



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
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**Enhancing the Wellbeing of Elderly with Hearing Impairment - YCH Hearing Aids Patient Support Group**

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**Introduction**

In Hong Kong, there are 92,000 people suffering from hearing loss, 76.2% of them are elderly. Having properly-fitted and affordable hearing aids is undoubtedly beneficial to people with hearing impairment, however, it was found that patients who have initially fitted their hearing aids may still experience difficulties in their daily maintenance of hearing aids, face a series of psycho-social barriers at the initial stage of wearing hearing aid, which may become difficult disincentives for them to continue wearing their hearing aid. In 2015 the Health Resource Centre (HRC) and Department of ORL-HNS of Yan Chai Hospital jointly developed the first hearing aids patient support group in Hong Kong and continued in the next two years, with the aims to increase patients' ability and sense of control over their hearing aid, encourage their use of hearing aids which result in the enhancement of their psychosocial wellbeing in daily life.

**Objectives**

- i) To strengthen members' ability on proper usage of hearing aids through furnishing their skills and knowledge on maintenance of hearing aids;
- ii) To enhance members' psychological wellbeing through the increase sense of mastery of using the hearing aids and the mutual support among the members

**Methodology**

The group was run for three years from 2015 to 2018 with totally 35 elderly with hearing impairment were recruited. Members were recruited through identification of potential members by the Audiologist and followed by phone invitation by HRC social worker. A 3-session psycho-educational group was arranged to the members with activities included demonstration of hearing aid maintenance by Audiologist, members' sharing on their experience and coping skills and cognitive exercises by Social Workers. Pre-test and post-test questionnaires were performed by the

members to compare and study the effectiveness of the group on the use of the hearing aids and psycho-social aspects.

### **Result**

All the members in the three years showed increased level in their adaptation to the use of hearing aid, especially on the knowledge on daily maintenance of their hearing aids, members' confidence and sense of mastery on their hearing impairment, and participation in social activities. All the members were highly satisfied with the group. As the first hearing aid support group in Hong Kong, it demonstrated the effectiveness of the use of a psycho-educational group for elderly members in strengthening their mastery of their hearing aids against their suffering from hearing impairment and hence promoting their wellbeing on the psycho-social aspects in daily life.