



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
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**Submitting author:** Mr W S KWAN

**Post title:** Ward Manager, Princess Margaret Hospital, KWC

**A 2-Year Quality Enhancement Program: Nutritional Care in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly**

*Lai ASF (5)(6), Law CB(3), Choi HYM(4), Chan MWM(1)(5), TAM VYY(2), Kwan WS(1)*

*(1)Community Nursing Service, Princess Margaret Hospital, (2)Department of Medicine, Yan Chai Hospital, (3)Department of Medicine & Geriatrics, Princess Margaret Hospital, (4)Department of Dietetics and Catering, Princess Margaret Hospital, (5)Kwai Tsing*

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**Introduction**

Adequate nutrition is essential for healthy aging and overall quality of life. In 2012-14, Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) had collaborated with Yan Chai Hospital, Social Welfare Department (SWD) and safe community organizations in Kwai Tsing (KT) & Tsuen Wan (TW) to implement a 2-year nutritional enhancement program in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (RCHE) of KT and TW.

**Objectives**

(1) to promote a provision of healthy diet for the elders; (2) to promulgate better food choices in RCHE; (3) to establish diet and nutrition management system in RCHE.

**Methodology**

A multidisciplinary Nutritional Care Working Group (WG) was formed which composed of dietitian, community nurses, and social worker. A nutrition assessment checklist was designed; and 63 staff volunteers were recruited and trained as RCHE Ambassadors for onsite inspection in 2012 as baseline and in 2013 as post intervention evaluation. A tailored-made "Nutrition and Healthy Diet Workshop" was provided to RCHE. A photo guide and a nutrition manual showing good practices and special feeding utensils were given to heighten the RCHE staff's awareness. Furthermore, a healthy cooking competition was conducted to provide a sharing platform for RCHEs.

**Result**

Results: 69 RCHEs (78%) had completed the Program during 2012-14. Upon the post intervention visits, the overall rating increased from 93% to 94%. Many RCHEs had improvement on environment e.g. hygiene related guidelines were posted up to increase staff awareness. For the nutrition assessment, almost all RCHEs revealed of a well-balanced menu for their residents. More RCHEs had measured the height of

elders (from 56% to 66%). In addition, over 90% of the RCHEs had excellent performance on the feeding technique and special care for the needy elders. However, there were rooms to improve on provision of dairy products (76%) and fruits (63%)

Outcome: The Program successfully enhanced the nutritional care in RCHEs. The RCHEs, the carers and the staff volunteers reflected that the Program had enriched their knowledge and skills on nutritional assessment and management. The Program was also highly commended by various community stakeholders. It demonstrated a concerted effort across organizations and health care professionals in promoting safe and healthy aging in KT and TW.