

CSD holds first "Quit to Win" Contest award presentation ceremony

To encourage persons in custody to quit smoking, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) last year for the first time joined the "Quit to Win" Contest organised by the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH), the University of Hong Kong (HKU) School of Public Health and the HKU School of Nursing. A launch ceremony was held last October, and several persons in custody who participated in the contest have now been confirmed as having quit smoking by the organisers. They were presented with certificates at an award presentation ceremony at Stanley Prison today (January 23) in recognition of their success in quitting smoking.

The Executive Director of COSH, Ms Vienna Lai, and the Chairman of the Phoenix Charitable Foundation, Dr Alan Lee, were official guests of the ceremony. Also at the ceremony, 12 persons in custody re-read their statement of commitment to kick the smoking habit and talked about their successful experience of quitting smoking. They also shared their prizes and happiness with family members.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ms Lai said, "This is the first time COSH has implemented a smoking cessation programme with the CSD. The success rate is 80 per cent and the results are encouraging. It is not easy to quit smoking and resist the temptation, especially when withdrawal symptoms appear. Successful quitters deserve to be praised. The committee looks forward to continuing to work with the CSD to promote the benefits of smoke-free living and encourage more persons in custody to quit smoking."

A person in custody, Simon (false name), said, "I smoked for 30 years. With the support of CSD staff and love from my wife and children, I decided to quit smoking. After I was admitted to prison I became a burden to my family. I hope that I can quit smoking successfully to show my determination to start anew after release. I also want to give the prizes I won from this programme as a Lunar New Year gift to my family for their continued support."

Twelve participating female persons in custody at Lo Wu Correctional Institution who have been confirmed as having quit smoking also re-read their statement of commitment to kick the smoking habit at a similar ceremony today.

The CSD is committed to ensuring a secure, safe, humane, decent and healthy custodial environment. For the health of persons in custody, the CSD has actively supported the Government's policy of tobacco control to help them quit smoking.