

DH promotes healthy lifestyle in community (with photos)

The Department of Health (DH) today (May 10) presented commendations to over 70 community members and 80 participating organisations at the "I'm So Smart" Community Health Promotion Programme Recognition Ceremony for their participation in promoting an active lifestyle with regular physical activity and less sedentary behaviour, and a healthy diet with adequate intake of fruits and vegetables.

Addressing the recognition ceremony, the Controller of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the DH, Dr Wong Ka-hing, said that Hong Kong faces an increasing threat from non-communicable diseases (NCDs). An unhealthy diet and insufficient physical activity are among the behavioural risk factors responsible for NCDs. In 2019/20, the Programme will continue to promote reducing sedentary behaviour, and will encourage members of the public to walk more to increase their physical activity levels and to integrate physical activity into daily life. In addition, the programme will emphasise a low-salt healthy diet, raising the public's awareness about salt consumption and enhancing their knowledge about the hidden salt in food.

Dr Wong pointed out that consuming too much salt is detrimental to health, which may raise blood pressure and increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that healthy adults should consume below 5 grams of salt per day, and that children should consume less salt than adults.

However, according to the findings of the DH's Population Health Survey 2014/15, over 85 per cent of the respondents had a salt intake above the WHO's recommended daily limit. The DH has been carrying out various measures to encourage the public to reduce salt intake, such as implementing the Salt Reduction Scheme for School Lunches in the 2017/18 school year to build a favourable school environment for promoting a healthy diet, and to cultivate good eating habits for children.

Dr Wong added that globally about one in four adults are not physically active enough, while an alarming four in five of the world's adolescent population are not sufficiently physically active. The DH launched the "Healthy Hong Kong 2025 | Move for Health" Campaign last year to encourage the public to "move for health" and increase their physical activity to build an active lifestyle.

Dr Wong said, "To address the threat of NCDs, last year the Government launched 'Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong' (SAP), with a focus on four NCDs, namely cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases, and four shared behavioural risk factors, namely an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use and harmful use of alcohol.

“The SAP sets out a series of actions to prevent and control NCDs and address the burden of NCDs. Nevertheless, the participation and co-operation of the community is of paramount importance in achieving the goal of reducing the burden of NCDs. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all participating organisations and members of the community for their support and involvement, and hope that we shall continue to work in close partnership to establish healthy lifestyles and a healthy culture and make Hong Kong a healthier city.”

The "I'm So Smart" Community Health Promotion Programme was launched in 2012 and aims at enhancing community collaboration to promote healthy lifestyles with healthy eating and regular physical activity. Over 80 groups participated in the Programme last year, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA), Estate Management Advisory Committees of housing estates under the HKHA, Healthy Cities Projects and 50 non-governmental organisations. Related activities by participating organisations attracted a total attendance of more than 65 300 last year.

Other officiating guests at today's ceremony included the Chief Manager/Management of the Housing Department, Mrs Harriet Lau; the Vice President of the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China, Mr Roy Ngai; and the Chairman of the Hong Kong Dietitians Association, Ms Sylvia Lam.

