



善終服務會

The Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care

Introducing our new Executive Director!

Ms Irene Lo is now in full swing as Executive Director at SPHC! Having worked with a number of non-governmental organizations, Irene brings a great deal of experience to the Society. She can be contacted at irenelo@hospicecare.org.hk

End of Life Care Training Manual

With the generous support of the Hongkong Bank Foundation, SPHC is now producing a training manual. Due to increasing requests for support to develop palliative care services within public and private sector, this manual hopes to share some of our experiences. A group of local experts have helped to review the content of the manual and thanks goes to them all, for their continuing support. For copies or further information contact Rex Lau at 2868 1211.

The return of Mal and Dianne Mckissicks.

Mal and Dianne are very well known now in Hong Kong. On this their third visit, they will be focusing on death education. Starting 12th November and running until the 16th November, we are spending five days focusing on death education models and practice. A half-day seminar will be held at Hospital Authority Building on the 16th November, There are limited spaces, so book in advance.

The role of the media in Death Education

With the community anxious to learn more about death education, requests from elderly groups and youth are flooding in. Now with “Tuesday’s with Morrie” available in Chinese one school has approached us, using Morrie Schwartz’s insights, to develop death education programmes. The importance of working with youth comes from the youth themselves. There are often so many “burning” questions they have as yet unanswered, about death and loss. With increasing media coverage of our death education programmes (SCMP September 3rd), we hope that we can continue to provide greater community services. In light of a recent legal appeal in the UK, where a man whose wife is dying from Motor Neurone Disease, has asked to assist her in committing suicide (Guardian 2nd September 2001), it is imperative we continue to highlight the needs of the dying and those facing bereavement.

Debating what is a good death!

Of course, we are all different in what we expect and see as the best way to die. In many of our training programmes, we often spend a great deal of time discussing a good death or dying well. We do this because there is often a sense of “accumulated grief” within health care professionals. Their accumulated grief occurs from what Adams (in Kristjanson et al 2000) describes as:

“ An overexposure to the actual and idealized processes of dying and death.”

What we *expect* to see as people die, often does not occur. There is a difference between personal ideals of a good death and what we can actually achieve in the health care environment. However in the case of assisted suicide, can this really be considered dying well? Through continuing death education efforts and palliative care developments, we hope that we can all continue to meet the needs of the dying through the best *care* possible.

Farewell

We wish Ms Amy Chow from the Jessie and Thomas Tam Centre, a happy and successful future as she now moves onto studying for her PhD. Amy has been with the center since it opened in 1997 and has navigated many changes and developments through this time.

Kristjanson, L.J. et al 2001. Palliative Care Nurses Perceptions of Good and Bad Death and Care Expectations. *International Journal of Palliative Nursing*, 7(3), 128-139.