

CSD's Life Gym: first positive living centre for male persons in custody Launched

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) officially launched Life Gym, Hong Kong's first positive living centre for male persons in custody, at Stanley Prison today (November 19). During its trial run, Life Gym will offer holistic psychological treatment programmes and male-responsive treatment strategies to help participating persons in custody desist from crime, with the aim of cultivating a mentality of positive living.

The Chief Superintendent of Stanley Prison, Mr Wu Man-wai, said, "November 19 is International Men's Day. Similar to other international organisations, the CSD attends to the psychological and physical health of male persons in custody. I am pleased to witness the opening of Life Gym. I envision that participants will turn towards a positive life after their release, and better develop their potential after receiving treatment programmes."

The CSD's Senior Clinical Psychologist, Dr Judy Hui, said, "Male persons in custody have their unique offending pathway, reflecting different rehabilitation needs and responses to treatment programmes. They are sometimes found to have distorted criminal thinking, violent tendencies, poor anger management or impulsive character, and can be susceptible to undesirable peer influence. The new centre makes use of diverse treatment approaches to help participants to change effectively."

The treatment programme delivered at Life Gym will last from eight to 10 months during the trial run. Treatment is given in the form of group therapy and incorporates male-responsive innovative elements, including the first application of a virtual reality programme developed by the department for psychological treatment. With a view to increasing participants' motivation for change, the programmes include problem-solving tasks, communication skills, alternative thinking and tasks to enhance self-confidence and resilience, as well as a host of fun activities such as inspiring video games, board games and sport activities. It is hoped that Life Gym will cultivate a therapeutic environment that encourages mutual support among participants, and that participants will put the newly learned psychological skills into practice in daily life to achieve the ultimate goal of positive change. Through drawings and a variety of activities, a Clinical Psychologist can help persons in custody to set different life goals and use prosocial means to achieve these goals in order to stay away from crime and develop positive living.