

JOCKEY CLUB AGE-FRIENDLY CITY PROJECT



賽馬會齡活城市
Jockey Club Age-friendly City



AGE-FRIENDLY CITY

Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project

We often ask our children, "What would you like your life to be like when you grow up?" But we rarely ask the elderly for their views about how they would like to live.

By 2040, a third of Hong Kong's population will be over 65 years old. We are the elderly of the future.

In a bid to understand elderly's needs, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust collaborated with four universities in Hong Kong to conduct baseline assessments on the age-friendliness of the city. Questionnaires and focus group interviews were carried out in

different districts to identify the difficulties faced by the elderly and their needs.

Everyday life can be challenging for an elderly person. Even a single step can be a hurdle for an older person with health problems. Some of them worry that people who are preoccupied with mobile phones may accidentally bump into them. And there are others who would like to continue working after retirement.

Can Hong Kong become a livable city for an ageing population? How would we like to live our life in the future?

CONTENT

02-05 Challenges and opportunities for the ageing population

06-09 Truly recognising the needs of the elderly

10-13 **1 SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**
Encourage the elderly to participate in policy discussion at a community level

14-17 **2 RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**
The elderly have different perceptions of dignity

18-21 **3 CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**
Elderly employment is a win-win for all

22-25 **4 COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES**
Strengthen the medical-social collaboration

26-29 **5 HOUSING**
Help the elderly age at home

30-33 **6 OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS**
Hong Kong's environment is ageing too

34-37 **7 TRANSPORTATION**
Good transportation in the neighbourhood is important

38-41 **8 COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**
The digital gap should be removed

42 Project Ambassador Lam Chi-ling: Training up and raising skills to contribute to the community

43 Project Ambassador Mak Wai-lai: It's everyone's responsibility to build an age-friendly city

44 Project Ambassador Chui Kwan-hung: Improving the community through neighbourhood

45 Project Ambassador Chui Yuk-ha: Elderly play an important part in building an age-friendly city interaction





Mr. Leong Cheung
Executive Director, Charities and Community,
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

Components of the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project



1 The AgeWatch Index for Hong Kong

- Develop an annual AgeWatch Index for Hong Kong by the CUHK Jockey Club Institute of Ageing since 2015.
- Identify areas for improvement to facilitate the planning of projects that aim to build Hong Kong into an age-friendly city.



2 Comprehensive Support Scheme for Districts

- Conduct baseline assessments and train project ambassadors by the four participating universities in the 18 districts of Hong Kong.
- Formulate a 3-year action plan on age-friendliness for each district in consultation with District Councils.
- Provide funding for district-based programmes in 18 districts.



3 Publicity and Public Education

- Implement territory-wide publicity and public education programmes.
- Collaborate with RTHK Radio 5, the project's media partner, to disseminate age-friendly messages.



4 Project Evaluation

- Evaluate overall efficacy of the project and effectiveness of district-based programmes.



Challenges and opportunities for the ageing population

Leong Cheung

“An ageing population brings challenges and opportunities to Hong Kong,” says Leong Cheung, Executive Director, Charities and Community, The Hong Kong Jockey Club (“The Club”). Hong Kong is facing an ageing population and the trend is increasingly prevalent in the years ahead. According to the latest Government’s projection, our population will reach 8.2 million in 2040, with one-third (about 2.5 million) 65 years old and above.

The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project

The ageing population is a global phenomenon. In 2005, the World Health Organization (“WHO”) launched the “Global Age-friendly Cities Project” and identified eight domains outlining the key elements in an urban environment which support active and healthy ageing.

Cheung says that an age-friendly city should meet the needs and abilities of the older residents by offering an inclusive and barrier-free environment. Underpinning this is an age-friendly culture which boosts the public awareness of the different needs across all ages, along with removing the

pre-conceived notions of ageing, while engaging stakeholders in community affairs.

In the 2016 Policy Address, it was mentioned that healthcare and social services for the elderly should be strengthened. Corresponding resources should be allocated to shape up an age-friendly environment for elderly to “age in place”.

In 2015, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust allocated HKD190 million for the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project (“JCAFC Project”) which takes a district-based approach towards building an age-friendly city. The objective of the project

was to promote age-friendliness across 18 districts of Hong Kong.

Embracing each district’s characteristics

Each of the 18 districts in Hong Kong is unique. For example, Shatin residents love their environment, Central and Western District residents are active in public affairs, while Tsuen Wan residents take pride in the district’s transportation system.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club acknowledges that a deeper understanding of the local environment is fundamental to provide appropriate support. Taking reference from the WHO’s eight domains of an age-friendly city, it partnered with four local universities to conduct a baseline assessment to gauge the age-friendliness of each district.

The baseline assessment survey found that the three lowest-scoring domains included Community support and health services, Housing, and Civic participation and employment. Based on the survey’s findings, and in collaboration with four universities and District Councils, the Club developed a three-year action plan for each district and worked with respective stakeholder groups to

create tailored district-based programmes which address local needs.

As the Project rolls out, 18 districts have joined the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

The District Councils are also a conduit for communication between government departments and community stakeholders. They convey the residents’ opinions to the designated parties and follow up on issues related to developing an age-friendly community.

Indispensable role of the business sector

Cheung emphasizes that, “The business sector plays an indispensable role in promoting an age-friendly culture to the wider community.” He believes that the business sector should also be involved in building an age-friendly city. The Club therefore launched the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Partnership Scheme (“The Scheme”) in June 2018 to encourage collaboration between the business and public sectors in promoting age-friendliness.

“Participating organisations which implement at least one age-friendly practice will be awarded a set of certificate and Scheme tags.” Special Awards have also been set up to recognise organisations



with outstanding performances in fostering an age-friendly culture. These include Age-friendly Employer Award, Age-friendly Facilities Award, Age-friendly Innovation Award, Age-friendly Collaborator Award, Age-friendly Business Award, Our City's Story Award and My Favourite City Partnership Scheme Award.

The Scheme was supported by four business chambers in Hong Kong and re-launched in 2020. More than 180 companies and organisations have joined the programme between 2018 to 2020.

It is not easy to build an age-friendly city as it takes time to alter deep-rooted perceptions of ageing in a society. The JCAFC Project is just the beginning. An ageing population gives rise to both challenges and opportunities. "We are hoping that our programmes can help enhance the elderly's health so that they can remain active in community activities. We also hope that the programmes can transform the elderly from being recipients of a service to active participants in order to live a fulfilling life as they age," says Cheung.

About the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project



Baseline Assessment

- Baseline assessment completed in 18 districts with findings published in March 2018.
- Collected a total of 9,785 questionnaires; 739 samples participated in focus group interviews in 18 districts.
- 87% of the respondents were aged 50 or above.
- The lowest-scoring (6 being the highest score) domains were: Community support and health services (3.67), Housing (3.71), and Civic participation and employment (3.87).



District-based Programmes

- HKD1.5 million was allocated to each district (an annual funding of HKD500,000 for three years) to devise and implement district programmes based on the baseline assessment findings.
- More than 140 district-based programmes were implemented.
- Over 114,600 people benefited.
- "Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project — Walking Kwun Tong for Active Ageing" won the "Best Active Ageing Programme (Community) Award" in Singapore's 6th Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards in 2018.



Project Ambassadors

- Recruited over 2,260 Project ambassadors in 18 districts in Hong Kong to promote age-friendliness and care for the elderly.



WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

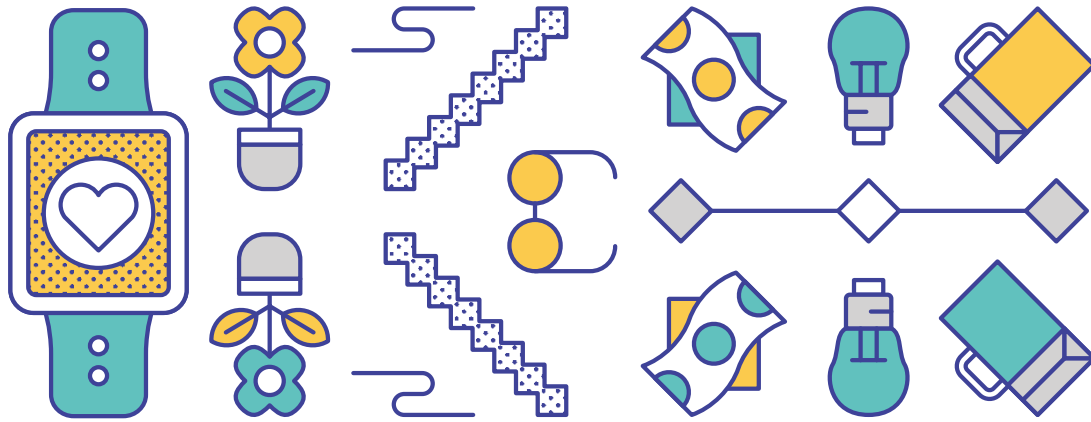
- 18 districts in Hong Kong have joined the Network.

World Health Organization Eight domains of an age-friendly city

EIGHT DOMAINS

Domain	Definition	Cross-district Baseline Assessment Score*
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION	Opportunities for the elderly to participate in leisure, social, cultural and other activities will allow them to use their skills, build self-confidence, gain respect and, in the long run, improve their physical and mental well-being. Before they retired, many of the participants were professionals and therefore have a unique insight on social issues. If they can convey their opinions and suggestions to the District and Legislative Councils, they can directly impact the policy and the community, and can continue to contribute to society.	4.29
TRANSPORTATION	Accessible, safe and affordable public transport is a key enabling factor for the elderly to engage in community life, and access health care and other services. With adequate bus routes and services across even remote areas, the elderly would not have to worry about standing and waiting uncomfortably for long periods for transportation, or expose themselves unnecessarily to bad weather. This will encourage the elderly to remain active in community life, attend medical appointments and enjoy other services.	4.27
RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	There are many ways to create an inclusive society which recognizes and fosters respect for the elderly which makes them feel that they have a place in the family and the community. For instance, developing the silver market to offer products for the older generation; or people could slow down on the streets when they are near an elderly person so that they will not worry about being knocked down or bumped into. These kinds of changes will encourage the elderly to participate in social, civic, and economic activities.	4.10
COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION	Providing practical and relevant information to help the elderly. What's the best way for the elderly to access medical services if they are feeling unwell, what courses are available in the community to help them learn new skills, etc. Effective dissemination of information, and a conduit for their queries is essential for elderly to be able to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.	4.06
OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS	A clean, pleasant, convenient, and safe environment will help the elderly to live on their own comfortably. Installing lifts and escalators along major walkways in the community will reduce risks and help the elderly be more mobile. This also includes well-designed outdoor spaces and structural facilities which allow the elderly to move around in the community and maintain a healthy social network.	4.04
CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT	Ample employment opportunities for the elderly give them the choice of working after retirement. Those with management experience can use their organisational skills and expertise in decision making to supervise elderly associations which strive to improve the welfare of their peers.	3.87
HOUSING	It is crucial for elderly people to have a safe and comfortable place to live. A good housing design can create room for the elderly to move around freely indoors and cater to their individual requirements. Those with limited mobility may need non-slip mats in bathrooms and some may even need to use handrails for support. There should also be adequate healthcare facilities and community services within the vicinity of the elderly homes.	3.71
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES	Good community support and health services should be offered at a range of price points with various types of service. This has a direct impact on their ability to maintain their well-being and live independently in the community. Affordable dental services encourage the elderly with dental problems to seek prompt medical care or install dentures which will help them sustain their quality of life and social participation.	3.67

* ● A survey conducted ranked the 53 items of the eight domains of an age-friendly city. Respondents were asked to give their score on a 6-point scale, with 6 being the highest rank indicating the most elderly-friendly.



Professor Jean Woo
Director, CUHK Jockey Club Institute of Ageing

BASELINE ASSESSMENT

The Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project commissioned four gerontology research institutes of local universities to conduct the baseline assessment in the 18 districts of Hong Kong. The survey assessed each district's age-friendliness and proposed improvement measures based on the residents' views. The baseline assessment reports prepared by the universities provided the basis for the project to collaborate with District Councils to develop a strategy to promote age-friendly initiatives in every district.

Project Partners	Pilot Phase	Second Phase
Jockey Club Institute of Ageing, The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Sha Tin, Tai Po	Kwai Tsing, North, Sai Kung
Sai Po Centre on Ageing, The University of Hong Kong	Central and Western, Wan Chai	Eastern, Southern, Wong Tai Sin
Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies, Lingnan University	Islands, Tsuen Wan	Tuen Mun, Yuen Long
Institute of Active Ageing, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Kowloon City, Kwun Tong	Sham Shui Po, Yau Tsim Mong

Truly recognising the needs of the elderly

Professor Jean Woo

"Citizens tend to have two distinctively different views: some do not see the needs of the elderly, while some geriatric carers found it hard to secure the resources required in the community," says Professor Jean Woo, Director of CUHK Jockey Club Institute of Ageing ("IoA").

Professor Woo claims that the needs of the elderly in Hong Kong have long been overlooked. Many historical studies took samples only from district elderly centres. The elderly's needs projected in these studies did not give a full picture, Woo explains that "only 10% of the elderly population in Hong Kong go to elderly centres."

Therefore, researchers from IoA conducted on-the-street questionnaires to widen the sampling.

The JCAFC Project's baseline assessment was based on a much larger amount of data and opinions collected from the questionnaire surveys along with focus group interviews conducted by the four universities across Hong Kong. The assessment attempts to measure each of the districts' age-friendliness and identify the needs of the elderly.

Among the eight domains, transportation scored well in all 18 districts. Many older people mentioned that the "Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly" had encouraged them to commute more frequently. Some also praised the transportation network in their district saying that it was well connected making it easy to travel anywhere.

We should make it easier for the elderly people to go to the hospital so that they can age in place.



The elderly participants also pointed out areas which needed further improvement. For instance, those living in Kwun Tong were particularly concerned about traffic congestion. Also of concern, a significant number of elderly people in wheelchairs had experienced taxi drivers refusing to take them.

The aim is to allow the elderly with low mobility to seek medical care easily so that they can age in place.

Hospitals cannot be reached by taxis

"Despite the high-scores for transportation, there may still be some issues worth examining in detail," Professor Woo, who gave the example of the difficulty in getting to Prince of Wales Hospital and Shatin Hospital.

Although both hospitals are under the New Territories East Cluster, Shatin Hospital is accessible only via urban taxi (red), while Prince of Wales Hospital can be reached by both the urban and New Territories (green) taxis. Professor Woo says that it is unreasonable that green taxis are not allowed to go to Shatin Hospital which is actually closer to the centre of the New Territories geographically.

Which means some of the elderly with low mobility find it difficult to go to Shatin Hospital for rehabilitation services. Professor Woo says that as

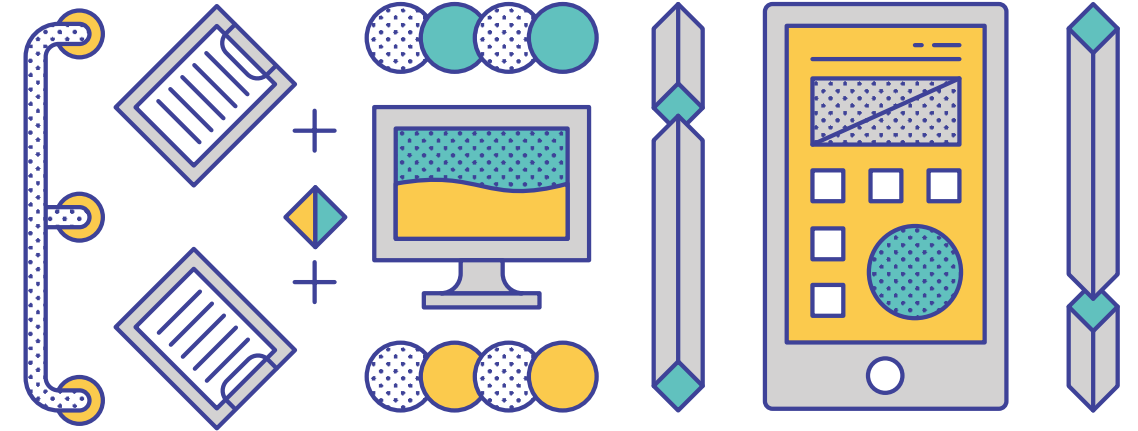
a result when an older person's physical condition deteriorates, "they'll end up in elderly homes."

An evaluation was carried out several years ago, in which officers of the Transport Department found that only a small number of people access Shatin Hospital via taxi. But Professor Woo states that, "It is not a matter of quantity. We should be looking at how we can make it easy and convenient for elderly to access the hospital for medical care so that they can age in place."

Difficult to use the General Out-patient Clinic Telephone Appointment System

Community support and health services scored the lowest among eight domains in the baseline assessment across 18 districts. Respondents were dissatisfied with long waiting times, high fees of private hospitals, inadequate support for carers, etc. In a focus group discussion, some also pointed that "the General Out-patient Clinic Telephone Appointment System is not user-friendly".

Professor Woo says that the elderly who don't know how to use the tele-appointment system often try to make an appointment by visiting the clinic instead. But the clinic staff usually turn them away and tell



them to go through the tele-appointment system.

"The problem can be easily solved with small changes to the set-up of the tele-appointment system." Woo explains that a "contact staff option" should be provided to allow the caller to speak directly to a staff member of the clinic. "Many customer service hotlines have a similar option. This is not technically impossible."

Older people learn relatively slowly

On the topic of Communication and information, Professor Woo says people presume the elderly are slow learners of electronic devices. She says, "They have actually neglected the root cause. For example, software programmes update regularly. Every update often changes the user interface significantly, making it daunting especially for an older person to keep up."

Increasingly diversified functions on mobile phones and tablets are also overwhelming for the elderly. A click of a wrong icon or pop-up advertisement could take them to another page.

In some overseas countries, age-friendly mobile phones and computers have simplified functions with only several frequently used applications on the interface for the elderly.

Silver Hair Market should be target-oriented

Professor Woo reminds those who are keen to capture the silver hair market opportunity should not only take into account the physical needs of the elderly, but also those of their carers. "You must understand that elderly will not buy things themselves. Often it's the carers that make the purchases for the elderly. It's best to let elderly people and their carers try out the items and be able to give feedback."

She claims that it is difficult to get a trial for specific items in Hong Kong. But even when the products are found to be suitable, it is often not readily available. Woo cites Age UK's integrated online platform as an example to follow. She says it has a wide range of products for the elderly, and "once purchased, the item will be delivered the very next day. Hong Kong is said to be a smart city, but we are lagging behind in this regard."

Professor Woo concludes that the most important part in building an age-friendly city is that "we must understand physical changes as a person ages and their corresponding needs."

1 SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



Professor Joshua Mok
Vice President, Lingnan University

A variety of affordable community activities should be provided to target the varying interests of the elderly population. Taking part in leisure, social, cultural, educational and spiritual activities can prolong their participation in social life.

Encourage the elderly to participate in policy discussion at the community level

Professor Joshua Mok

Social participation received a relatively high score in every district. In the Central and Western District, most respondents considered their community age-friendly and ranked Social participation the highest among the eight domains indicating that they have a strong sense of belonging.

The Central and Western District Community Concern Group and the Central and Western District Age-friendly Work Group were set up over the last 10 years by members of several elderly centres in the district. Their activities are funded by the District Council and well attended by more than 100 participants. Public forums and briefings are also organised to promote age-friendliness.

Peony Sin, Social Worker of the Caritas Elderly Centre — Central District, says that the Age-friendly Work Group is planned and executed by the elderly

participants themselves, the social workers only play an advisory role. “The level of participation of the older people is very high and they are looking to enhance their quality of life. The difficulties and needs of the elderly in the community are better articulated as they speak out for themselves.”

“Many elderly people are confident that their opinions can effectively improve the age-friendliness of a community and might have a greater impact than the social workers who speak on their behalf,” adds Benjamin Sin, Social Work Supervisor of Caritas Mok Cheung Sui Kun Community Centre. The centre’s Elderly Rights League was established for the older people to express their views. They gathered to discuss elderly policies, for instance, the subsidy for elderly dental services was on their agenda recently.

Social participation of respondents in Central and Western District

46.4%

of the respondents have participated in the elderly centre’s voluntary services or activities in the past three months.

82.6%

of the respondents aged 60 or above have used the services or participated in the activities of elderly centres.

Recommendations made by respondents of Central and Western District

- 1 Set up indoor meeting places, easily accessible via public transport, for instance, along the tram line.
- 2 Allow flexibility in membership eligibility and regulations of the elderly centres.
- 3 Provide more outreach services to singleton elderly living in old tenement buildings.



Listen to the voice of the elderly

“Take a macro view, social participation means taking part not only in community activities but also in politics. Retirees nowadays are in good health and have a wealth of knowledge and experiences. They are capable of expressing their views on elderly affairs and public policies,” says Professor Joshua Mok, Vice-President of Lingnan University.

With reference to the baseline assessment, Professor Mok noted that some older people have begun to set up district organisations. “If they can bring together the views from different district organisations, identify the common problems and set up concern groups, they will be more effective in drawing attention to the problems.”

He suggests the District Councils should invite the elderly to join relevant meetings to express their views in the social service committee or other related groups. The voice of the elderly should be integrated in policy discussions at the community level. “The higher their level of participation, the better the community needs could be reflected and therefore it will result in smoother governance.”

He believes that it might also be a solution to the low participation of elderly men in the community. “Most men are interested in public

affairs. This may motivate them to engage more in the community.”

All districts have joined the WHO Network

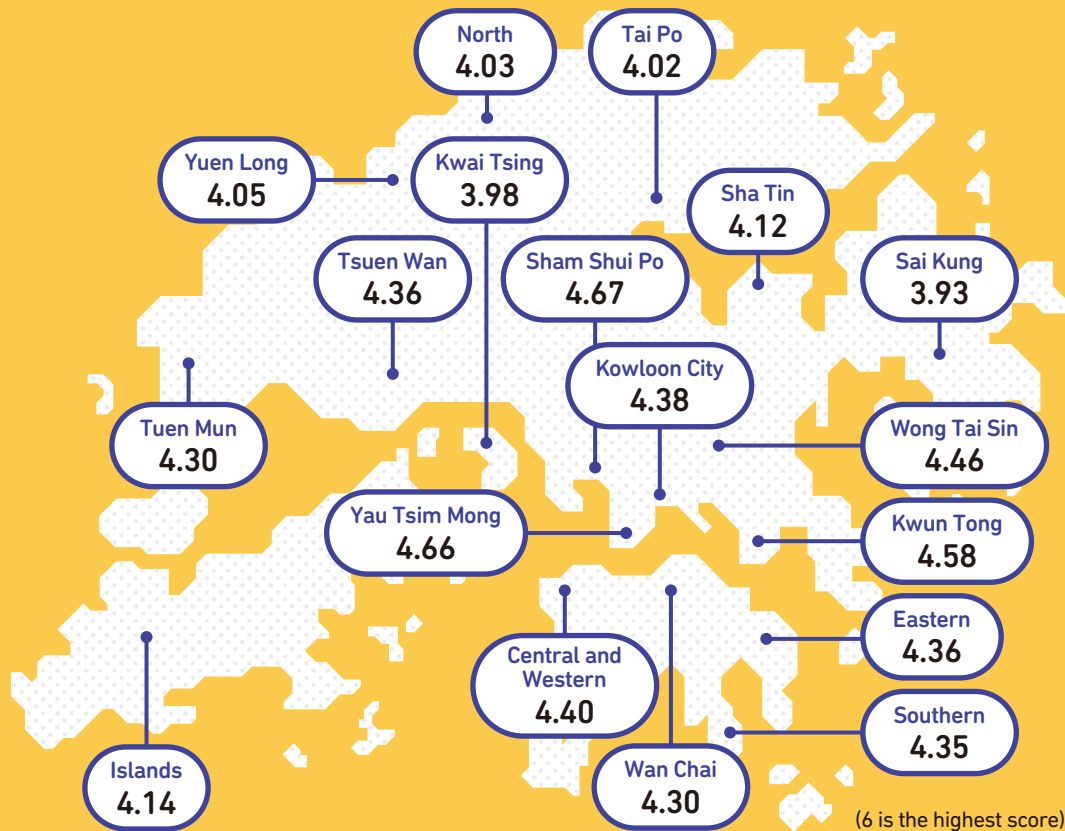
All of Hong Kong’s 18 districts have joined the World Health Organization Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Professor Mok claims that the baseline assessment has facilitated their participation in the Network and consequently raises the level of age-friendliness of each district.

He admits that those who gave their input for the baseline assessment are active in community activities and have a relatively higher level of social participation. Elderly men and those who are frail or live in remote areas are less likely to be interviewed. “The baseline assessment has revealed the service gaps and shown that more outreach services may be required,” according to Professor Mok. “In the long run, society should not rely only on the government. The young olds are capable of developing the silver hair market to serve the needs of their peers.”

1 SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



Score of Social participation of the 18 districts



Elderly centres promote a sense of worth

Mr Tan Tick-yee, Assistant Director (Elderly) of the Social Welfare Department explains that the elderly services policy aims to help older people live a healthy, respected and dignified life in the community while contributing more to society.

He says there are a total of 210 subsidised elderly centres in Hong Kong providing services including district and neighbourhood centres. They are encouraged to initiate, plan and manage their own learning and voluntary activities.

As of March 2018, there were a total of 220,000 members and 60,000 volunteers serving in these centres. Over the last two decades, the Social Welfare Department has been funding the "Opportunities for the Elderly Project", to unleash the potential of the elderly to contribute to the community.



Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

Islands	Kowloon City	Tsuen Wan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise more activities for men, such as leisure activities and discussion forums Promote and organise activities to strengthen neighbourhood support Improve barrier-free washrooms and increase the activity space in elderly centres Set up elderly centres or gathering places for elderly people on outlying islands, such as Lamma Island 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the elderly can participate in social activities and community life Allocate more resources to elderly centres in the district Encourage the elderly to take part in various activities in the district, including entertainment, sports and leisure, learning and development courses, and voluntary services and voluntary services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise activities which are related to the occupation of older people before they retire Prioritise safety when designing activities for the elderly Provide courses for learning new technologies Expand elderly centres

2

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

An inclusive society recognises and respects the elderly and encourages them to take part in social, civic and economic activities.



Dr Lam Ching-choi
Chairman, Elderly Commission

The Elderly have different perceptions of dignity

Dr Lam Ching-choi

In the baseline assessment conducted by the Lingnan University Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies, Respect and social inclusion was one of the domains that received the highest score among the elderly living on outlying Islands, including Lantau Island, Tung Chung New Town, Cheung Chau, Lamma Island, Mui Wo, Tai O and Discovery Bay.

Since most of the respondents lived on the islands where they were born or near their families, they were highly satisfied with both the social networks and relationships with their families and relatives.

"The neighbourhood relations here are amicable," a respondent said. Cordial relations in the neighbourhood are often a result of frequent face-to-face direct communication, especially in rural areas. This is how illiterate elderly people can receive information in the community. Residents greet each other and discuss various matters in the community. This formal and informal communication helps build a strong social network which makes the older people feel safe and included in the community.

In the new towns like Tung Chung, older people engage with the community and express their views by

taking part in activities organised by the elderly centres.

However, some respondents mentioned that youngsters and new residents lacked respect for the elderly. In addition, as outlying islands are tourist spots, the elderly felt that their neighbourhoods were getting too crowded. Others were also concerned that the public perception of older people was often negative.

Promoting civic education

The findings of the baseline assessment have also caught the attention of Dr Lam Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission. "Traditionally, older people were respected, but now they face age discrimination. We expand all kinds of resources to raise children, but we didn't teach them how to take care of older people," says Dr Lam. He thinks that activities including people of all ages are important. "Youngsters do not have many opportunities to meet older people. I joined an intergenerational activity and noticed that youngsters changed their perception of the elderly afterwards. They realised that older people have a broader vision and that the old and the young can learn from each other."

Views of a participant in a baseline assessment focus group

Mrs Lai from
Cheung Chau
Age 56



"Life on an island is vastly different from that in urban districts. For example, my 86-year-old mother lives only a few minutes' walking distance from me. We see each other very often. Naturally, my son learnt to respect and take care of elderly people."

Dr Lam was a member of the Sai Kung District Council and he finds that the outgoing youngsters are most vocal in public consultations concerning urban planning. As there are different age groups in our society and age-friendly practices are essential, older people can even act as ambassadors to find out the needs of the elderly.

When it comes to the concerns about the large numbers of visitors in some places, Dr Lam thinks that the government should strike a balance between the areas reserved for residents and those open to tourists as space is limited. He also advises the elderly to look at it positively. "Experiential tourism is immensely popular in other countries, in which tour guides are usually older people, because they know the history and are in a better position to divulge the heritage of the district."

Raising the retirement age

Dr Lam believes that changing the retirement system is fundamental for elderly to retain respect in society. "In urbanised Hong Kong, life planning includes learning, work and rest. It is discriminatory to think that elderly do not have to work and learn. This is perhaps, the root cause of why the elderly feel disrespected and socially excluded. And

resources constraints exacerbate the situation."

Lam notes that many older people are well-educated, and they worked at a management level before retiring. They found it hard to adapt to retirement life in which they no longer need to make decisions.

Dr Lam explains that maintaining dignity is a crucial part of the elderly services he devised. "What is most important is to have a choice. Older people should be able to plan their retirement activities according to their preference and ability. Perhaps they can work part time, become a volunteer, tutor, or even start a business. Who says only young people can start a business? Older people have a wealth of experience."

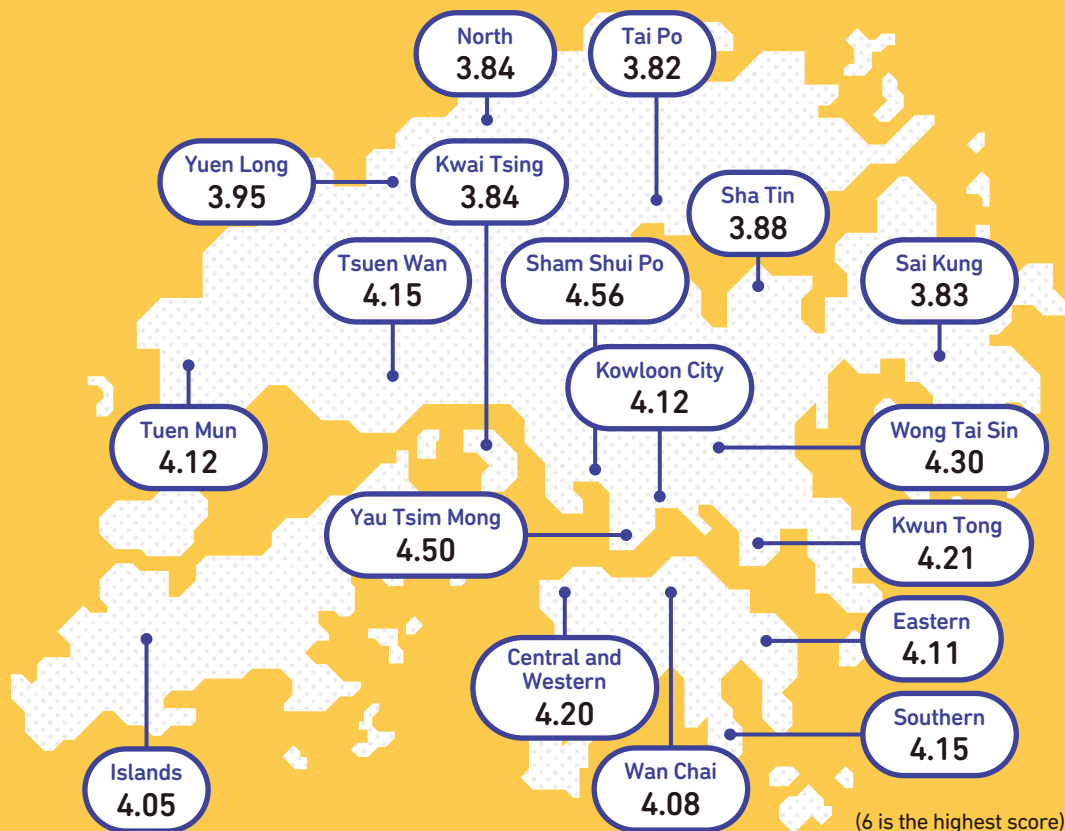
According to Dr Lam, like young people, every senior person has their own unique character and desires. "The preference of young people changes all the time. Why should elderly services be the same everywhere leaving them with no choices?"

Senior people with varied backgrounds have different perceptions of dignity. "Grassroots level elderly need support for daily living. Middle-class elderly are more concerned about their dignity as they aim to manage themselves and learn new skills. Seniors from ethnic minority communities need respect and inclusion of their culture."

2 RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION



Score of Respect and social inclusion of the 18 districts



Recommendations made by respondents of the baseline assessment

Kwun Tong	Sha Tin	Kowloon City
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster mutual understanding and respect, and provide opportunities for all age groups Encourage corporates to provide and design services and products which meet the needs of the elderly Form community working groups consisting of government representatives, and discuss the age-friendly issues of Kwun Tong with District Councils, the elderly and representatives of elderly centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the contribution of the elderly to society via civic education Provide more opportunities for the elderly to take part in volunteer services Encourage the elderly to actively take part in the design of community services Encourage public services and business organisations to consult the elderly about their needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise territory-wide and district-based activities, such as a poster or advertisement design competition to promote a positive image of the elderly Organise more activities to foster mutual understanding and appreciation between different generations Set up community working groups led by government representatives to discuss age-friendly issues among government departments, District Councils, the elderly and representatives of elderly centres

3

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT



Dr Mak Kin-wah
Chairman, Hong Kong Society for the Aged

An age-friendly city should provide opportunities for employment and voluntary work for the elderly and encourage them to participate in civic activities so that they can continue to contribute to their communities after retirement.

Elderly employment is a win-win for all

Dr Mak Kin-wah

In the industrial district of Kwun Tong, many of the retirees wish to continue working. The respondents of the baseline assessment expressed their desire to have flexible work arrangements, and the necessary training to help them re-enter the job market.

"Nowadays some people can live up to 100 years. If a person starts to work at the age of 20 and retires by 60, do you think they can support themselves till they are 100 years old after working for just 40 years? You should also bear in mind that they may have to support their family members as well," says Dr Mak Kin-wah, Chairman of the Hong Kong Society for the Aged ("SAGE").

Over a decade ago, SAGE proposed flexible employment for the elderly as a way to encourage them to continue to work. Dr Mak points out that it is not easy for older people to find a job. There is

a shortage of jobs in the market and there are not many types of work that are suitable for the elderly. "Inhibited by traditional thinking, older people are labelled as slow and capable only for cleaning jobs and security work." He thinks that this is a flawed stereotype. Hong Kong has long been a knowledge-based society and many older people born after the war have attained a certain level of education. Cleaning and security work are not the kind of jobs that they expect or are interested in.

Age is no longer an indicator

Dr Mak cites the example of the 2010 Job Fair for Mid-age and Elderly People. Although the fair offered only 200 posts, it provided employers with an opportunity to learn more about elderly employment. They were also satisfied with the job performance of the older people they hired.

Tips for elderly employment

In a study on "Age-friendly employment" conducted in 2010, SAGE asked the elderly respondents about their concerns in relation to re-entering the job market. Seven employment conditions that favour elderly re-employment were identified:



Since then, they have been taking the initiative to employ more older people. In the Elderly Job Expo in 2018, the total number of posts offered by the employers increased to 5,000.

Dr Mak repeatedly reiterates that age is no longer an indicator and that the society should make the best use of everyone's talents. The emphasis should be on one's ability. He has witnessed many older people re-entering the job market. Some have developed a second career. Others have returned to their former profession and shared their knowledge and years of experience with the newcomers. Some have learnt to get jobs through mobile apps and are happy to be freelancers.

Dr Mak emphasizes that elderly employment is a win-win for all. "It benefits the mental and physical wellbeing of the elderly because their life is more fulfilling. For employers, older people can fill the vacancies which have a shortage of labour. The employment of older people also benefits the economy and drives economic development."

He does not believe that young people will be affected if older people continue to work. There are different types of jobs for people at different stages of life. Everyone contributes to society in their own way. There is no conflict between the two, especially

given that there is likely to be a shortage of labour in the future. The older people are there to fill the gap. "If there is a group of older people who can be employed on a flexible basis when young people are preoccupied, it's not a bad thing, right? Moreover, if this mode of employment is established, young people can also benefit when they retire."

Lack of coordination for the "win-win"

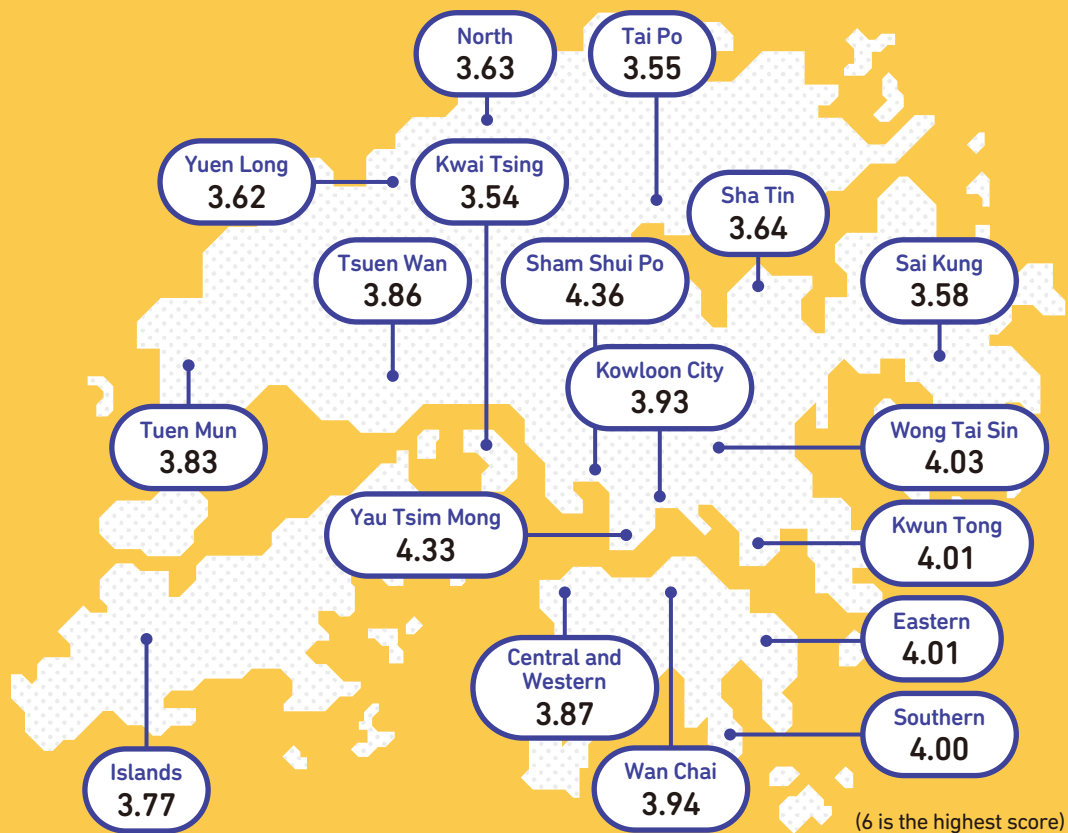
Dr Mak thinks what is most important now is to change the social stereotype which largely associates older people with social welfare. It is not imperative to retire at 60 years old. He says that older people are able to continue to work and learn in different fields.

He thinks that Hong Kong has already fulfilled certain prerequisites to facilitate elderly employment, such as the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme, the health care voucher, and the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme. "If someone can take up the coordinating role, put these measures together and turn them into a long-term policy, we could achieve a win-win situation for all. As long as we are willing to reconsider our elderly policies, there are a lot of possibilities."

3 CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT



Score of Civic participation and employment of the 18 districts



Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

Kwun Tong	Sha Tin	Islands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer more voluntary work opportunities which meet the community needs Provide flexible work arrangement for the elderly Tailor make training programmes for older people Provide one-stop employment support services for the elderly Organise activities to enhance employers' understanding of the strength and needs of the elderly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment should be based on one's ability Develop flexible modes of employment Provide allowances to carers of older people Establish platforms for the elderly to look for jobs suitable for them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more part-time work opportunities Employ older people as tutors for short-term activities Review and amend current policies to protect the rights of elderly employment Improve employment consultation services Put more effort into collecting the views of the elderly Increase public awareness of the importance of social participation and the contribution of the elderly

4

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES



Dr Teresa Li
Assistant Director of Health
(Family and Elderly Health Services)

Providing diverse, accessible and affordable medical and support services is especially important when helping the elderly maintain a healthy, independent and active life.

Strengthen the medical-social collaboration

Dr Teresa Li

In all districts the score of Community support and health services was comparatively low among the eight domains of an age-friendly community, in the baseline assessment. But it was the lowest in Tsuen Wan, and the residents were vocal about it.

There are currently two general outpatient clinics run by the Hospital Authority in Tsuen Wan, the Lady Trench General Out-patient Clinic and Yan Chai Hospital General Practice Clinic. Over the last decade, the ageing population of Tsuen Wan has doubled, which has added pressure on the community health services.

Long waiting time for medical services

"The waiting list for medical services is long, but the consultation time with a doctor is short." This was the feedback from the elderly and carers

in the focus group interviews. Some respondents suggested that the Lady Trench General Out-patient Clinic should be renovated to accommodate more patients.

They also felt that although the clinic's consultation area had been enlarged, the medical consultation daily quota was still inadequate. Many also felt that the General Out-patient Clinic Telephone Appointment System is too complicated. They would like the system to be simplified and said they would be less anxious if there were a real person on the other end.

There was also some positive feedback from the older people in Tsuen Wan, they said the healthcare voucher was easy to use. They also expressed appreciation for the discounted rates offered by some private doctors.

Hoping for public dental care services in each district

Access to dental care services is the biggest concern among the elderly.

The findings of the baseline assessment indicate that a large proportion of the elderly people expressed their desire for more public dental care services in their districts. The Department of Health currently operates 11 dental clinics providing free emergency dental services, including the treatment of acute dental diseases, prescription for pain relief, treatment of oral abscess and tooth extraction.

However, not every district has a public dental clinic. The elderly have to visit private dental clinics for non-emergency dental treatments such as scaling and fillings. They can use their healthcare vouchers, but many elderly find private care too expensive and prefer to use the public dental services.

I want public dental care services in our district.



Insufficient community care services

Dr Teresa Li, Assistant Director of Health (Family and Elderly Health Services) states that there is an elderly health centre and an elderly health outreach team in each district. They not only provide primary healthcare services, but they also collaborate with different elderly service agencies to organise health promotion activities aimed at enhancing the ability of the older people to care for themselves and subsequently reduce the risk of falling ill.

The elderly taking part in the focus group interviews also mentioned that there was a shortage of community care services, especially in remote areas such as Sham Tseng. "Cross-sector collaboration can further improve community support and health services." Dr Li says that the government will strengthen medical-social collaboration in support of the "age in place" policy. Pilot projects will be implemented in the community in partnership with non-governmental organisations to provide primary healthcare services to the hidden elderly.

Community care services cover not only the elderly, but also their carers. The respondents asked for emotional support and assistance to improve their

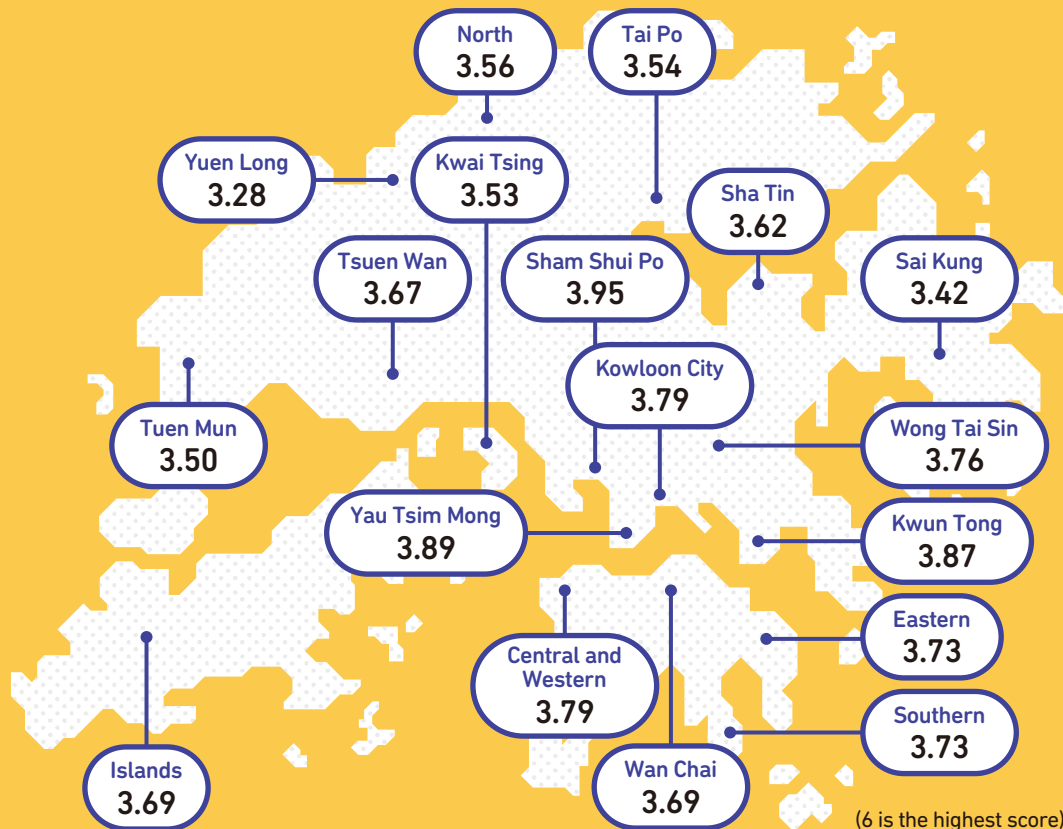
caring skills. Some carers recommended that "the opening hours of elderly centres should be extended."

To help the elderly age in place and live in an environment that they are familiar with, appropriate community support and healthcare services for the elderly are necessary. Helping them maintain their physical and mental well-being can reduce the chances they have to live in elderly homes.

4 COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES



Score of Community support and health services of the 18 districts



Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

- | Tsuen Wan | Tsuen Wan | Wan Chai |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce more barrier-free transportation services ● Include the option of speaking to a real person in the Hospital Authority's General Out-patient Clinic Telephone Appointment System where the caller can also leave their personal contact information for the staff to follow up ● Strengthen neighbourhood relationships to make the community a safer place for the elderly ● Suggest that service providers also help the elderly buy food ● Set up elderly community kitchens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote the medical social service information so as to increase the transparency ● Provide emotional support and more training for carers ● Proper handling of the public housing unit after admitting the resident into an elderly home ● Increase the number of cemeteries ● The young-olds should also be entitled to healthcare vouchers and the Community Care Fund's Dental Services for the Elderly Programme ● Renovate and expand the Lady Trench General Out-patient Clinic ● Increase the frequency of Easy-Access Transport Services to Hong Kong Adventist Hospital-Tsuen Wan ● Increase outreach services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve the promotion and quality of community care services to ensure accessibility for the elderly in the district ● Improve caregiving services ● Reduce the waiting time of health services |
| | | Tai Po |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide affordable non-public medical services ● Expand current care and support services, such as escorting elderly to the clinics ● Provide more indoor and outdoor fitness equipment for the elderly |

5 HOUSING



Dr Cheung Moon-wah
Former General Manager (Elderly Services),
Hong Kong Housing Society

With the provision of affordable, appropriately designed and safe housing complexes that are well-connected with the community and social services, the elderly can live a comfortable life which meets their diverse needs.

Help the elderly age at home

Dr Cheung Moon-wah

In Kowloon City, there is a wide variety of housing types, public and private housing estates, and old tenement buildings. Most of the old buildings which were built in the 1950s and 60s have no barrier-free facilities. Along with having no lifts, some buildings even don't have handrails on the stairways. Many flats in the old tenement buildings are subdivided into small units. "It is so small, about 50-square feet, people can't even turn around. The hygiene conditions as well as the ventilation are very poor." The elderly would also like the government to closely monitor the living conditions of these subdivided units.

The old tenement buildings may have poor living conditions but there are often plenty of shops, restaurants and clinics in the area which makes it very convenient for elderly people. Though there are more barrier-free facilities in the new private

housing estates with wider roads and more public space, they are often far from the community centre where most of the elderly services are located.

Housing scored the highest among the elderly living in public housing estates in the baseline assessment. To help improve their living conditions, different organisations provide home modification or maintenance services specifically for the elderly in Hong Kong. By installing handrails, changing light bulbs, repairing electrical wires and other minor works, they also help the elderly improve home safety.

Barrier-free at least

"The elderly in Hong Kong live in various types of housing." Former General Manager (Elderly Services) of Hong Kong Housing Society, Dr Cheung Moon-wah thinks that there lacks a concrete policy in the current

Score of Housing in Kowloon City		
OVERALL SCORE	3.70*	
Public housing estates	3.94	Including Ma Tau Wai, Lok Man, Sheung Lok, Kai Tak North, Kai Tak South, Ka Wai Chuen, Oi Man, Oi Chun
Old tenement buildings	3.43	Including Ma Tau Kok, Kowloon City, Sung Wong Toi, To Kwa Wan North, To Kwa Wan South, Hung Hom
New private housing estates	3.47	Including Ma Hang Chung, Ho Man Tin, Kadoorie, Prince Edward, Kowloon Tong, Hoi Sham, Hok Yuen Laguna Verde, Whampoa East, Whampoa West, Hung Hom Bay

* Six being the highest score that indicates the highest level of age-friendliness

development of age-friendly housing in Hong Kong and the city has yet to master the planning of housing for older people.

He says that Hong Kong should adopt the ideas of universal design, wider passages, more handrails, and standing baths, etc. "To go a step further, we can use some adaptable designs." Removable doors or walls can be included in initial building infrastructure design to facilitate possible modification in the future for the elderly to age at home.

"If universal design cannot be implemented, it should at least be barrier-free." He cites the example of the stroke-affected elderly who are wheelchair-bound. Both their homes and the housing estates that they live in must have barrier-free facilities for them to move around. "A one-or two-inch high entrance kerb is enough to confine them to their homes all day," claims Dr Cheung.

Housing and community care complement each other

Dr Cheung proposes three major directions for improvement, "home safety, community care and health care." For the elderly to have a safe and comfortable home and to continue to live independently in the community, both age-friendly

housing and community care are indispensable.

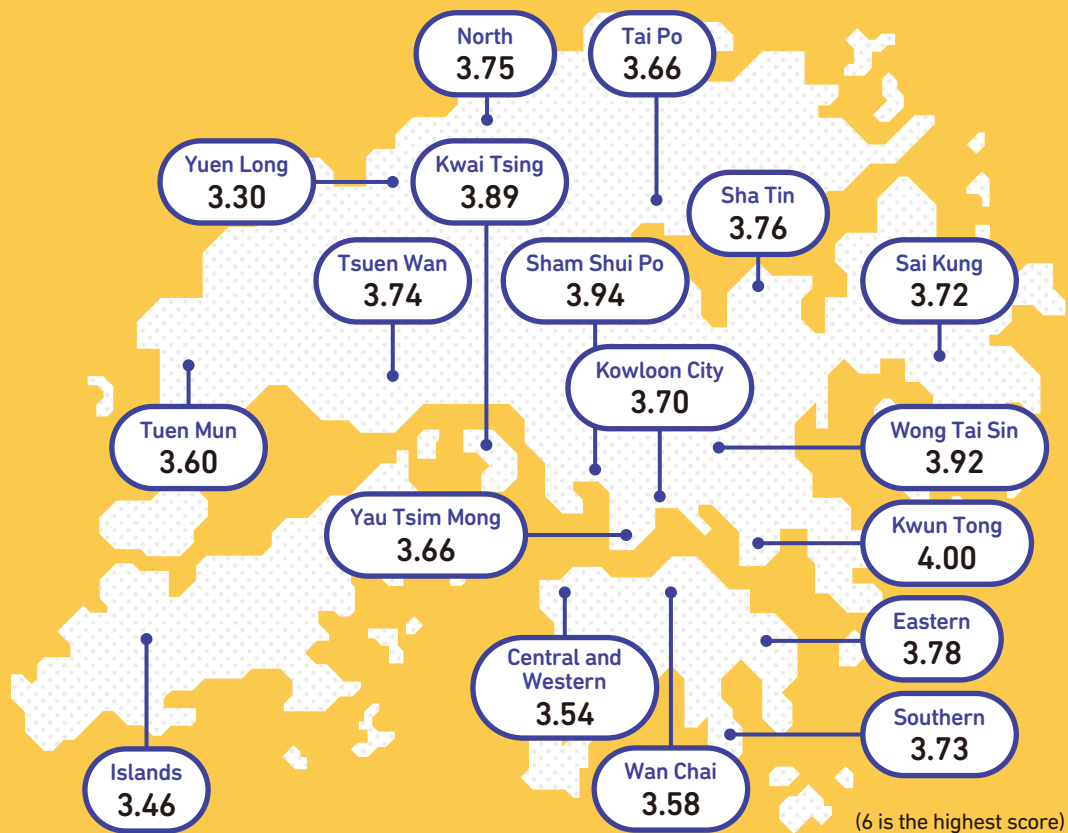
In the baseline assessment, it was proposed that the improvement of housing in Kowloon City should start upgrading the living conditions of the subdivided flats in the old tenement buildings. Dr Cheung points out that Singapore and Macau also face the same problem of aging buildings. "They should be redeveloped, but before that, assistance should be offered to the elderly residents." Older people who use wheelchairs find it hard to go out, they can apply for the stair climber service from social welfare agencies. Resources from the Community Care Fund and alternative public funding sources can be allotted to secure necessary subsidies.

"We should help the elderly age in the community, rather than sending them to the elderly homes too soon," says Dr Cheung. "More government resources are needed for the elderly homes, but essentially older citizens prefer to age at home with their families."

5 HOUSING



Score of Housing of the 18 districts



Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

Kowloon City



- Install barrier-free facilities in old tenement buildings
- Improve living conditions of subdivided flats, such as sanitation and room ventilation, etc
- Employ security guards in old tenement buildings
- Reduce waiting time for public housing

Central and Western



- Provide guidelines and subsidies for maintenance of old tenement buildings

Kwun Tong



- Add complementary facilities in the community to make sure the elderly can buy daily necessities near their homes at a reasonable price
- Change the mode of service by actively reaching-out to the singleton elderly in the community, allowing them to access the home maintenance services they need

6

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

A clean, pleasant and secure environment which has green spaces and safe pedestrian crossings, offers the living conditions for seniors to age in place.



Professor Daniel Lai
Former Director, Institute of Active Ageing,
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

The environment of Hong Kong is ageing too

Professor Daniel Lai

The Central and Western District covers Kennedy Town, Western, Shek Tong Tsui, Sai Ying Pun, Mid-Levels, Central and Sheung Wan. Most of the buildings in this district are built along the hillside with many stairs and slopes which are challenging for the elderly.

The baseline assessment of the Central and Western District showed that most adults found it tough to walk uphill, but the slopes and stairs pose an even bigger challenge for the elderly. Although there were escalators and lifts connecting different places in this district, repair works usually took place at the time when they would go out shopping with heavy bags.

Professor Daniel Lai, former Director of the Institute of Active Ageing at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, says the elderly are unable to avoid using stairs and climbing slopes on almost a daily basis due to the design and layout of the roads and buildings.

"In Hong Kong, there are laws in place to make sure the environment and building designs meet the needs of different people. However, it's not just the population of Hong Kong that is ageing, so are the environment and the building structures."

Professor Lai thinks that homes in Hong Kong

are small, particularly the ones of elderly people living on their own. If the design of the environment around them is an obstacle and stops them from going out, it will eventually impact their physical and mental health.

He says that the Government and different public and private organisations are installing more outdoor age-friendly facilities, "Many districts want to join the World Health Organization's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. District Councils which have seen the results of the baseline studies have allocated funding for small-scale projects. I believe changes will gradually be made in the near future."

Barriers overcome by stair climbers

Professor Lai points out that many older people live in old tenement buildings which have no lifts, so they go out only once a day. Unless they move elsewhere, it is difficult for them to improve their quality of life.

"70% of our centre's members live in old tenement buildings. Some of them have not gone out for five or six years," adds Lanly Yeung, Service Manager of St James' Settlement. In the Central and Western District where she works, there are at least a hundred buildings which

Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment of the Central and Western District

Extend the waterfront promenade of the Central and Western District

Provide more elderly fitness facilities in parks and ensure that they are well-maintained

Improve the accessibility of outdoor parks and spaces for exercise

Install handrails for staircases and slopes

Build more escalators and lifts; conduct proper maintenance and carry out the works at night if possible

Improve street hygiene; reduce obstructions on sidewalks and walkways

Repair uneven road surfaces

are more than 40 years old and don't have lifts. In some buildings even though there are lifts, you still have to climb a flight of stairs to access them, which also makes it difficult for the elderly people to venture out.

Yeung has seen some carers carrying the elderly people down the stairs which can be very risky. Some older people rely on the non-emergency ambulance service to go up and down the stairs, so hospital trips are the only time they leave their homes. While many have to move to an elderly home after falling ill, as they are too frail to use the stairs in their buildings.

In view of this, St James' Settlement introduced the stair climber service in 2016. "In the beginning, the elderly were not willing to use the service because they were afraid of bothering others. We reassured them that it was electric and could easily take them up and down the stairs. It took them a while to accept it. We are now looking to provide more services for the community," says Yeung.

The stair climber does not just help the elderly get to their medical appointments, it also helps them re-establish their social lives. "They have been home-bound for too long and are not interested in socialising anymore, so we take them out to watch movies, go shopping, or visit churches and temples, and even go to the graveyards to worship their ancestors."

The right attitude is the key to age-friendliness

Professor Lai believes that technology can assist the elderly, but it is more important to nurture their capacity for self-care. "The government or organisations can start by improving the infrastructure to motivate the elderly to step outside their home. The general public should also change their mindset to provide support."

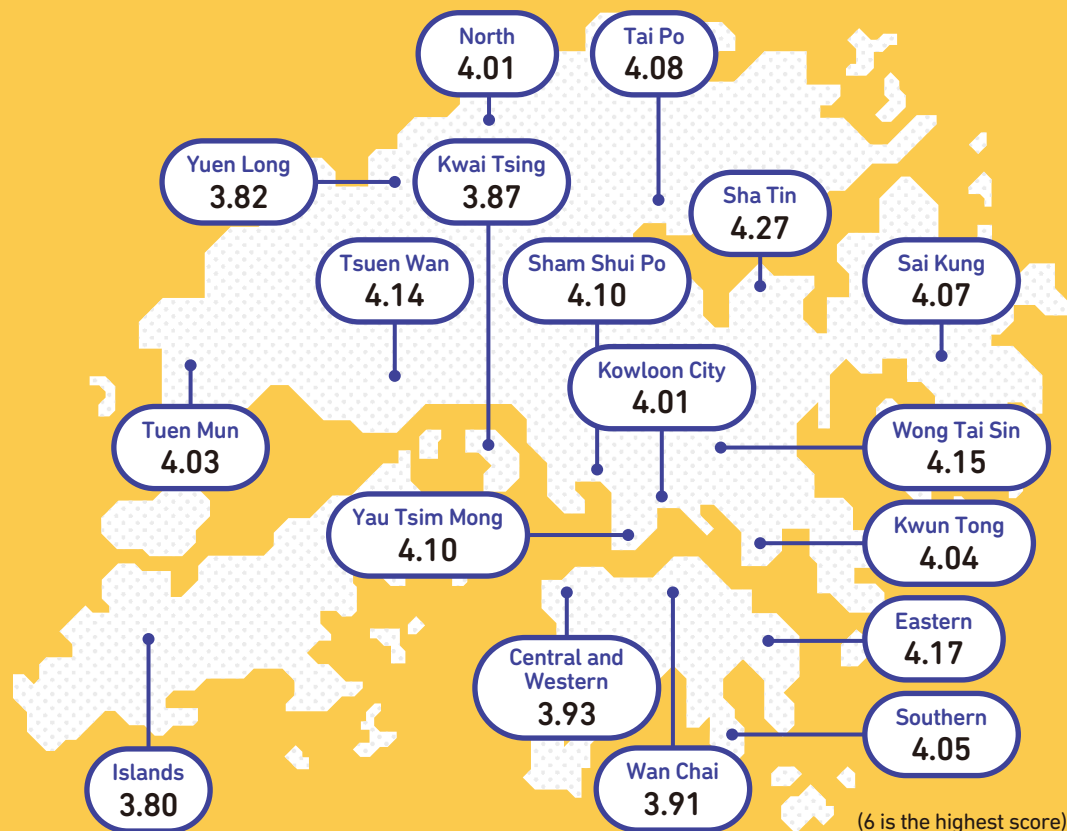
He thinks that public education is essential to draw people's attention to the needs of those around them and change their mentality. For example, Hong Kong people always seem to be in a hurry, they tend to overtake other commuters and even walk on escalators in a rush. "Some of the elderly people told me that they avoided going out because they were afraid of falling or being knocked down. You won't move faster by trying to hurry like that, but the elderly hugely appreciate those who are calm, courteous and give them space to move at their own pace."

He reminds us that such changes in our mentality not only help the elderly, but also benefit people of all ages, and those with different physical capacity or with special needs.

6 OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS



Score of Outdoor spaces and buildings of the 18 districts

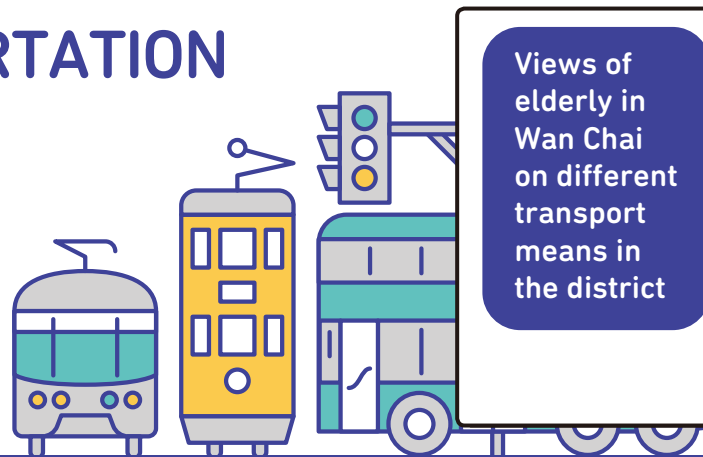


Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

Islands	Kwun Tong	Kowloon City
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Install more street lighting systems ● Install more signage for parks and roads in Tung Chung and Tai O ● Set up special service counters for the elderly in tourist areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up more shelters for bad weather on streets ● Provide additional seating areas in shopping malls for the elderly; install automatic doors to make it more accessible for wheelchairs ● Improve the hygiene of public toilets and facilities. Squat toilets are particularly inconvenient for the elderly ● Install more elderly fitness facilities and benches in parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District Councils and government departments should work together to address obstructions on walkways and sidewalks imposed by shops ● Organise seminars for the elderly to make recommendations on outdoor spaces

7 TRANSPORTATION

Accessible, safe and affordable public transportation enables residents to gain access to medical and social services, remain engaged with their community, as well as age actively.



Views of elderly in Wan Chai on different transport means in the district

TRAM Advantage

- Affordable, only HKD1.2 per trip
- Easy to get on and off
- Many stops

Improvement needed

- Those who do not use Octopus Card, can find it hard to get ten or twenty cent coins to pay the fare
- Shopping bags often get caught on the old tram turnstiles, posing a danger to elderly travelers
- You need to push hard with strength to open the doors on the new trams
- The long benches in the lower deck are too low. Some of the elderly passengers find it difficult to stand up after sitting down and could get injured
- Sometimes there are pickpockets on the trams
- Some stops have no pedestrian shelters, making it difficult for elderly to wait for the trams, and get off

MTR Advantage

- Easy access to many districts
- Avoid traffic congestion and road blocks

Improvement needed

- Long distances from platforms to exits
- The signage can be confusing
- It can be hard for the elderly to navigate the train line Interchanges

BUS Advantage

- Very user-friendly for the elderly

Improvement needed

- After the opening of the West Island Line, the frequency of the buses has been reduced which is inconvenient for those who relied on them

Good transportation in the neighbourhood is essential

Professor Terry Lum



Professor Terry Lum
Associate Director, Sau Po Centre of Ageing,
The University of Hong Kong

In Wan Chai, the elderly appreciates the well-connected public transport network the most. According to the baseline assessment conducted by The University of Hong Kong Sau Po Centre on Ageing, accessibility of transportation received the highest score among the elderly in Wan Chai District, which covers Causeway Bay, Wan Chai, Happy Valley, Canal Road and Tai Hang.

Respondents said, "The transportation network in Causeway Bay is particularly convenient for the elderly because it's well-linked to all districts."

Many of the residents in Wan Chai district commended the variety of public transport available. Along with buses and the MTR, there are also trams which are unique to Hong Kong Island. However, some respondents of the baseline assessment complained that the public transportation waiting areas were too cramped. The shelters are insufficient and there are not enough

seats, exposing those waiting to the sun and rain.

The elderly respondents also mentioned other problems, such as the obstruction of pavements by lorries unloading outside Wanchai Market and on Canal Road. Traffic congestion on Tin Lok Lane and Wan Chai Road was another concern. While in Causeway Bay, they found that many pedestrians and drivers did not follow the traffic rules. All these posed dangers to the elderly when crossing roads.

The society should learn to slow down

"Age-friendly is not only about taking care of the elderly but also about giving them the chance to voice out their opinions." Professor Terry Lum, Associate

Director of the HKU Sau Po Centre of Ageing says that twenty years ago when he was studying this subject, it was merely research but now it's become part of his experience. He says he knows what it's like to be refused service by a taxi driver when trying to take his elderly parents to the doctor. "We are always in a hurry and there is a lack of tolerance. One-third of Hong Kong's population will soon be elderly, it is time to slow down and learn more about their needs."

Professor Lum believes that the JCAFC Project gives the elderly a platform to voice out their concerns. For example, the Southern District participants produced a microfilm about their transportation needs.

"Transportation planning used to focus only on economic development." As the main transportation network, railways bring a large population from one area to another for work. "But the elderly's needs are different. They do not have to commute long distances every day. The transportation around their living area is more important because it's used for their daily well-being - to go see a doctor, to exercise, for grocery shopping, or just to socialise with friends and relatives."

Professor Lum cites the example of Kennedy Town. After the MTR line to Kennedy Town came

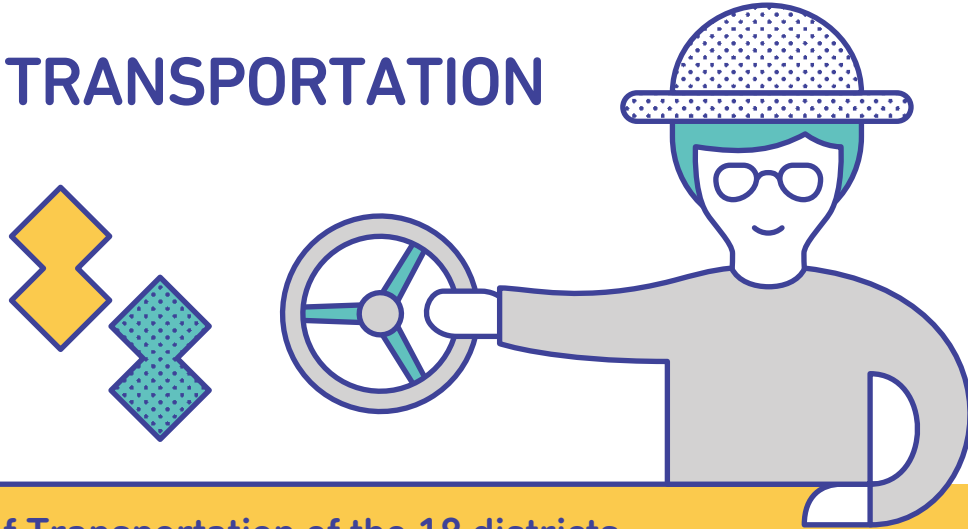
into service, it became convenient for the young-olds to commute to other districts, but some of the older people complained that the subsequent transportation rationalisation led to a cancellation of bus and minibus lines. The walking distances in the MTR stations also proved to be too much for the elderly. In other words, these transportation improvements actually hindered their daily lives.

Subsidy for more services

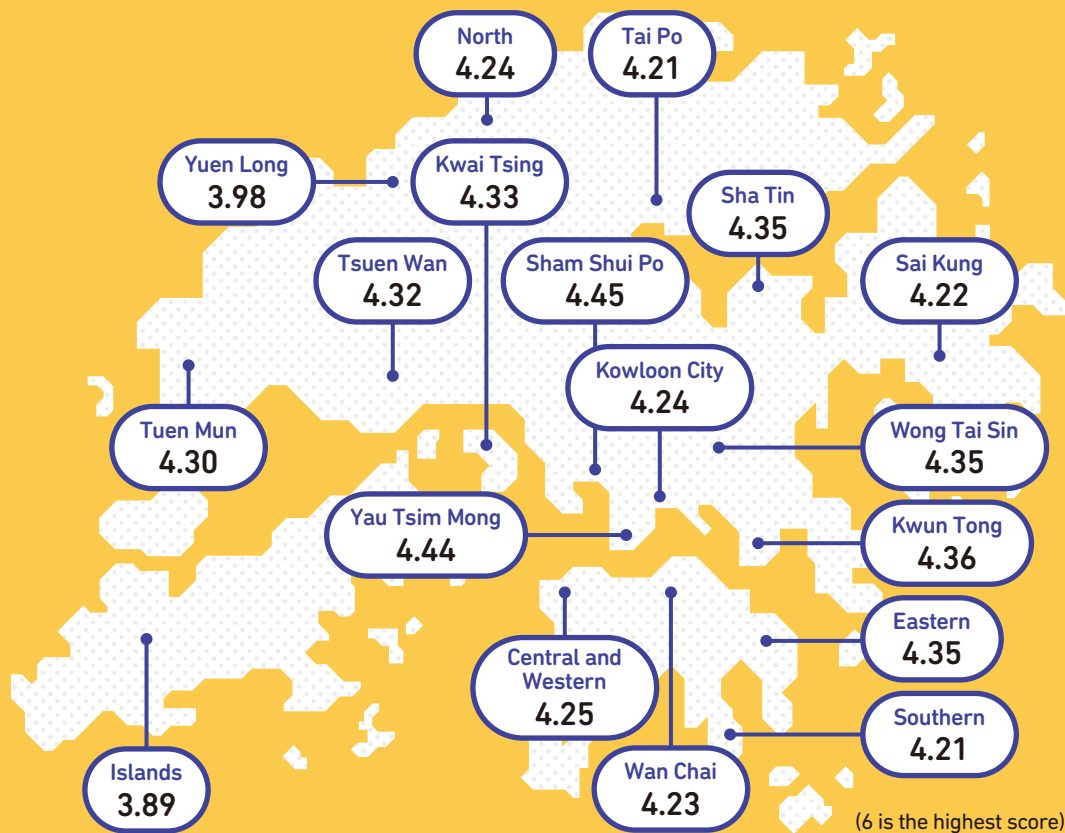
"There are always divergences in services. The government can subsidise corporations to enhance their services, it can also provide subsidies for the elderly." Professor Lum mentions the taxi services of DiamondCab and SynCab, which makes getting around more pleasant and convenient for the elderly.

Like the health vouchers, the travel subsidy similarly allows the elderly to choose the services they prefer. With the growing demand, the expectation is that more drivers will provide competitive and better quality services. This is especially relevant for the elderly in wheelchairs. They will no longer have to worry about being refused service by taxi drivers.

7 TRANSPORTATION



Score of Transportation of the 18 districts



Age-friendly buses

The baseline assessment showed that many of the respondents commended the bus services. Since 2010, Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited have joined hands with the elderly in the Central and Western District and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Design Public Design Lab to design bus compartments to meet the elderly's needs.

After considering their opinion, 4 priority seats have been added to each bus, handrails have

been installed near the rear door and next to the driver. A drop-off signal light has been installed in the middle of the lower deck.

These age-friendly measures have won an award from the Hong Kong Council of Social Service. "The goal of the company is to ensure that the bus service is accessible for all. The transportation needs of the elderly are also of great importance. Therefore, barrier-free facilities have been introduced on our vehicles," says William Chung, Head of Operations of Citybus Limited.

Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

Islands	Kowloon City	Kwun Tong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen civic education in Tung Chung to raise public awareness about road safety for the elderly Strengthen bus services for the elderly in Cheung Chau Bring in single decker buses with wheelchair accessibility in Tung Chung Review the public transport system of Lantau Island 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide travel subsidy to the young-olds aged 50-64 to encourage them to participate in activities in different districts Build communication channels for the elderly to express their views on transportation Strengthen community education on road safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance public transport services at the mid-levels of Kwun Tong, such as increasing bus frequency while maintaining the same service level even during off-peak hours Increase barrier-free passages and facilities connected to the MTR stations Reduce traffic congestion and pay special attention to traffic accident black spots Provide opportunities for the elderly to express their views to the government or District Councils

8

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Distribution of information to older people in a timely, convenient and affordable manner helps prevent social exclusion of the elderly.



Mr Chua Hoi-wai
Chief Executive, Hong Kong Council of Social Service

The digital gap should be removed

Mr Chua Hoi-wai

The elderly in Tai Po claimed that it was difficult to use the internet. "The connection is slow and the fees are expensive."

Tai Po is surrounded on three sides by mountains, Pat Sin Leng, Cloudy Hill, Tai Mo Shan and Grassy Hill. Even though the population resides predominantly in the Tai Po New Town, there are also numerous rural villages.

According to the baseline assessment conducted by CUHK Jockey Club Institute of Ageing, communication and information exchange in these remote areas was vastly different from that in the town centre. "We feel isolated," said a respondent.

There are about 300 villages in remote areas of Hong Kong which currently only have access to slower broadband services which use copper wire telephone lines and are susceptible to disruption by typhoons and rain.

Concern about internet fraud

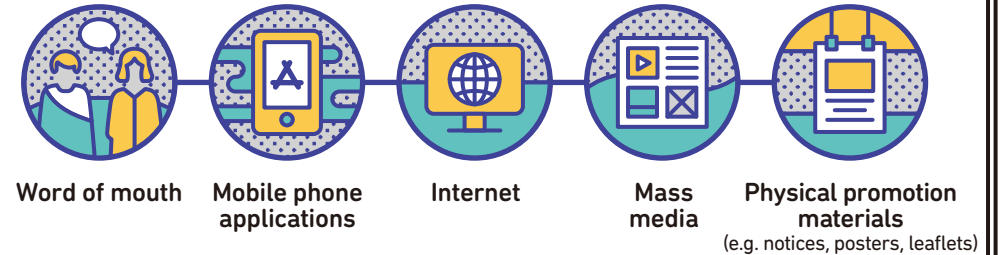
Even in the urban areas, there are relatively

fewer elderly people using the internet. According to the Census and Statistics Department findings in 2012, more than 75% of the population had a personal computer at home connected to the internet, but only 15% of them were aged 45 or above.

"The elderly tend to access information via traditional media as it can be too challenging for less educated older people to master new technologies," according to Chua Hoi-wai, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service. In summary he says the digital barriers exist due to "a lack of knowledge and technical support, inability to afford the fees, myths about the internet."

The elderly usually access the internet through smart phones. But there are plenty of skills they need to learn including downloading an application, software updates and even general usage. Another reason for the digital barrier is the expenses involved. A smartphone or a tablet could cost at least a few thousand dollars which may be

Existing channels to disseminate information to the elderly



too expensive for much of the elderly population.

"When the hardware is damaged, they worry about repairing and the associated charges." Chua says that older people are particularly concerned about using too much mobile data unintentionally which incurs additional cost. Because of this, they prefer not to use the internet.

Even when the infrastructure is available, many of the elderly who don't know enough about the Internet, are still hesitant about using it. Chua Hoi-wai says, "There are rumors about people being cheated on the internet. These stories are putting the elderly off from picking up a new habit." Chua admits that the internet is full of fake news, and it can be hard for the elderly to find a reliable source. The elderly have a real concern about being cheated or having their personal data leaked.

Changing the way of learning

To encourage older people to use new technologies, the baseline assessment findings focused on the functionalities. "You can use Whatsapp to make free calls to your children living abroad. Many elderly are thrilled to learn about this function," said a respondent. Older people attach more importance to practicality when learning new technologies. They will

only be motivated and make the effort to learn if the technologies are useful to them.

Chua says that training resources to enhance the elderly's knowledge and technical skills should be provided. Most of the elderly prefer face-to-face teaching and live demonstrations. He suggests that people the elderly trust, like the staff from the centres, can introduce the various types of information technology.

Digital and video teaching materials should be produced to fit the elderly' needs. For example, the narration should be in a slower pace and subtitles in bigger font size. The contents should also be designed to meet their competence and interests so that they are willing to carry on learning.

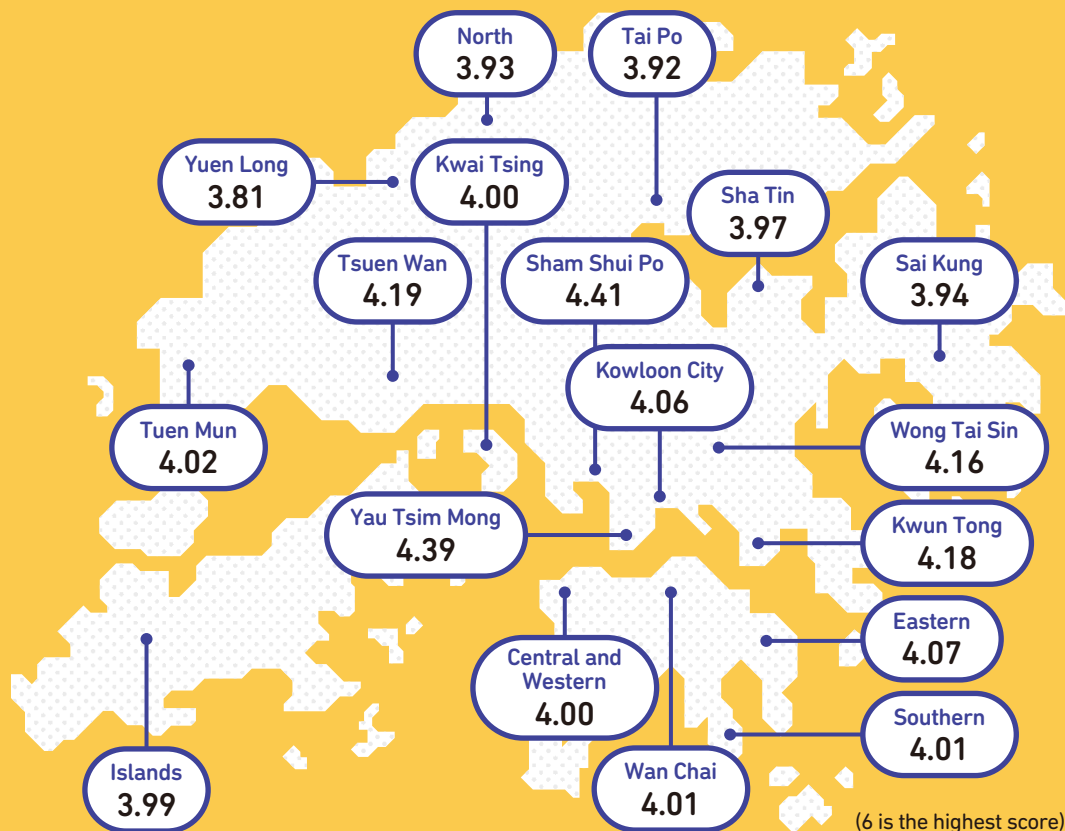
In addition, Chua recommends offering the elderly affordable hardware, internet service plans and maintenance support. If there are people with related knowledge and skills to provide consultation and follow-up services, the elderly would feel more confident about using the internet.

8

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION



Score of Communication and information of the 18 districts



Recommendations for improvement by respondents of baseline assessment

Tai Po	Kowloon City	Tsuen Wan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clearer, more updated and accessible promotion of activities in the district ● Strengthen promotion of all activities ● Assist the elderly in learning to use computers and smart devices ● Enhance network coverage and offer internet service plans at competitive prices for rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen age-friendly information dissemination at a district level via mass media and community organisations ● Organise programmes for youngsters to teach the elderly how to use smart devices ● The Telephone Appointment System should add an option of "talking to a real person" for the elderly ● Organise activities to promote usage of the Telephone Appointment System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make use of community networks to help the elderly verify authenticity of information on the internet ● Teach the elderly to use instant messaging apps ● Increase free wi-fi hotspots or provide special internet service plans for the elderly ● Recycle old smartphones and donate to the elderly in need ● Collate information on relevant issues for the older people and their families

Project Ambassador Lam Chi-ling

“Training up and raising skills to contribute to the community.”

The project ambassadors promote the concept of an age-friendly city in the community and encourage the public to take part in the JCAFC Project.



“With an ageing population, it is very important to bring in facilities suitable for the elderly,” says 81-year-old Lam Chi-ling.

Lam Chi-ling joined the Central and Western District Age-friendly Working Group (“Working Group”) ten years ago. The group promotes age-friendly transportation and they have even borrowed a bus to conduct field studies. When Lam sees the four priority seats as well as the handrails at the entrance and exit of the buses, she knows that the recommendations by Working Group have been implemented.

“For elderly, it would be more convenient to socialise within the community and no need to change transportation when seeing the doctor,” says Lam.

Lam has been a JCAFC project ambassador since 2017. “I want more people to know about our work in improving age-friendliness in the Central and Western District.”

Whenever the ambassadors are in their orange uniforms, they feel empowered to promote age-friendliness and have more confidence when speaking to the public.

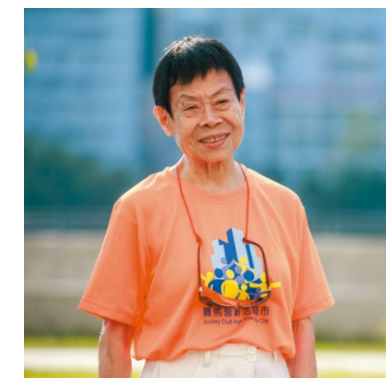
She attended training sessions given by Professor Terry Lum, Associate Director of the HKU Sau Po Centre of Ageing at The University of Hong Kong.

“We knew there were lots of slopes and stairs in the Central and Western District. We’ve learnt more about urban planning from Professor Lum. There are problems in the design of our buildings and roads which need to be addressed. For example, we can install stair climbers in old tenement buildings which have no lifts to help the mobility-impaired elderly,” says Lam.

Lam is pleased that the Central and Western District joined the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in early 2018. As a project ambassador, Lam has more opportunities to talk and share with the public and has even received media interviews which have sharpened her communication skills, so now she is no longer afraid. “There is no fear when you are striving for something worthy,” says Lam.

Project Ambassador Mak Wai-lai

“It’s everyone’s responsibility to build an age-friendly city”.



75-year-old Mak Wai-lai has taken part in a lot of voluntary work since she retired, such as answering the enquiry hotline for the Cancer Fund and visiting patients in Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital. “To be involved in community work and help others, you must first enhance your skills.”

Mak says the training workshop for the JCAFC project ambassadors has broadened her knowledge of the ageing population and instilled the concept of an age-friendly city. She assisted in the community exhibition in which she found that some of the elderly in her community were concerned about dental health. She is emphatic that “The government should provide public dental services.”

Many elderly people need dental care but cannot afford the private services which can cost a few hundred dollars for each consultation. “These charges cannot be covered by the Old Age Living Allowance.”

Mak has lived in Sha Tin for more than 20 years and admits that she was not concerned about the community affairs before. “I felt that the community had nothing to do with me.”

Since she has become a project ambassador, she has started paying more attention to the

environment within the community, while also encouraging her friends to get involved.

“The project is not just for a few of us but it concerns every member of the community.” Mak believes that everyone should contribute to make the community a better place to live.

“I am glad to offer my time as long as I am healthy enough to participate.”

Mak has earned unexpected rewards by taking part in various activities. “I’ve made more friends.” They go camping and fishing, and sometimes even travel together. Mak can communicate well with the youngsters on a large range of topics, from photo taking to film editing. “I don’t feel like I’m old. A person who enjoys learning does not grow old. I feel like I am the person I was in my younger days,” She says earnestly.

Project Ambassador Chui Kwan-hung

“Improving the community through neighbourhood interaction.”



Chui Kwan-hung, is nearly 70 years old, he used to be a chef working abroad and has been to many countries. He recalls that there were times when he woke up in the middle of the night and did not know where he was. “The work was of course hard, but what was most difficult was loneliness.” After he retired, he started visiting the elderly. “They always told us that they met us more frequently than their children.”

Chui became a JCAFC project ambassador in 2018. Health@Community was the first district-based programme he joined. After the training, the ambassadors designed age-friendly exercises together with nursing students and physiotherapists to encourage older people to exercise in order to prevent the three high risks: high blood pressure, high blood sugar and high blood lipids. “We have tried each of the movements to make sure they are easy for the elderly to master.”

They were also involved in creating light meal recipes. When they visited the older people, they introduced both the exercises and the recipes. “I want our visits to bring more benefits and be more constructive rather than just chatting with them,” says Chui.

Chui says living in Kwun Tong has many advantages except for its health care services. Private clinics are expensive but it is difficult to make appointments for public services. If an elderly person

fails to see a doctor in time, his or her condition may worsen. “That is why video consultation is very useful.”

Under the programme, the ambassadors visited the homes of the elderly participants to set up a camera which facilitates videoconferencing with health professionals, for example consulting the pharmacist on drug management. Chui says that this helps the elderly in a very practical way.

Many older people like deep-fried and high-fat food which can raise blood cholesterol. It takes some skills to convince them to avoid these types of food. “As they can be very resistant, you have to adopt an alternative approach when talking to them. For example, I would tell them to have two healthy meals for every ten meals.”

An elderly health management network has been built in the community through this kind of knowledge sharing among peers. “Neighbour support is very important. If we foster good relationships, we can help each other.”

Project Ambassador Chui Yuk-ha

“Elderly play an important part in building an age-friendly city.”



Chui Yuk-ha, who has just reached her seventies, had made plans for her life after retirement, including learning to swim and taking up Chinese painting. “I’ve learnt to play the harmonica recently,” she laughs. “I could not help but praise myself for being so smart.” She became a JCAFC project ambassador in 2017. She led a guided tour for exchange students from the Lingnan University and took the role of consultant for students on giving advice on choosing gifts for the elderly.

Chui Yuk-ha has lived in Tsuen Wan for more than a decade. “This is a city of footbridges which make it accessible for pedestrians in many places. I feel so proud of it.” When she led the exchange students for a guided tour in Tsuen Wan, she was touched by the compliments they gave. “I was able to explain to the foreigners what an age-friendly city meant and showed them how an elderly person could contribute to society.”

She laments that the ageing population is an issue which concerns everyone. An age-friendly city not only benefits the elderly but also youngsters because they will also grow old one day. “Everyone will reap the benefits.”

She insists that it is very important for the elderly to take part in community activities. “Older people always complain about being bored. But if you are willing to go out, you will never be bored.”

Chui is not only active, she is also aware of the community environment. “I live in Tsuen Wan and used to go out only to shop and dine at restaurants. I now pay attention to whether the road is slippery or the road surface is uneven. I also look around to see if there is any barrier-free passage.” She also cares about the elderly living in the district. “I’ll stay alert when I get on or off a vehicle. I’ll let older people get on first or give them a hand.”

According to Chui, the biggest reward in being a JCAFC project ambassador is that she is encouraged to examine her own community and express her views, which contributes to the improvement of the community.

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From the perspective of the elderly, even one stair step can be a barrier. Some fear that people are looking at their mobile phones and may bump into them. Others wish to continue to work after retirement.

Can Hong Kong become an age friendly city for elderly to live comfortably and grow old?



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