



From the Editor

We have received many positive responses from you after our last issue's appeal for help. We'd like to thank you on behalf of the students – children who need special care - of Xinyue Centre in Shaanxi Province. This issue's theme is on 'Care for the Elderly' that provides information about our work with the elderly on the Mainland. Here we report about the needs of a home for the aged in a village in rural Hebei. We pray for your continuing support.



Installation of Air-conditioners and Handrails to Provide Comfort and Safety for the Elderly

Our Lady Help of Christians Home for the Aged in Shuidong, Anhui Province was established in 2015. It is the only non-government run home for the elderly in the area, accommodating 38 elderlies, all aged 75 years or above. It is situated in a nice, quiet location and is furnished with simple, basic necessities: beds, wardrobes, tables, chairs. However, due to lack of funding, the facility was not equipped with heating, and there was no handrail support. Anhui is not a coal producing province so heating not only cost a lot but was also of poor quality. During winter the old folks had to suffer in the cold. The sisters wrote to Caritas-HK in March, 2016 to ask for help. Thanks to the generous benefactors, we were able to install 9 air-conditioning units that can regulate temperatures for both winter and summer needs. Handrails and grab bars were also installed. Below is a report from the sisters:



Handrails for the hallways and bath grab bars were installed

There has been a significant improvement in the quality of life for the old folks since the installation of the air-conditioners and the handrails in the home. It is now cooler in the summer, and there is no longer the need for coal burners to keep warm in the winter. It's now much safer for them to go to the dining hall because they can hold on to the handrails on the way there. Getting rid of the coal burner greatly reduces the risk for fire hazards; the handrails help prevent slippage. Together they provide a much safer environment for the old folks. We wholeheartedly thank Caritas-HK and our benefactors for their kind support.

Many Thanks!



Installation of a heating system

Mainland Elderly Service Improved with Help of HK Volunteers

With a rapidly aging population on the Mainland, there is an ever-increasing need of services for the elderly. Many church organizations have taken up this challenge to set up 'homes for the aged', many of which are managed by nuns who have an abundance of love but little in the way of resources, professional knowledge and skill. For these reasons the quality of service often is somewhat below par. To help alleviate this problem, Caritas-HK, besides providing material support, also organized Hong Kong volunteers to provide on-the-spot training for some of these homes.

In August, 2017, a team of 3 volunteers from Hong Kong that included a licensed social worker, a physiotherapist, and a health care worker headed up to the **Mingyuan Home for the Aged in Anguo, Hebei Province** to conduct a week-long training on:

1. Assessment of physical ability and design of exercises for the elderly
2. Knowledge and skill in safely moving disabled elderly from point to point
3. Principles for creating safe living and recreational quarters for the elderly
4. Tackling of problems encountered by the sisters



Learning about theories



Learning to properly use the equipment

Participants' Comments

- There is a lot to learn about taking care of the elderly in a professional manner. Now I have an understanding of the importance of proper evaluation of their physical limitations, and the design of exercises tailored to their needs. I have learned the proper ways to move them from point to point without causing them discomfort. I am also alerted to work safety measures that help me prevent sprains and strains.

- Whereas I used to feel I only have to do a proper job in looking after the old folks, the programme taught me that I also have to be compassionate about them. There was not much exchange between us in the past. Now I can communicate with them readily. I look forward to more such training in future. Thank you, my instructors, for your tailor-made course for us. It is so useful.

- The programme helped me realize how I used to misuse our exercise equipment. What I have also learned from the instructors in the past few days is how to evaluate the needs of those under our care, and to design the appropriate exercises to suit their individual needs.

Learning to give proper instructions to an elderly



Giving instructions to a student

- I used to think my role was to care for the old folks with lots of love, and to do everything for them so they didn't have to lift a finger. This training enlightened me that not letting them do anything is actually the wrong approach. Taking away their responsibilities and challenges deprives them of their purposes in life. The boredom caused them to feel sleepy all day. Such 'loving care' is actually suffocating and makes them less confident of themselves. I also learned how to assess their abilities and limitation; how to encourage them to care for themselves where they can; and to instill in them self-confidence.



Teachers with their students

Call from Afar ◻◻◻

Dear Responsible person of Caritas-HK,

About one-third of the 3000 plus population in Qifan Village, Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province are old people. Most of the young people there are working in the cities, leaving their old parents behind with no one to care for them. They spend most of the day in a dark corner of their shanties, feeling bored and empty. Being neglected, they often lack proper meals, and the environment they live in is unsafe.



A sister cutting hair for a senior

To address the villagers' needs, we started a home for the elderly in 2006, named 'Mount Delai Home for Old Folks'. Word of mouth spreads and our good services were well recognized by the families and villagers.

However, because of the limitation of resources, and the fact that our premise is too small and too old, we can only accommodate 17 old folks - a far cry from meeting the needs of the community. With everything we got, plus donations and loans, and with the grace of God to help overcome many obstacles along the way, we finally managed to build a five-storied building next to the old one. The first three floors are designated as living quarters for old folks; office and recreational areas are on the fourth floor; and the fifth floor is the staff dormitory. We now have the shell of the building, and the touching up for the interior is about to be completed, but we have yet to find funding for all the other operational necessities. We need 326,300 RMB (approx. HK\$ 383,882) for the purchase of these critically needed items. We appeal to you for your help.

Our goal is not to make profits. What we want to accomplish is to, through our services, provide a comfortable and warm home for the littlest brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus. We pray that you will respond to our request so that we will soon be able to put this new building to good use for more old folks. We will be grateful for your help, and we will pay you back through prayers, and through our services for the elderly.

	Item	Unit	Amount
1	Special beds for old people	5	5,900
2	Large washing machine	1	65,000
3	Solar powered water heater	2	30,000
4	Boiler for heating	1	50,000
5	Surveillance equipment	8	22,400
6	Computer for surveillance system	1	3,000
7	Elevator	1	150,000
Total (¥)			326,300

Sister Wang,
October 2017



A sister chatting with an elderly in the garden

Item no : 5501

Looking forward to
your response

For enquiry, please call on 35892259 or 35892500, or leave your message at mainland@caritas.org.hk. To show your care, you may write a crossed cheque payable to "Caritas-Hong Kong" and send it to: Mainland Service Desk, Room 505, Caritas House, 2, Caine Road, Central, Hong Kong. Please write down the item no. / purpose of the cheque and your contact information on the back.