

## ChickenSoup for the soul: Hong Kong charity aims to make life better for city's elderly residents

- Service has been developed with help from Operation Santa Claus, the year-end fundraising campaign, jointly organised by the South China Morning Post and public broadcaster RTHK

Eddie Lee

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Lee King-chun, Mok Shun-cheung, social worker at Chai Wan Baptist Church, and Edward Man, ChickenSoup Foundation founder, at Hing Wah Estate. Photo: Dickson Lee

Lee King-chun, 74, is active in her neighbourhood.

“I often go to the elderly centre. I made some friends when I joined hobby classes there,” the retired cleaning worker said.

She enjoys spending time at the Hing Wah Estate in Chai Wan, where she has lived for 28 years, and reaching out to her elderly neighbours – some as old as 90.

“There is an elderly couple whom I see regularly. I check their blood pressure and often ask them if they need help,” Lee said.



Lee King-chun takes time out to check on her neighbours at the Hing Wah Estate, in Chai Wan. Photo: Dickson Lee

The mother of two, who has been living alone after her daughters got married and moved out, understands too well how important such a goodwill gesture is to older people struggling along without the support they need with everyday tasks.

“I myself suffer from dizzy spells,” Lee said.

As she does not live with her family, the septuagenarian thinks she may sometimes need some external support and help, and is considering subscribing to the Personal Emergency Link, a 24-hour care service.

The public housing resident also said her 40-year-old unit required repair and maintenance.

“Many things need to be fixed,” said Lee, gesturing at the peeled paint and decrepit electrical wiring.

Mok Shun-cheung from Chai Wan Baptist Church’s social service unit said many older couples and elderly residents living alone in the old district need support.

“My team is providing help for such households in need,” the social worker said.

Some of the community work is carried out in collaboration with charity, the ChickenSoup Foundation.

As part of its new initiative “Project Super Senior,” the foundation plans to help elderly citizens improve their self-care skills and their living conditions.

Edward Man Ho-wai, founder and CEO of ChickenSoup, said his team aimed to identify 50 elderly families not being adequately served by existing public services, and provide support.

The service has been developed with funds from Operation Santa Claus, the annual charity campaign jointly organised by the *South China Morning Post* and public broadcaster RTHK.

“We will work with our partners, including those from the private sector, to organise activities for our elderly clients, who may otherwise stay at home all day,” Man said.

“We may take them to the countryside, or to functions involving our younger clients, so that they will have more contact with the outside world.”



ChickenSoup founder Edward Man at the foundation’s headquarters in Wan Chai. Photo: Xiaomei Chen

His team also helps elderly residents clean up their homes to ensure they can live in their rooms safely and comfortably.

Man said he believed elderly residents would benefit from the new service, which corporate donors and sponsors would help develop and fund.

Founded in 2013, the charity provides services with a staff of eight and a team of corporate volunteers at multiple locations in the city, such as Kwun Tong, almost every day.

The group has so far enlisted the help of 150 organisations, including companies, NGOs and schools.

It has organised empowerment programmes in the areas of education, sports and career development for vulnerable children and teenagers.

Dozens of patients affected by different health problems, such as cancer and heart diseases, have benefited from a privately funded emergency medical services programme managed by ChickenSoup.

Source:

[https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/society/article/3036572/chickensoup-soul-hong-kong-charity-aims-make-life-better?module=perpetual\\_scroll\\_0&pgtype=article&campaign=3036572](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/society/article/3036572/chickensoup-soul-hong-kong-charity-aims-make-life-better?module=perpetual_scroll_0&pgtype=article&campaign=3036572)