

### Editor's Note

Linda Lam

Welcome to the Summer issue of HKPGA Newsletter. After the turmoil due to recent SARS epidemic, we eventually see our community pick up the momentum to return to normal. While hit by the outbreak hard, we all learn to treasure every moment we share with our families and friends. In keeping with this, Prof Arie's article reminds us of the successful meeting we had last winter, an extraordinary occasion filled with friendship and laughter. As the Scientific Chair, I also take this opportunity to report on the "scientific side" of this meeting. In this issue, you will also find an informative article from Ms Susan Frade, who writes

on "Helping Alzheimer associations to help themselves". Meanwhile, Ms Claudia Lai and Mr Sunny Wan introduce to us an award-winning web based resource center, the "Ginkgo", which caters for the needs of both lay persons as well as the health care professionals. Don't miss the abstracts of the projects of Ms Cybbie Mok, Ms Suk-ling Ma, and Ms Wing-ki Tai, especially if you are interested in entering the HKPGA Research Awards Competition this year. Please enjoy these special articles in addition to the regular contributions from our members. Lastly, you are very much welcome to contribute to the Newsletter by passing your articles to [hkpga@hongkong.com](mailto:hkpga@hongkong.com). Looking forward to hearing from you.

## The IPA meeting in Hong Kong - Much More than 'Dementia, Depression and Suicide'!

Asked for a personal view of the meetings in Hong Kong, I look back after some months, peering through a warm and delightful haze of hospitality and friendship. My recollection of some of the more serious parts of the meeting may have waned a little under the glow of other pleasant memories.

Fortunately, both meetings - the Korean pre-meeting, and the IPA meeting - were so good and so memorable that many features shine out. But the most vivid memories are of the warmth of friends, old and new. As soon as I arrived, Cybbie Mok and Wai Chi Chan tackled with charm the task of looking after this travelling oldie. Soon there came highlights such as my visit to the Jockey Club Centre for Positive Ageing. There I made new friends, and saw so much that is memorable - a wealth of good, sensible, practical ideas, married with compassionate and effective care. To the staff - and to Doris Ho and the Jockey Club - I take off my hat. This centre will be, indeed is already becoming, a beacon of good ideas and good practice for the world.

Then the pleasure of spending time with my old friend Helen Chiu and with other friends, along with Linda Lam and Siu Wah Li, in the psychogeriatric teams at CUHK, and the following day at Castle Peak Hospital, and more friends. And a preview of Helen's new academic accommodation, which I believe is now happily occupied.



*Prof Alistair Burns and Prof Helen Chiu accompanied by a traditional "Chinese Lion"*

Tom Arie, CBE, FRCP, FRCPsych, FFPHM  
Professor Emeritus of Health Care of the Elderly  
University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

The next day came the meeting with Korean colleagues, an excellent occasion. I don't know which impressed me most - the quality of the presentations, the excellence of people's English, the friendliness, or the reminder of the astonishing pace of industrialisation, social change, and ageing in Korea, which were all so well described, along with much good work being done in our field. And there was a fine guest presentation by Yeates Conwell, who broke new ground in examining the relationship between dementia and suicide. The latter grim topic - suicide - is now a key area of collaboration between colleagues in Hong Kong, America and Australia. Maybe Korea will join in too?

Soon people were arriving from far and wide. More receptions, more lovely eating - and lots of hugs of reunion.

The IPA meeting was a model of Hong Kong and IPA efficiency. How to pick the highlights? Perhaps the most encouraging feature was that good work in psychogeriatrics, usually very well presented, now comes from so many South East Asian countries. Dementia, depression and suicide in old age are recognised as the global sources of misery that they are, and the research and service



*The icon of IPA meetings: Sandy's performance!*



*On behalf of HKPGA, Prof Helen Chiu welcomed local and overseas delegates at the opening ceremony*

responses are varied and positive - though still alas with many frustrations. The public lecture by Dr Wah Fat Chan on Early Detection of Dementia was in Cantonese, so not quite for me - but it continued IPA's excellent tradition of reaching out to a wider audience.

Alistair Burns, gave a fine overview of his team's research, on treatments, and on services. Delivery of services was the subject also

of an excellent symposium, with contributions from China and Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea and Thailand, ably chaired by Vijay Chandra from WHO. Such a symposium would have been unimaginable in the early days of IPA.

Listing all the good lectures would almost amount to a recitation of the whole programme, which was a fine mixture of information and of ideas, a well balanced, broadly-based programme, and with opportunities for the younger workers to be heard, along with the older hands.

But there was also plenty of interaction and 'networking' between formal sessions, and much catching up with old friends. I enjoyed a little sortie out to Causeway Bay, a favourite shopping and strolling spot for me from past visits, with John Snowdon from Sydney. Dare I reveal that we met quite a few delegates there, who like us were snatching a short absence



*Ms Jess Leung's yangqin performance was one of the highlights of the gala dinner*

from the conference proper!

The conference hotel, with its lawn and marquees made a fine setting for huddles for gossip, and, perhaps for setting up future collaborations. In the big marquee I met again a colleague from Singapore, Kua Ee Hoek, who was in Nottingham nearly 20 years ago. He, and gave me a copy of the novel he has written - 'Listening to Letter from America', about a group of old people in a day hospital: I recommend it!

Last - who will forget the dinner, with the amazing lion dance, the cabaret talent from local services staff, Sandy Finkel's traditional show, good food, conviviality - and even a certain performing professor, who appeared to be enjoying himself!

Against the background of present anxious concern about SARS which currently besets Hong Kong, it is especially good to recall that happy week. I fervently hope that by the time this piece appears, cause for this concern will have receded.

I came back laden with souvenirs (thank you, Dr Ip, for my key-ring light, which has regularly pierced the winter darkness of Norfolk!) In keeping with good psychogeriatric practice, there was excellent follow-up. My email is full of lovely messages from friends, like Liliane Chan and Daphne Law and others, who sent me lots of pictures. So here I sit at my computer, thinking of you all - and calling up the pictures and the memories. Thank you again - and again!



Tom Arie

*Hurrah! We ran into Tom, Alistair and Helen at the Meeting!*

## IPA Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting: Hong Kong

Linda Lam  
Scientific Chair  
IPA Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting

The Asia Pacific Regional Meeting of the International Psychogeriatric Association (2002) was held at the Gold Coast Resort in Hong Kong from 23 to 26 October 2002. It was a truly memorable event as over 500 delegates from all over the world participated in this Meeting. During those few days, leading world experts in the field of geriatric psychiatry presented their work and shared their experience for the betterment of psychiatric care for the elders.

The conference themes were thoughtfully chosen to represent major topics of global interests. The keynote speeches by Profs Tom Arie, Alistair Burns and Jeffery Cummings stimulated a strong appetite for discussion. Fortunately, this quest for knowledge was filled by the plenary speakers who brought the delegates with cutting edge

information about psychogeriatric research and services. On 24 October, topics related to elderly suicide prevention services and current researches were thoroughly discussed. It was followed by the excellent sessions on dementia and geriatric depression on 25 and 26 October 2002 respectively. Furthermore, it would not be wrong to say that the Conference has been one of the most successful meetings when professionals from the West and East met. The impacts of cultures on geriatric mental health were particularly relevant and intensely discussed. Mental Health Professionals devoted to the work for elders found themselves not alone, people from all over the globe actually worked hard with the same goals. The discussion forum brought to life how ideas could be shared and exchanged.

The scientific meeting would not be complete without consideration into the biological needs. The conference was held in the midst of a delightful resort at the best time of the year. It is always tempting to bathe oneself in the warm late autumn sun and has a chat with friends in the open air. Although the marquee was filled with delightful specialties everyday, the lunch symposia were so attractive that one felt obliged to attend.

As part of the organizing team, we were very conscious to make sure that everything was scheduled. On the other hand, we are also overjoyed at the hot discussion and participation. It is also a place when old friends meet and new friendships began. We hope that the spirits of world collaborations will prosper and flourish in the future.



*Prof Cumming's lecture drew a large crowd out of the Marquee!*

## Helping Alzheimer associations to help themselves



### Alzheimer's Disease International

Most Alzheimer associations are started by family carers of people with dementia. In developing countries where there is often little social and health support available to people with dementia and their families, the role of the Alzheimer association is vital.

Currently 60 such Alzheimer associations throughout the world come together under the umbrella of Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI). Founded in 1984, ADI is registered not-for-profit organisation in the US and received in official relations status with the World Health Organization in 1995.

ADI's key aims are to:

- strengthen the organisational capacity of Alzheimer associations
- encourage the formation of new Alzheimer associations
- and raise global awareness about dementia

ADI firmly believes that stronger Alzheimer associations are better able to meet the needs of people with dementia and their families.

Currently there are about 18 million people in the world with dementia. This figure is set to rise to 34 million by the year 2025. Much of this increase is attributed to rapid population growth throughout Latin America and Asia and a marked increase



*World Alzheimer's Day, China*



*Run for ADAP, the Philippines*

in life expectancy. In just 20 years time the total number of people aged over 60 in India and China combined will exceed the numbers of people aged over 60 in all the world's developed countries put together. There is no doubt that dementia will have tremendous implications for families and health and social services in developing countries.

So how is ADI working towards making Alzheimer associations, such as the Hong Kong Alzheimer's Disease and Brain Failure Association, more effective?

ADI concentrates on five main areas of activity throughout the year:

1. The Alzheimer University training programme - this series of workshops have been designed to build organisational capacity by focusing on the fundamental issues of setting up and running an association. Now in its third year, many countries in the Asia Pacific region have attended including India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Thailand. Topics covered include identifying aims, the role of the board, how to raise awareness and basic fundraising.
2. World Alzheimer's Day(tm) (observed on 21 September each year) is an opportunity to increase global awareness about dementia and for Alzheimer associations to raise their own profile. ADI co-ordinates the production and distribution of materials. This enables members with no resources to print their own materials to also mark the day. The theme for this year's campaign is 'Old age or disease? Recognising dementia' - the key message being that dementia is caused by a disease and that memory problems are not a normal part of ageing.
3. ADI's annual international conference is an opportunity for staff and volunteers from the host Alzheimer

Susan Frade  
Membership and Communications Officer  
Alzheimer's Disease International

association, medical professionals, carers and people with dementia to come together to share and learn from one another. The programme for last year's conference, hosted by our member in Spain (23-26 October), covers quality of life issues, the global impact of dementia and the importance of design/architecture in dementia care. For more information visit [www.alzheimer2002.com](http://www.alzheimer2002.com)

4. Providing accurate, reliable and readily available information is a vital way of disseminating key messages and also dispelling myths that surround dementia. ADI produces a number of factsheets and booklets - some aimed at medical professionals, others at the staff/volunteers of Alzheimer associations and a few at carers. In the age of technology, our website [www.alz.co.uk](http://www.alz.co.uk) is fast becoming people's first point of contact with ADI.
5. Supporting the work of the 10/66 Dementia Research Group is a growing priority for ADI. The group, led by Dr Martin Prince of the Institute of Psychiatry in London, UK, proactively trains researchers to carry out prevalence studies in developing countries. The groups gets its name from the fact that less than 10% of all population based research into



*10/66 researcher interviewing local people, India*

dementia has been directed towards the 66% or more of all people with dementia who live in developing countries.

The group has been involved in two main pilot studies: developing methods of diagnosing dementia in population based research that are not biased by culture or education; and looking at the care arrangements for people with dementia and the impact of these on carers. Results of these studies can be found at [www.alz.co.uk/1066/research](http://www.alz.co.uk/1066/research)

ADI is truly committed to supporting the work of our existing members and encouraging the formation of new ones. We recognise that our newer members have come from developing countries and this is where future

members will come from. In addition, ADI is growing to reflect the reality of the 10/66 Dementia Research Group that two-thirds of people with dementia live in developing countries.

For more information about ADI contact:

ADI, 45-46 Lower Marsh, London, SE1 7RG, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 7620 3011; fax: +44 (0)20 7401 7351

email: [adi@alz.co.uk](mailto:adi@alz.co.uk); web: [www.alz.co.uk](http://www.alz.co.uk)

## Council News

Wai-chi Chan

The first Korean Association for Geriatric Psychiatry - Hong Kong Psychogeriatric Association Joint Meeting was held on 22 October 2002 at the Multi-purpose Hall of Castle Peak Hospital. It was well attended by local delegates and colleagues from Korea. After the opening addresses made by Prof Jung Ho Lee, KAGP President, and Prof Helen Chiu, HKPGA President, our keynote speaker Prof Tom Arie gave us an impressive talk on "A Working Life with Dementia". It was followed by enlightening lectures delivered by local and Korean plenary speakers, including Prof Jonghan Park, Drs Tak-kwan Kong, Byeong Kil Yeon, and Pey-chyou Pan. The Joint Meeting was "flavoured" with an interesting luncheon roundtable. It offered an excellent opportunity for delegates to exchange their views and ideas while enjoying Chinese delicacy. We look forward to the second KAGP - HKPGA Joint Meeting in the near future. Will it be in Korea next time?



*Participants of KAGP-HKPGA Joint Meeting*

The 4<sup>th</sup> HKPGA Annual Scientific Symposium was held at the same venue after the KAGP - HKPGA Joint Meeting on 22 October 2002. We were privileged to have Prof Yeates Conwell from University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry of US to be the keynote speaker, and Dr Wah-fat Chan as the moderator. Prof Conwell shared with the participants his precious opinions

about "Aging, Dementia, and Suicide: Conceptual and Empirical Links". Members thoroughly enjoyed Prof Conwell's talk, which stimulated an intensive discussion and exchange of ideas among delegates. The busy



*Prof Jung Ho Lee welcomed delegates from Korea and Hong Kong*

day was concluded by the 4<sup>th</sup> HKPGA Annual General Meeting. Members passed unanimously votes of thanks to our Honorary Legal Advisor Mr Paul Ng, and Honorary Auditor Mr William Po.

Winners of the 2002 HKPGA Research Awards were as follows:

#### HKPGA/Pfizer Research Award

Functional profile of Chinese elderly with Alzheimer's disease: a validation study on the Disability Assessment for Dementia (Chinese version)

Ms Cycbie Ching-man Mok

#### HKPGA Postgraduate Research Award

Association between tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  promoter polymorphism and Alzheimer's disease

Ms Suk-ling Ma

#### HKPGA Undergraduate Research Award

Visual hallucinations in Dementia

Wing-ki Tai

The Council would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to referees for 2002 HKPGA Research Awards, including Prof Tome Arie, Prof CN Chen, Dr PC Pan, and Dr Freedom Leung, for their continuous support.



Fourth HKPGA Annual General Meeting

Over 500 delegates from 30 countries joined the International Psychogeriatric Association Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on 23 - 26 October 2002. This Meeting was held at the picturesque Gold Coast Hotel. Prominent speakers from around the world shared with the participants from cutting edge advances, policy objectives to cultural issues. Profs Tome Arie and Linda Lam gave us insightful review of the scientific as well as social programmes of the Meeting.

Their contributions were on page 1 and 2 respectively.

The Council would like to invite members to enter the HKPGA Research Awards Competition this year. Details of the Awards are as follows:



Dr. Joseph Lee (Lef), Prof Helen Chiu and Prof Tom Aie at the KAGP-HKPGA Joint Meeting

## 2003 HKPGA Research Awards

Sing-yuen Li

### The Awards

The **Hong Kong Psychogeriatric Association (HKPGA) Research Awards** were established with an annual donation from the Pfizer Corporation to encourage and reward fine research projects in psychogeriatrics. There are three awards, which will be given annually to the best-submitted projects that have attained a good scientific standard as decided by the selection board. The **HKPGA / Pfizer Research Award**, of value **HK\$10,000**, will be awarded to the best-submitted postgraduate research project. The **HKPGA Postgraduate Research Award**, of value **HK\$5,000**, will be awarded to the second best-submitted postgraduate research project. The **HKPGA Undergraduate Research Award**, of value **HK\$5,000**, will be awarded to the best-submitted undergraduate report. The submitted reports for postgraduate awards have to be either unpublished research reports or research reports that have been published within one year dating back from the closing date of submission. The submitted reports for the undergraduate award have to be research reports, projects or review articles relevant to the local setting. The postgraduate awards will be awarded to postgraduates of any discipline. Only members of the HKPGA will be eligible for the postgraduate prizes.

The prizes will be presented at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the HKPGA. Abstracts of the winning projects will be published in the HKPGA Newsletter.

### Call for Submissions

Submissions of research reports are invited for the 2003 HKPGA Research Awards. Research reports should reach the Association not later than 15 September 2003.

### Requirements

- Papers must be written in English with author-date citations of references in text. APA style (per Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 4th ed.) is preferred.
- References must include complete titles, all author names, and journal names spelled out in full. References to works written in another language must include both the original title and its English translation.
- Papers must be double-spaced on one side of A4-size white bond paper with margins on all four sides. When a paper has been written on a computer, a floppy disk containing a copy of the paper should be sent, if possible. Be sure the disk is labeled with the name of the word processing program used and the correct file name under which the paper is saved.
- An abstract of no more than 250 words must precede the text.
- The paper should have no more than 30 pages of text, plus literature citations, tables and figures. The latter should not exceed 12 pages.

- The title page should include the following information: title of paper, author(s) name(s), degrees, and affiliations; complete mailing address and telephone, fax and e-mail for the corresponding author, and at the top, the phrase “**Submission for 2003 HKPGA Research Awards**”.
- A page stating only the title of the paper also must be included. This page, which is needed for the blind-review process, must immediately follow the complete title page.
- If art is included, only original black-and-white drawings or glossy prints may be submitted.
- Four copies of the paper must be submitted. Submissions should be forwarded to:

**Selection Board of HKPGA Research Awards**  
**Hong Kong Psychogeriatric Association**  
 c/o Community Psychogeriatric Team  
 Castle Peak Hospital  
 Tuen Mun, NT  
 HONG KONG

### News from Sponsorship Committee

Wah-fat Chan

28 members succeeded in applying for HKPGA sponsorships to attend the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Prevention of Elderly Suicide. Due to recent SARS epidemic, the meeting has been postponed to 24-26 March 2004.

Please note that correspondence address of Prof Helen Chiu has changed to  
 Department of Psychiatry  
 The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
 Tai Po Hospital  
 9, Chuen On Road, Tai Po, N.T.  
 Hong Kong  
 Tel: 2607 6027 Fax: 2667 1255

## Winners of 2002 HKPGA Research Awards

Sing-yuen Li

### HKPGA/Pfizer Research Award

#### Functional profile of Chinese elderly with Alzheimer's disease: a validation study on the Disability Assessment for Dementia (Chinese version)

Cybie Ching-man Mok<sup>1</sup>, Andrew Man-hong Siu<sup>2</sup>, Wai-chi Chan<sup>1</sup>, Kwan-mo Yeung<sup>3</sup>, Pey-chyau Pan<sup>4</sup> and Siu-wah Li<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Castle Peak Hospital, <sup>2</sup>Hong Kong Polytechnic University, <sup>3</sup>Princess Margaret Hospital, <sup>4</sup>United Christian Hospital, Hong Kong, China.

#### ABSTRACT

The validity and reliability of the Chinese version of the Disability Assessment for Dementia (CDAD) were studied with 169 community-residing participants with Alzheimer's disease (AD). Functional disabilities profile in Chinese elderly with AD was also examined.

**Methods** The CDAD, the Cantonese version of the Mini-Mental State Examination (CMMSE), the Global Deterioration Scale (GDS), the Modified Barthel Index (MBI) and the Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Scale (IADL) were administered in the study of criterion-related validity and construct validity. Test-retest reliability and inter-rater reliability were estimated with a sample of 30 participants.

**Results** A high negative correlation between the CDAD and GDS (Spearman's rho = -.89, p < .001) was revealed. ANOVA and post-hoc comparisons showed that the mean CDAD scores differed significantly across different GDS stages. IADL sub-score of CDAD was found to have high correlation with IADL Scale (r = 0.94, p < .001), and the ADL sub-score of CDAD had high correlation with the MBI (r = 0.82, p < .001). A moderate correlation (r = 0.595, p < .001) with the CMMSE was found. High internal consistency

of all items as a whole was demonstrated with Cronbach's alpha = 0.91. Test-retest (ICC = 0.9978) and inter-rater reliability (ICC = 0.98) were excellent. Analysis of the relationship with socio-demographic factors indicated that CDAD had no gender bias, and the correlation with age and education was low.

**Conclusion** There is strong evidence that the CDAD is a valid and reliable instrument in assessing the functional disabilities of community-residing individuals with AD.

### HKPGA Postgraduate Research Award

#### Association between tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ promoter polymorphism and Alzheimer's disease

Suk-ling Ma<sup>1,2</sup>, Nelson Leung-sang Tang<sup>1</sup>, Linda Chiu-wa Lam<sup>2</sup>, Helen Fung-kum Chiu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Chemical Pathology, <sup>2</sup>Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China.

#### ABSTRACT

Tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  (TNF  $\alpha$ ) is a cytokine with proinflammatory activities and recently a study suggested that polymorphisms of TNF  $\alpha$  gene were associated with Alzheimer's disease (AD) in Caucasian patients. Here we reported for the first time a strong association of another three TNF  $\alpha$  polymorphism in the 5' regulatory region: TNF-857 (C/T) (p=0.058), TNF-863 (C/A) (p=0.007) and TNF-1031 (T/C) (p<0.001) with AD. A high risk TNF  $\alpha$  haplotype (composed of -1031C-863C-857C) was identified and had an odd ratio of 2.54 fold (95% CI: 1.37-4.79) for AD. The minor alleles of the other two polymorphisms appeared to be protective alleles. The TNF  $\alpha$  alleles also showed an interaction with ApoE genotype in the development of AD. Polymorphism in

TNF-1031 (TRC) has been reported to enhance transcription and production of TNF  $\alpha$ . Therefore, we postulated that these TNF  $\alpha$  polymorphisms determine the basal and stimulated secretion of this proinflammatory cytokine and an enhanced transactivation of TNF  $\alpha$  contributes to the predisposition of Alzheimer's disease in addition to ApoE4.

## HKPGA Undergraduate Research Award

### Visual hallucinations in Dementia

Wing-ki Tai

Medical Student, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China.

#### ABSTRACT

Visual hallucinations (VH) are common among dementia. A retrospective case record study was conducted to find out the prevalence of VH among out-patients referred to a psychogeriatric

clinic in Hong Kong and to find out the relationships between VH and other associated factors. 467 dementia patients without VH were compared with 53 dementia patients with VH. This study demonstrated the association of VH with advancing age and infarction especially in the temporal lobe.



(Left to Right): Ms Wing-ki Tai, Ms Suk-Ling Ma & Ms Cycbie Mok

## Ginkgo: A Web-based Resource Center for Dementia Care

Claudia K Y Lai, Project Leader  
Sunny H K Wan, Project Coordinator

Ginkgo (<http://www.ginkgogroup.org>), a web-based resource center for dementia care, was established by a group of health professionals and academics for the purpose of providing an integrated information database for the public on dementia and dementia care. It is a Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) project. The Health Care and Promotion Fund of the Health and Welfare Bureau funded the pilot phase.



Members of the group include doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, pharmacists, and software engineers from the tertiary education sector and health care agencies. The group shares the common goal of enhancing the quality of dementia care in Hong Kong. As health care professionals working in the field, we wish to adopt the characteristics of the Ginkgo tree to be a strong and long-living group that promotes dementia care. Our specific goals include:

- (1) to establish a web-based resource center for both family and professional caregivers;
- (2) to promote communication between service providers and service recipients through the Internet in an environment that is client-focused and interdisciplinary in approach;
- (3) to provide information to the public and to disseminate research findings; and
- (4) to create an open forum for discussion of issues pertaining to dementia policies and dementia care.

Since the debut of the Ginkgo prototype site in April 2001, we have received earnest support from members of the public and professional colleagues. Our efforts in public education were recognized by the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, and the project team won the 2001 Information Technology Award in the category of Computer-based Public Education. Over the last two years, the site has had 40,000 visitors.

To render our site more client-focused and user-friendly, we have invited members of the public, particularly family caregivers, to form an Advisory Group on Ginkgo development. The first meeting was held last summer.

We found it encouraging that most of the advisory group members appreciated the aesthetic design and the comprehensive content. Members also highlighted some shortfalls and website problems that require attention. In response to these comments, we have made a series of improvements, such as registering with a number of leading local search engines in order to facilitate easier location of our site over the Internet.

### Future Development

The Ginkgo team was successful in obtaining funds from the Dean's Reserve, Faculty of Health and Applied Social Sciences, PolyU, to initiate Phase 2 development of Ginkgo. Phase 2 encompasses several key operational objectives, which include the introduction of a new section, the "Latest Research", the development of a "Forum", the incorporation of a text-based version of the Ginkgo site, an update of our "Service Database",



and a major restructuring of the site's basic design.

- The "Latest Research" section will keep our visitors abreast of the latest news on the dementia care frontier, including new treatments and technological breakthroughs.
- A "Forum" for family caregivers is another new service currently under construction. Through this interactive platform, we plan to open the floor for dialogue among caregivers and/or health professionals. The "Forum" will also be able to facilitate mutual caregiver support.
- The project team is well aware that Ginkgo should also be made accessible to visually- or hearing-impaired Internet users. A barrier-free text-based version that provides content equivalent to the normal version, but without decorative images and animations, will be incorporated into the current Ginkgo structure in accordance with internationally recognized web accessibility standards. We expect the text-based version of Ginkgo to be up and running by the end of 2002. Basically, the on-going development of this text-based version is intended to increase the general accessibility of the entire Ginkgo web page. Not only will it enhance the website's usability for the physically disadvantaged, but it will also cater to Internet users with slower modems and less sophisticated personal computer equipment.
- In August, we began the latest update cycle of our "Service Database". Thanks to the support of various organizations and service groups, we have solicited the latest information on revised



*Claudia (1st from right) and some core members of the Ginkgo Group*

dementia-specific and dementia-related services across Hong Kong. The database update and refinement will be uploaded into the Ginkgo site in due course.

- To deliver a more sophisticated yet user-friendly Ginkgo site, we are presently undergoing a major revamping of the site's basic design. The new design will provide three gateways, namely "The Public", "Caregivers" and "Professionals" so that customized content can cater to the specific needs of people from a variety of backgrounds. Animations and illustrations will also be incorporated into major sections such as "Educational Resources". Please do not give up when you are occasionally unable to access our site. We would like to take this opportunity to apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Ginkgo could not have come into being without support from a large number of friends and volunteers, who have selflessly committed a tremendous amount of their free time to work on the site. Despite limited funding, our enthusiasm and commitment have not faltered. We invite all who are interested to join hands with us in serving those in need.

### About the Logo



The ginkgo tree is an ancient tree that is remarkably resistant to city pollution, insects and viruses. The heart-shaped ginkgo leaves come from various sources toward the center and settle eventually to become the Ginkgo logo, symbolizing people from different places coming together to create this site. It also represents the dynamic construction of knowledge and information in meeting the changing needs of clients and caregivers. The asymmetric logo design appears to be incomplete. In fact, the "incomplete" appearance symbolizes our invitation to you to join the group for further development of the site to make it whole.

## Events Calendar

Wai-chi Chan

Oct/Nov, 2003 Hong Kong	The 5th HKPGA Annual Scientific Symposium and Annual General Meeting <i>Details will be announced shortly</i>	Contact: Email: <a href="mailto:hkpga@hongkong.com">hkpga@hongkong.com</a>
Mar 24 - 26, 2004 Sheraton Hotel, Hong Kong	Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Prevention of Elderly Suicide <i>Conference Theme: "Prevention of Elderly Suicide: A Transdisciplinary Challenge"</i>	Contact: Email: <a href="mailto:rc2003@hkcss.org.hk">rc2003@hkcss.org.hk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.jpapes.net/rc2003">http://www.jpapes.net/rc2003</a>

### Editorial Committee Members:



Prof. Linda Lam (Chinese University of Hong Kong)  
Dr. Wah-fat Chan (Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital)  
Dr. Wai-chi Chan (Castle Peak Hospital)

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