

PREFACE

“A bad death” is one of the worst curses ever in the Chinese culture. With the goal of promoting a good death for the terminally ill patients, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust initiated the Jockey Club End-of-life Community Care Project (JCECC) to pilot a community intervention model that is evidence-based and relevant to the local context. Patients with a prognosis of less than 6 months from major hospitals will be referred to community partners to enable patients to gain the best quality of life with dignity and autonomy by staying in their own home or long-term care residential facilities.

There is ample evidence that community support can empower patients and their family members to communicate with the health care professionals and among themselves so that their preference on end-of-life care and advance care plans can be established and shared. International experts are invited to Hong Kong to train health and social care professionals to enhance their clinical and communication competence. Through systematic professional training and leadership programs, the general awareness and level of competence among professionals were greatly enhanced.

Death and End-of-Life Community Care are very important, yet taboo topics in the predominantly Chinese community of Hong Kong. The JCECC organised large scale community education campaign, use of social media, produce mini-movies and documentaries, newspaper and publications. The changes of public knowledge and attitude on end-of-life were tracked by large scale population studies through the process of the project. With the massive public education activities in detoxifying death and culture change on the importance of death preparation, new initiatives by non-government organizations on good death and end-of-life care mushroomed in Hong Kong.

We are greatly indebted to The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charity Trust for initiating this JCECC Project. The pursue of excellence and the dedication to building viable local service models relevant to the cultural context of Hong Kong by HKJC members and staff had truly moved mountains. The Advisory Committee consisting of leaders in the Food and Health Bureau, Labour and Welfare Bureau, Hospital Authority, experts from professional organizations and organizations. They have provided the JCECC team with invaluable advice and guidance throughout the past three years.

We are very grateful to all the contributors of this book for sharing their passion, expert knowledge and vision, thus making this book possible. The colleagues from agency partners of the Project were innovative and creative in dissolving fear of death by their warmth and passion to celebrating every life until the last moment of death. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the volunteers and advisors for their time and effort, as they have created laughter and fun for the families who were devastated by the disease burden and stress of caregiving.

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