in relationship building across and within generations while drawing seniors and youth into the process and welcoming them to participate. The youth and seniors were matched according to mutual interests (for example, horsemanship, military life, medicine, veterinary medicine). The seniors and youth met over a few months to share information on their topic of interest. This community-building project culminated in a Wisdom and Experience Fair in which participants shared what they learned with the public. Many valuable and lasting relationships between the generations were formed.

Box 5-3: Example 3: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Aged Friendly in Eastern - Versatile Friendly Project

Under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project, the TWGH Fong Shu Chuen District Elderly Community Centre organised the Aged Friendly in Eastern - Versatile Friendly Project, which provided a series of home care training workshops to older participants, including pain management, feeding and escorting. Trained participants were matched and provided home care support services to different caregivers. This programme could empower older adults with new skill sets and employment opportunities.

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[18] Selfie With A Senior Competition and Exhibition. Retrieved 21 Feb, 2021, from
https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/selfie-with-a-senior/
[19] Age-friendly Cities Committee Intergenerational Project. Retrieved 1 Mar, 2021, from
https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/age-friendly-cities-committee-intergenerational-project/

Box 5-4: Example 4: Jeju Senior Policy Monitoring Group in Korea[20]

Jeju Province became a member of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and communities (GNAFCC) in 2017. Since then, Jeju has effectively operated the Senior Policy Monitoring Group, which paved the way for elders to become engaged in policy-making. The primary purpose of this project was to create a responsive environment for the aspirations and needs of older adults. It also aimed to increase awareness of age-friendly policies available to elders.

Initially, the Monitoring Group was composed of 30 people over 65 years but was expanded to include 9 young supporters from high schools and colleges, along with 41 seniors for enhancing intergenerational interaction in 2019. The supporters volunteered to take photos and videos during meetings and events. The college supporters participated in the workshop to improve intergenerational understanding by sharing thoughts with elders.

Typically, the Monitoring Group works on four different themes each year. Subjects are carefully selected based on the Jeju guidelines for an age-friendly community. After a workshop on the monitoring process, the Monitoring Group reaches out to local seniors and evaluates situations relevant to targeted policies. At monthly meetings, members actively develop ideas for appropriate age-friendly policies. Jeju Province has been striving to reflect the proposal created during the monitoring process.

Box 5-5: Example 5: Elderly Council in Muratpaşa Municipality, Turkey[21]

The Elderly Council was founded in 2019 by Muratpaşa Municipality, Turkey. The council intended to create a platform where elders over 60 years have a voice for and in the city. The main aim of the Elderly Council was to make a friendly environment from an elderly perspective by considering their perceptions and views. The principal goal was to provide participatory democratic dynamics through working volunteers.

Currently, there are 60 volunteers, composed of 30 women and 30 men. The executive committee determined 7 sub-committees in the first meeting. These are rights of older persons, sustainable and accessible city, environment, intergenerational relationships, healthy ageing, lifelong learning, culture and art. The council enables the elder's experiences to be visible. In general, they were satisfied with their participation in the council since they could express themselves and their demands. Overall, they have felt valuable and productive, working for their community.

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[20] Jeju Senior Policy Monitoring Group. Retrieved 1 Mar, 2021, from
https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/revitalizing-jeju-age-friendly-practice/
[21] Elderly Council. Retrieved 12 Feb, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/elder-council/

Chapter 6. Civic participation and employment

Vision

We aim to 1) facilitate older adults to engage in Civic participation and employment and 2) encourage productive ageing by improving city capacity by creating more civic participation and employment opportunities.

Definition of Civic participation and employment

Civic participation is defined as an individual or group's activity to make changes in a community and to protect the community's values and interests (Song, 2019). It encompasses a wide range of formal and informal activities, including (1) association participation; (2) giving; (3) volunteering; (4) environment-friendly behaviours; (5) political and social behaviours and (6) supporting-helping individuals (Cnaan & Park, 2016).

In Hong Kong, every employment is bound by a verbal or written agreement regarding employment conditions between an employer and an employee. This agreement is legally referred to as a "Contract of Employment". An "employee" is defined as someone subject to a contract of employment (Thomson Reuters, 2021).

The Challenges

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that older adults, in general, were satisfied with the sufficient volunteering opportunities available in Hong Kong. They also had a positive volunteering experience accompanied by training opportunities provided by NGOs, which provides them with a sense of empowerment and achievement. However, they faced specific barriers in Civic participation and employment, including 1) limited job opportunities; 2) difficulty obtaining employment-related information; and 3) the unmatched job nature (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

Causes of the Challenges

1. **Limited job opportunities**
   - Employers have negative stereotypes of older employees in Hong Kong. A study on age discrimination in employment in Hong Kong found that employers were concerned that hiring older adults would raise their operational costs (e.g., insurance fees) and cause a drop in productivity (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2016). They also worried that mature workers would resist changes in work patterns and cause conflict with young employees (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2016).

2. **Difficulty obtaining employment-related information**
   - Older adults have difficulties obtaining employment information. Even though there are different age-friendly employment opportunities and training available in Hong Kong (e.g., Employment programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged by the Labour Department, Employment assistance programme for elderly by the Community Chest , Post-50 Internship Programme by the Employees Retraining Board, Job-matching for young-old by the Happy-Retired Charity Action Limited and the Elderly employment support programme by the Hong

Kong Society for the Aged), this information is scattered and creates a barrier for older adults. Moreover, older adults who have limited literacy may not be able to obtain the information.

3. **Unmatched job nature**
   - Older adults are looking for meaningful engagement and flexible job opportunities to contribute to society and remain active in later life. However, most available job vacancies for older adults in Hong Kong are dominated by low-status and physically demanding work such as janitors, care workers and kitchen helpers, which is not appealing for older adults.
   - According to the Office of the Government Economist (2019), 68.8% of older adults were working in lower-skilled occupations, which is higher than the corresponding figure for all employees in Hong Kong (56.3%).

Policy Recommendations

1. **Enhance public education and empower older adults in age-friendly employment**
   We suggest the Labour Department organise a citywide employment campaign to increase employers' and older adults' awareness of age-friendly employment and promote the advantages of employing older adults through public education.

   a. The Labour Department could consider promoting age-friendly employment through different publicity events. These events could focus on 1) enhancing public knowledge on rules and regulations on employing older adults; 2) promoting the concept of age-friendly employment and working environment; 3) reducing prejudice and discrimination by providing accurate information to counter-stereotypical examples of older adults in the workplace.

   Box 6-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – "The New Olds" Campaign

2. **Establish a one-stop platform for older adults' employment**
   To help older adults obtain employment-related information efficiently, we suggest the Government consider setting up a one-stop online platform (city-level or district-level) to disseminate employment information and an ambassadors' programme for older adults with limited literacy.

   a. Online employment platform: We suggest the Labour Department integrates other elderly employment opportunities provided by different NGOs and social enterprises into their "Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged" website (e.g., Employment assistance programme for elderly by the Community Chest, Job-matching for young-old by the Happy-Retired Charity Action Limited and the Elderly employment support programme by the Hong Kong Society for the Aged). Older adults can access this one-stop online platform and quickly obtain all available elderly employment opportunities. In terms of district level, we suggest District Councils can allocate funding and appoint an organisation to create and support an online platform to disseminate district-related employment opportunities to its residents. The online platform allows organisations or employers in the district to upload their job opportunities for older adults.

   b. District ambassadors programme: We suggest the Labour Department or District Councils provide funding for an information ambassadors programme for older adults with limited education and those with limited digital literacy. NGOs will train ambassadors in face-to-face information

dissemination using the online platform. These trained ambassadors will disseminate employment information to older adults in the districts or the Job Centres of the Labour Department.

3. **Establish a new model of civic participation and employment opportunities for older adults**
   The Government can consider establishing a new civic participation and employment model via time bank that links social capacity to unmet social needs. Time bank is a system that involves earning and spending "time credits", in which participants receive one credit for each hour of service they provide (Chan & Gray, 2015). They can use their accumulated time credits in exchange for services and help when needed. Time bank represents an equitable and inclusive economic order because all hours are equal in value regardless of the type of services that participants provide (Chan & Gray, 2015). It also recognises the work and services that traditional markets do not value. Participants under time bank can earn credits based on peer-to-peer services (e.g., providing respite to a caregiver) or by participating in community services (e.g., volunteering in NGOs), these time credits embody a type of purchasing power and represent recognition of participants' contribution (Chan & Gray, 2015).

   a. We suggest that District Councils allocate funding and appoint an organisation to create and support a time bank platform (with software or mobile application) to promote civic participation and employment opportunities to its residents. The newly developed platform (with software or mobile application) facilitates the exchange of services between participants. Participants will list the services they can perform and the services they would like to receive. The system will then match participants and record the exchange. District Councils can also invite NGOs, social enterprises and private sectors in the district to provide input in the time bank (i.e., services/job opportunities and rewards). This time bank system can build social capital effectively by linking untapped social capacities to unmet needs in the district.

Box 6-2. Example 2: The Time-banking Projects in Rhode Island, USA

Box 6-3. Example 3: Westside Repair Café in Los Angeles, USA

Conclusion

In general, the wide variety of volunteering opportunities provided in Hong Kong was highly recognised by older adults. However, certain adjustments are needed for improving overall Civic participation and employment in Hong Kong, including 1) enhancing public education and empowering older adults in age-friendly employment; 2) establishing a one-stop platform for older adults' employment; 3) establishing a new model of Civic participation and employment opportunities for older adults.

Box 6-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - "The New Olds" Campaign[22]

"The New Olds" Campaign is organised under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project, which aims to promote and encourage Civic participation and employment of the elderly among employers, young-olds and retirees; promote genuine age-friendly values to the mass public and in workplaces and urge employers to implement age-friendly practices in their companies/organisations through:

(1) Producing videos to demonstrate the talent and potential of the New Olds;
(2) Composing articles on AFC tips and sharing labour ordinance, staff benefits, points to note and case sharing on employing elderly employees, voluntary work, hobbies and other potential/talents of the elderly;
(3) Producing e-books on elderly learning and development and a guidebook on age-friendly employment
(4) Organising events including workshops, seminars and online contests targeting employers, Human Resources staff, young-olds, retirees and the general public

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Box 6-2. Example 2: The Time-banking Projects in Rhode Island, USA[23]

In Rhode Island, a group of parents who have children with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or autism use time banking to create a type of extended family. The Parent Support Network of Rhode Island offers assistance to parents when their children re-join them after leaving a congregate-care facility. Through the network, parents receive time credits for providing child care, coaching, transportation and personal support to each other. The children, meanwhile, earn time credits by participating in their mutual support group. Parents and children then spend those credits on outings that the network sponsors. This use of time banking has enabled parents to prevent the institutionalisation of their children. It has saved the state government millions of dollars that would otherwise be spent on support services.

Box 6-3. Example 3: Westside Repair Café in Los Angeles, USA[24]

A group based in Los Angeles runs a Time bank programme called the Westside Repair Café. It's a four-hour event in a local park or auditorium every two or three months and is open to the public. People bring faulty appliances, broken furniture, torn clothing and volunteer repair experts fix these items. Transition Culver City, an environmental organisation, cosponsors the repair café. One goal of the event is to give people an incentive to keep old items that would otherwise end up in a landfill. Time bank members can pay for repairs with time credits or bring a dish to a potluck meal in conjunction with the event. Non-members can participate in the Westside Repair Café by making a small donation (typically $5 or less). Those who provide repair services earn time credits for their efforts.

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Chapter 7. Communication and information

<u>Vision</u>

We aim to promote and build an age-friendly city by appropriately distributing information to older adults in a timely, accessible and affordable manner through communication channels that seniors are familiar with, which helps prevent social exclusion of older adults.

<u>Definition of Communication and information</u>

Communication is the act of transferring information from one place or one person to another (Monaghan County Council, 2016). Information is "what" we share, while communication is "how" we share it (Monaghan County Council, 2016). Staying connected with events, news and activities with timely, accessible and practical information is a key part of active ageing (World Health Organization, 2010). How the message is formulated and choosing a suitable communication medium is crucial to having good communication with older adults (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010).

<u>The Challenges</u>

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that the Communication and information domain ranked 4th among the eight domains (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019). Older adults can access information through different channels such as elderly centres, notice boards of public housing estates, community halls and sports halls, mass media, the Internet and smartphones (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019). However, participants have three main concerns regarding this domain which include 1) existing channels failing to reach a particular older population; 2) unfriendly design and presentation of information and 3) unreliable information.

<u>Causes of the Challenges</u>

1. **The existing channels failed to reach a particular older population**
    Older adults who are not members of elderly centres, those residing in private housing, those with limited literacy, or those who live in remote areas may have difficulty accessing information.
    - Most of the district or older adult-related information is disseminated through elderly centres, notice boards of public housing estates, community halls and sports halls. Therefore, older adults who are not members of elderly centres or residents in private housing would have less access to information.
    - Even though a growing number of older adults own a smartphone (68.1%) and used the Internet (65.9%) during the last 12 months (Census and Statistic Department, 2021), older adults who have poor eyesight, limited literacy or people living in remote areas with poor mobile communication network coverage, may not be able to receive information via this channel (The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, 2019).

2. **Unfriendly design and presentation of information**
   There is a lack of public awareness and sensitivity towards older adults' information needs regarding information design and delivery.
   - From the perspective of information design and provision, there is a lack of public education, public awareness and sensitivity towards older adults' characteristics and needs (functional impairment) to obtain, process and understand the information. This is reflected in small font sizes in most printed materials, such as the promotion leaflets by elderly centres and drug information by clinics. The use of automated answering systems by most public utilities, Government departments and private sectors also creates difficulties for older adults in understanding information.

3. **Lack of a trusted intermediary/platform to provide one-stop information**
   - There is a lack of a trusted intermediary/platform to provide one-stop information to older adults. Older adults related information such as health care, social welfare, community care services and residential care service information are scattered in different Government departments or service providers. Older adults may have difficulties navigating different organisations and gathering the information they need without a trusted one-stop information platform.
   - Older adults may engage with unreliable information through shared messages from instant messaging applications (e.g., WhatsApp), social media (e.g., Facebook) and face-to-face communication. It is difficult for them to validate the reliability of the information without a trusted intermediary/platform.

Policy Recommendations

1. **Enhance dissemination of information**
   Aligning with suggestions we made in social participation, we suggest that District Councils consider setting up a one-stop multichannel platform to disseminate district-related and older adults-related information. This multichannel platform can include an online platform and a smartphone app for older adults with higher literacy and a district ambassadors programme tailored to help older adults with limited literacy or functional impairment receive information.

   a. One-stop multichannel district information system: District Councils can allocate funding and appoint an organisation to create and support a new one-stop multichannel platform to promote the dissemination of district-related and older adults-related information to its residents. The platform can consolidate Government schemes, which are important to older adults' daily life, such as health care services, social welfare and caregiving support. Older adults and their families can subscribe to this platform and decide what information they want to receive.
      - To further enhance information literacy among older adults, District Councils can fund NGOs to provide training courses and supportive services to older adults on information technology (e.g., use of computers and smartphone applications). This enables older adults to stay connected with their children, friends and the community.

   b. District ambassadors programme: We suggest District Councils provide funding for a district information ambassadors programme for older adults with limited digital literacy or functional impairments.
      - NGOs will train ambassadors for face-to-face information dissemination using the mobile app or the online platform. These trained ambassadors will disseminate district-related information to their neighbours and other older adults in the districts. They will visit places where older adults congregate and/or reside regularly (e.g., town hall, libraries, community centres, faith

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groups, exercise programmes and senior residences) to share updated information related to the district.

Box 7-1. Example 1: Centre for seniors - Government schemes made simpler in Singapore

Box 7-2. Example 2: Older adults' website for information and advice in Newcastle, UK

Box 7-3. Example 3: The Senior Connector Programme in Region of Halton, Canada

2. **Enhance sensitivity to older adults' need for information**
    To enhance public awareness and sensitivity to age-friendly communication, we suggest District Councils consider developing a guidebook on age-friendly communication to provide tips and advice on effective communication with older adults.
    a. District Councils can allocate funding and appoint an organisation to develop an age-friendly communication guidebook to promote effective communication with older adults. The guidebook can provide information on the changes accompanied by the ageing process, identify effective communication mediums and provide tips and suggestions on formulating the message in verbal communication, non-verbal communication, written communication and visualisation (e.g., signage & maps). This guidebook can help communicators in the Government and service agencies be aware of the needs of older adults when planning and implementing communication activities and initiatives and providing them with useful information to achieve the goal.

Box 7-4. Example 4: Age-Friendly Communication: Facts, Tips and Ideas in Canada

Conclusion

In conclusion, older adults can access information through different channels in Hong Kong, especially members of elderly centres and residents in public housing estates. However, given the current challenges faced by older adults in terms of the channels and content of communication and information, we suggest the Government 1) enhance dissemination of information via a one-stop multichannel district information system and the district ambassadors programme and 2) enhance sensitivity to older adults' need for information by developing an age-friendly communication guidebook.

> *Box 7-1. Example 1: Centre for seniors - Government schemes made simpler in Singapore[25]*
>
> In Singapore, older adults 50 years and above can easily access available governmental schemes by launching a one-stop website that consolidates and explains them simply. The one-stop website is also mobile optimised.

> *Box 7-2. Example 2: Older adults' website for information and advice in Newcastle, UK[26]*
>
> A comprehensive information website was developed with and for older adults in Newcastle – (www.informationnow.org.uk). The website includes advice and information on a wide range of issues identified by older adults. It is regularly updated to ensure the information is accurate and up-to-date. Alongside the website, a weekly e-bulletin is distributed to over 750 individuals. The bulletin contains website updates, new research, policy changes and new services and activities that interest older adults. Information is widely promoted in the city via information events aimed at older adults, their families and organisations that work with older adults. Sessions are also included in front line staffs' induction programmes to ensure that staff supporting older adults are well-informed about services in the city.

> *Box 7-3. Example 3: The Senior Connector Program in Region of Halton, Canada[27]*
>
> The Senior Connector Program is a volunteer programme offering resources and referrals to seniors, families and caregivers. Senior Connectors empower others with knowledge to make informed decisions. Senior peer volunteers make connections through face-to-face contact with their peers in their communities.
>
> Senior peer volunteers are educated and trained in information and services available in the Halton region. Upon completion of the training, volunteers are provided with placements where seniors congregate and/or reside, such as community dinners, pharmacies, libraries, senior centres, faith groups, exercise programmes and senior residences.

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[25] Centre for Seniors. (2021). Government Schemes Made Simpler. Retrieved 21 May, 2021, from http://www.silverschemes.sg/

[26] World Health Organization. (2011). Older People's website for information and advice. Retrieved 23 Jun, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/older-peoples-website-for-information-and-advice/

[27] World Health Organization. (2014). The Senior Connector Program. Retrieved 12 Jun, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/the-senior-connector-program/

Box 7-4. Example 4: Age-Friendly Communication: Facts, Tips and Ideas in Canada[28]

The Public Health Agency of Canada developed an age-friendly communication guide in 2010. This guide offers practical and easy-to-follow advice, tips and additional sources of information to help people communicate clearly and effectively. Most ideas and advice can be easily applied to communicating with audiences of all ages.

The publication draws together a range of research findings, practical tips and advice from experts on communicating with seniors. It is divided into four main sections: 1) The Senior Audience: Large, Growing and Diverse looks at what is known about Canadian seniors and how the facts might influence people's communication choices; 2) Choosing the Communication Medium outlines communication media—both new and traditional—to explore their suitability for communicating with seniors; 3) Formulating Your Message offers tips on the content and design of messages, applying what we know about senior audiences and communication media; 4) Advice from the Experts is a resource list and bibliography of sources for further information about communicating effectively, especially with older persons.

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Chapter 8. Community support and health services

Vision

We aim to improve the availability and quality of community support and health services for older adults in Hong Kong by helping them to maintain their health and independence in the community.

Definition of Community support and health services

Community support and health services were posited as the most important factor towards an age-friendly city (Ruza, Kim, Leung, Kam, & Ng, 2015). This chapter adopts Zamora, Kloseck, Fitzsimmons, Zecevic, and Fleming's (2020) definition of community support and health services, which divided it into three categories including 1) health services (i.e., medical or health services performed by health professionals); 2) formal community support (i.e., formal support services provided by a professional agency); and 3) informal community support (i.e., informal community-based programs that may provide support services).

The Challenges

A baseline assessment conducted from 2016 to 2017, covering all 18 districts in Hong Kong, found that Community support and health services ranked last among all eight AFC domains. Older adults were satisfied with the affordable services provided in Hong Kong. However, they showed concerns, especially with health services and formal community support, including 1) insufficient provision of community support and health services and 2) limited community and health services in remote areas, which may negatively affect their health and well-being.

Causes of the Challenges

1. **Insufficient provision of community support and health services**
   The formal community support and health services in Hong Kong typically rely on professional resources such as medical practitioners, social workers and allied health professionals for service delivery. This heavily professional-dominant, top-down model underutilises existing assets and capital inherent in each community because older adults are typically seen as passive recipients rather than co-creators of health and well-being. These biased attitudes and expectations towards age hinder productive engagement among older adults (Morrow-Howell et al., 2017).

2. **Limited community and health services in remote areas**
   Older adults living in remote areas have little or no health services available in their community. For example, Shek O residents have to travel to Sau Kei Wan for health services due to the absence of clinics and related health care services in their community (baseline assessment of the JCAFC Project).

Policy Recommendations

1. **Empowerment approach for community and health services support**
   Rather than conceptualising older adults as burdensome, we regard them as advocates and co-creators of their well-being, capable of contributing meaningfully to their communities. Therefore, we suggest making a paradigm shift from the existing professional approach to empower formal and informal community support and increase its caring capacity. This can be achieved by setting up a time bank platform to link untapped social capacity to unmet needs and empowering older adults to improve their health status through evidence-based community health-enhancing programmes.

   a. Time bank: We suggest District Councils can allocate funding and appoint an organisation to create and support a time bank platform to mobilise social capital in the community and provide community support to its residents. Participants will list the services they can perform (e.g., home-making services, transportation and escort services, carer support) and the services they would like to receive in the system. The system will then match participants requirements and record the exchange. People who provide services in the time bank can use the recorded time credit for future community care services. This time bank system can build social capital effectively by linking potential community care resources with people in need in the district.

   > ***Box 8-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Health Ambassadors Training Programme with a Time Bank Volunteering System***

   b. Evidence-based health-enhancing programmes: We suggest that District Councils allocate funding to NGOs when organising evidence-based health-enhancing programmes (e.g., physical activities, mindfulness workshops) that enhance the district's older adults' health and well-being. These evidence-based activities can empower older adults to take charge of their health and potentially reduce their reliance on health services.

   > ***Box 8-2. Example 2: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Walk the City for Active Ageing***

2. **Expand health service delivery channels**
   To enhance health service coverage in remote areas, we suggest District Councils allocate funding to health care providers or NGOs to organise community health-support services for older adults living in remote areas in the district. For example, funded health care providers or NGOs can reach remote areas and provide mobile dental services, ophthalmology services or Chinese medicine for its residents. Moreover, District Councils can allocate funding and set up shuttle bus services to connect remote areas with health care service facilities in the district.

   > ***Box 8-3. Example 3: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Aged Friendly in Eastern – Versatile Friendly Project (II)***

Conclusion

In general, older adults recognised that community support and health services in Hong Kong were affordable. However, the following adjustments should be made 1) adopting an empowerment approach to community and health service support through time bank and evidence-based health-enhancing

programmes and 2) expanding health service delivery channels for older adults living in remote areas to achieve age-friendly community support and health services in Hong Kong.

Box 8-1. Example 1: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Health Ambassadors Training Programme with a Time Bank Volunteering System

Under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project, Centre on Ageing (COA), the University of Hong Kong organised a Health Ambassadors Training Programme with a time bank volunteering system to 1) equip and empower older people with knowledge and information on dementia, depression, and frailty, and 2) promote civic participation among older people via a time-bank system. The programme contains several elements:

(1) Train ambassadors (older people) with the concept of AFC and specific health-related knowledge regarding dementia, depression, and frailty.
(2) Station these ambassadors at various elderly centres in their respective districts as "volunteer consultants". They shall provide useful health information and promote the concept of AFC to other older people.
(3) A time-bank system was used to record the amount of time contributed by ambassadors to their communities. Through the programme, ambassadors receive time credits for providing support on dementia, depression, or frailty-related services in the elderly centres. They could spend those credits on four types of reward including workshop, day camp, bakery product, and catering service provided by social enterprises in Hong Kong.

Box 8-2. Example 2: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project – Walk the City for Active Ageing

The Christian Family Service Centre organised the territory-wide programme under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project which linked the concept of "Healthy Walking", "Regional Guided Tour" and "Age-friendly City". The walking routes are full of regional characteristics, and age-friendly to the elderly, which could facilitate elders who are not used to do exercise to develop a walking habit, and enjoy sports without the need of equipment anytime and anywhere. The programme includes several elements:

(1) Recruit older people to design 12 walking routes across the territory under the themes of "Health", "Resources", Fun" and "Social", which are suitable for walking and target to motivate older people to go out and keep connected with the community.
(2) Train young-olds aged 50 or above as "Walk Leaders" and equip them with the knowledge of proper walking posture and the skills of coordinating and leading walking tours. The Walk Leaders will assist in organising walking tours for small groups of older people in the community on a regular basis, in order to encourage the older people to develop a walking habit to maintain health.
(3) Develop electronic maps for the walking routes on mobile application and produce walking routes guide for promoting the various walking routes and age-friendly messages to the general public.

Box 8-3. Example 3: The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project - Aged Friendly in Eastern – Versatile Friendly Project (II)[29]

The TWGH Fong Shu Chuen District Elderly Community Centre organised the district-based programme under the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project to improve age-friendliness in 1) Community support and health services; 2) Civic participation and employment; 3) Respect and social inclusion within the Eastern district. This programme includes two sub-programmes:

The first programme provided a series of home care training workshops to older participants, including pain management, feeding and escorting. Trained participants were matched and provided home care support services. This programme could empower older adults with new skills and provide them with employment opportunities.

The second programme focused on health services. The centre arranged different health-related services such as dental services, optometry and podiatry for older adults in the district to ensure that services were accessible and timely.

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[29] World Health Organization (2019). Aged Friendly in Eastern – Versatile Friendly Project (II). Retrieved 12 Nov, 2021, from https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/aged-friendly-in-eastern-versatile-friendly-project-ii/

Chapter 9. Conclusion

This policy brief provides various policy recommendations on the eight AFC domains to different stakeholders in Hong Kong based on the JCAFC Project's baseline and final assessment results. Despite different recommendations across the eight domains, these recommendations shared similar features and rationale for guiding the way towards appropriate age-friendly initiatives.

Firstly, the concept of AFC requires further promotion so that more stakeholders in Hong Kong can be familiar with the concept to identify shortcomings in the city and address issues accordingly. The eight AFC domains provide a structural framework for policymakers, district councillors and other stakeholders to evaluate their city/community and take action based on the classification of the core age-friendly features. For instance, universal and barrier-free designs could enable urban planners, developers and designers to develop suitable and sustainable housing and outdoor environments that fulfil the needs of older adults with different physical abilities and allow them to engage in the community with better well-being.

Secondly, we should encourage older adults to reject the role of the passive service recipients and empower them to be active co-creators of society. Older adults are ultimate experts in their own lives who can contribute to the decision-making process by advocating the age-friendly city movement. This can be achieved by adopting a bottom-up approach, for example, providing older adults with a platform to express their needs and concerns regarding the age-friendliness of their communities and involving them in advisory groups for city or infrastructure planning. Moreover, we should further unleash the potential manpower from the older adult population. The Government and private sectors should take the lead to support and promote elderly employment. Moreover, volunteer opportunities for older adults could promote civic participation, which could be further enhanced by establishing a reward system such as the time bank.

Lastly, it is important to break the information barrier between older adults and society. This can be achieved by setting up a one-stop multichannel district information system and enhancing information dissemination to older adults. Older adults and their families can access the one-stop information system and gain information related to, for instance, social participation opportunities, job opportunities, information for home safety and maintenance, and health care services in their communities. They can subscribe to the information they find interesting and keep regularly informed.

In conclusion, this policy brief provides practical insight into building an age-friendly community in Hong Kong. Specifically, moving forward to an age-friendly city should rely not only on the Government and policymakers but collaboration and co-production between different stakeholders in the city, including the Government, private sectors, NGOs, community organisations and the general public.

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