

Dementia — A Public Health Challenge for the Community



According to a recent study, there were 85,012 dementia patients aged 60 or above in Hong Kong in 2009. This figure is projected to reach 332,688 by 2039¹.

As a result of the increasing prevalence of dementia among older adults, more regular unpaid care or support will be required from their caregivers, an issue that could undermine the social and economic development of our community.

In view of the growing impact of dementia on working dementia caregivers as well as the larger community, HSBC Life has again collaborated with the Sau Po Centre on Ageing at The University of Hong Kong and The Women's Foundation this year in a study entitled **"Working dementia caregivers: Challenges & Needs"**². The study indicates that caregivers face serious challenges when taking care of dementia care recipients.

How much do you know about the challenges facing working dementia caregivers?



Financial stability

68%

of respondents perceived that their care recipients do not have adequate financial resources



Only

16%

of care recipients have insurance support



Support network

36% of respondents devote



≡ **1/2** full-time job



Mental healthiness

Nearly

80%

of respondents reported feeling down, depressed or hopeless in the two weeks prior to the survey



Female working caregivers are more likely to feel stressed from fulfilling dual roles



Information accessibility

Over

50%

of respondents handle various caregiving tasks daily such as

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL)³ **59.6%**

Supervision/Emotional support **58.5%**

Activities of Daily Living (ADL)⁴ **57.9%**

Financial support **55.0%**

The dual roles of working caregivers is demanding, leaving little time to seek information and supportive resources

Facing the above challenges, we promote possible actions in different sectors of society to enable the community to be better prepared for the challenges brought by dementia:

- ▶ **Working dementia caregivers and their loved ones** need to start their financial planning earlier on to build a safety net.
- ▶ **Employers** should provide workplace accommodative measures, including a flexible work environment, to support employees with caregiving responsibilities and help reduce their stress by giving them more time to take care of their loved ones.
- ▶ **Communities and the insurance industry** should raise public awareness regarding the physical and psychosocial needs of dementia caregivers, and provide information and support.
- ▶ **Government** should enhance existing policies regarding dementia caregivers, consider legislation or creative public-private solutions for income protection, and establish a one-stop online resource platform.

Remarks: 1.Yu, R., Chau, P. H., McGhee, S. M., Cheung, W. L., Chan, K. C., Cheung, S. H., & Woo, J. (2012). Trends in Prevalence and Mortality of Dementia in Elderly Hong Kong Population: Projections, Disease Burden, and Implications for Long-Term Care. *International Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, 2012, 1-6. doi:10.1155/2012/406852. 2.The above research findings are based on results generated from an online survey conducted by 171 working dementia caregivers from July to August 2020 and two focus groups with 17 dementia caregivers conducted in August 2020. 3.Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) include shopping, preparing meals and taking medications. 4. Activities of Daily Living (ADL) include eating, walking and bathing.

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