

Government calls for concerted efforts to build dementia-friendly community (with photos)

The Director of Social Welfare, Mr Gordon Leung, today (December 12) called on members of various sectors to continue to work with the Government to build a dementia-friendly and age-friendly community as he addressed the "CareNin2" movie screening and sharing session organised by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) under the Dementia Friendly Community Campaign (the Campaign).

Mr Leung said that the SWD has launched a series of public education programmes under the Campaign since September 2018 and has commissioned the Hong Kong Alzheimer's Disease Association to roll out various Dementia Friends information sessions to enhance public understanding and concern for dementia. As at November 30 this year, more than 16 700 people have registered as Dementia Friends. Mr Leung was deeply encouraged by such a positive response and he appealed to the public for their continuous participation in and support for the Campaign.

The Chairman of the Elderly Commission, Dr Lam Ching-choi, who also attended the event, stressed the importance of early identification of people suffering from dementia. He encouraged the public to show more care and concern for the elderly in their neighbourhood. With concerted efforts in the community, he said people suffering from dementia could live in dignity.

With the improvement in the COVID-19 epidemic situation, the SWD has gradually resumed the publicity and educational programmes of the Campaign starting from November this year. These included collaborations between the District Social Welfare Offices of the SWD and non-governmental organisations in organising a tram tour, setting up mobile promotional counters, developing an online platform for dementia information sharing, publishing quarterly information booklets and implementing a "Dementia Friendly Promotion Project at Schools". Apart from the event today, the SWD also plans to organise two more movie screening and sharing sessions in January and February next year on Hong Kong Island and in the New Territories respectively to draw public attention towards the needs of persons with dementia and their families.

To mobilise young people to work in elderly and rehabilitation care services, the SWD launched the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services (the Navigation Scheme) in 2015. The movie shown today, "CareNin2", is a vivid depiction of the experience of a young personal care worker in a large residential care home for the elderly where he looks after a resident suffering from dementia. At today's event, Mr Liu Man-him, a graduate of the Navigation Scheme who has spent five years working in elderly care services, shared his stories of working with elderly persons with dementia and how his professional knowledge helps residents of the elderly care homes feel assured

of the services they receive during the epidemic. Mr Matthew Shum, the founder of the Illuminant, a social enterprise that co-organised today's event, also shared his self-reflections on the ageing population, dementia and elderly services.

At the event, Mr Leung appealed to members of the public who have not received COVID-19 vaccination to get vaccinated as early as possible. He also reminded registered voters to cast their votes in the 2021 Legislative Council General Election on December 19.

Details of the Dementia Friendly Community Campaign are available at the thematic webpage (www.swd.gov.hk/dementiacampaign/en/index.html).

