



ANHF

AUSTRALIAN NURSING HOME FOUNDATION

澳華療養院基金

Culturally Appropriate Aged Care Since 1980

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Newsletter

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ANHFAU



Holding Fast to a Doctor's Mission during An Unprecedented Challenge

Dr. Bernard Tse (ANHF Board Member)



COVID-19 is a pandemic that poses the most challenging health crisis for our generation so far. As health professionals, we try to do the best that we can for our patients under whatever circumstances we face. As the COVID pandemic began in early 2020, I had been relying on constant prayers and planning to adapt to and change with the tide of the virus waves. I am thankful to our supportive team that have tirelessly carried on through this difficult period.

My work has four areas: (1) community education to overcome misinformation and concerns about the COVID-19 virus and vaccines (2) protection of my staff and patients (3) maintaining care of patients' ongoing health issues (4) infection prevention with vaccines available.

Campsie clinic became a vaccination clinic

As Greater Sydney succumbed to the virus and Campsie became a hotspot in mid July, only telehealth consultations were able to safely be conducted. It was a difficult decision for our team and our patients but in retrospect was the right decision as in the subsequent weeks the whole of South Western Sydney was inundated with Covid-19 infections.

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With the increasing availability of the COVID-19 vaccines, we took on the challenge to become a vaccination clinic as vaccination is the only way for us to get out of this pandemic with less morbidity and mortality, hence an earlier return to normal life. In our COVID-safe practice, our vaccine clinic staff wear the rather uncomfortable full PPE with all patient contacts.

Our PHU and PHN enquiries assured us that our current clinic set up minimised the risk to staff and patients. We continue to care for our patients by triage patients that require face to face consultations when clinically needed.

The Elderly are still a bit hesitant about vaccination

Some of the elderly are still a bit hesitant about

vaccination. My advice is to have the vaccine immediately, especially now that all three options of Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines are available to people aged over 60. Speak to your GP to clarify any concerns. Vaccination is even more important to the elderly who often have other medical conditions that often worsen due to COVID-19 infection. Many studies have demonstrated that two doses of any of these COVID-19 vaccines greatly reduce the risk of severe sickness, death or hospitalization.

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e5.htm>

Our daily lives will be changed as we live with COVID virus

As a doctor, board member and resident of Sydney, I see this current pandemic as part of a longer war against COVID virus. Our daily lives will be changed for many years as we live with it. In our digital world information is shared rapidly but we need to slice out the large amount of misinformation by understanding and patiently explaining the truth with facts. Our Individual opinions need to be respected in balance with the safety and protection of the community, especially the vulnerable. Many elderly people get infected by their loved ones who have much greater risk due to contacts outside of home. We all missed our loved ones in the past 3 months of lockdown. As NSW reopens, I urge those who have not had your two doses of COVID vaccines to do it immediately, for you and your loved ones' benefit.



Last but not least, I have been very impressed by and truly grateful for the resilience, resourcefulness, deeply caring and sacrificial way our health care and aged care workers have showcased over the last 18 months. As we go out of the lockdown, there will be bumps along the way out. May we continue our meaningful work together, caring for the people that need our help.



Compliment Letter from a Resident at Lucy Chieng Gardens

Recently our Housing Officer received many compliment letters, among them a resident wrote: 'Because of our age and health issues, we're hesitant about receiving the COVID-vaccination. By the time we wanted to get vaccinated, we worried about getting infected in public areas. When I knew Jacky, our Housing Officer, had arranged Dr Bernard Tse to provide vaccination at LCG, my first feeling was like having grasped a life jacket. I could be protected in using public transport later on.'

According to Jacky, residents were a bit hesitant about vaccination, only a few had it with the help of their family members. As the pandemic worsened and the lockdown began, Campsie became a hotspot. Though our elderly residents wanted to get vaccinated, they could not because of mobility issues or the difficulty in getting help from family members. Some worried about getting infected while queueing at the vaccination centre. Jacky therefore contacted Dr. Bernard Tse, who came over with his caring medical team in full personal protective equipment to provide vaccination services for residents who chose to be vaccinated.

Residents and their family members were so touched by and grateful for the care and concern from such an excellent medical team. Jacky said, 'Now we can proudly say that the vaccination rate at LCG is 100%!'

During the pandemic Campsie was like a small boat tossed in the colossal waves. Some clinics charged extra fees for COVID-19 vaccination, some even decided to close temporarily. Despite the dire situation Dr. Bernard Tse and his medical team insisted on providing vaccination for LCG residents. He humbly said this was the responsibility of every health professional, 'In the long run we have to live with the virus, getting vaccinated is the best and only means to protect yourself.'

Frontline Aged Care Services in Full Gear Despite the Pandemic

As the pandemic climbed to an unprecedented height, the Australian government issued lockdown restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our frontline aged care staff still held fast to their role through thick and thin and took multiple COVID tests to ensure the safety of our elderly consumers. Their professionalism deserved our greatest respect. Here in this issue we interviewed several frontline staff from different services to unveil the quiet resilience that nourished such strong vision.



Bringing Positive Energy to the Elderly

Chieu, our care service employee, insisted on providing home care services for the elderly instead of taking leave or stop working temporarily. ‘The elderly need us more during the pandemic. They could go out before for shopping or yum cha with friends and relatives, but not now. Homebound every day was extremely boring. Our visit meant day-long happiness to them, especially those who have mobility issues and need assistance in having a shower. What would happen to them if we stopped our services during the pandemic? We helped the elderly to purchase daily necessities. Every time after shopping, I’d thoroughly clean the items before putting them in the fridge. Knowing that the elderly could be a bit emotionally down, I’d lend them a listening ear, chat with them, assure them that there were people who cared despite the pandemic. All was done to bring them a positive mindset: this isn’t the end of the world. The worst will soon be over.’

When asked if he would worry about getting infected while shopping for the elderly in supermarkets, Chieu said he and his family members had all been vaccinated to safeguard everyone. ‘Although I don’t live in the hotspot LGAs, I take the initiative to have COVID-tests every week to give my family and the elderly peace of mind. As they are more vulnerable to the infectious disease, I have to be extra cautious in every shopping trip. Besides wearing a mask, goggles, gloves and personal protective equipment, sanitization is a must when I return to my car. I am in full PPE in every home visit, wearing the mask all the time though I sweat profusely while assisting the elderly in a shower.’

To Chieu, life is too short to be wasted on worthless things. Helping the others injects meaning in his life. To the elderly, every visit by him is a visit of happiness and caring. Reluctant to see him leave, they always ask, ‘When will you come again?’ Chieu will answer with a smile, ‘Have a good sleep first, you’ll see me again tomorrow!’

Journey out of Emotional Abyss with Seniors Wellness Centre Staff



Forced to stay at home during the pandemic, many elderly had emotional issues. An elderly consumer at Stanley Hunt Seniors Wellness Centre (SHSWC) had to see a GP when her moods deteriorated due to long-term homebound during the lockdown. Knowing that she was referred to see a psychiatrist and

considering that long-term isolation might have been the root cause, Ms Annie Kung, SHSWC Lead Coordinator, paid a home visit before allocating a staff to arrange activities with this elderly lady. That really worked wonders!

Vicky is a staff in our seniors wellness centre and our Home Care Service. The elderly consumer had known her at the centre and trusted her. Vicky knew this elderly consumer loved mind games, so she searched on the internet for games like riddles, word play, Cantonese two-part allegorical sayings etc. This elderly consumer enjoyed these games so much that before every scheduled activity she waited eagerly to meet Vicky via audio-visual means for the one-hour session, even asked Vicky to give her two extra riddles to pass the time before the next session. 'She laughed heartily during these interactive activities.' Said Vicky. 'Having helped her to get out of depression gives me so much job satisfaction!'

Being a frontline staff, Vicky had to work at different suburbs. When asked if she was worried, Vicky replied: 'To tell the truth, I'm human. There are worries. But seeing the needs of the elderly, I can't let go. I have a consumer who has Parkinson's disease. After the service had temporarily stopped for a fortnight during the pandemic, his health deteriorated so much that he couldn't walk. His family members asked me to resume home visits to assist him for exercise, which gradually stabilized his condition. There were elderly consumers who needed assistance in showering, without which their personal hygiene would definitely be affected. Our services have to continue with proper infection control measures no matter what challenges we face during the pandemic. Supporting the elderly is what our work is meant for!'

Vicky also mentioned that work was busier than before the pandemic. When the need arose, staff had to work at consumers' homes even on Saturdays and Sundays. Vicky has already received two doses of vaccination, yet to her infection control measures should still be closely observed. 'Before starting the service, you must put on personal protective equipment such as gloves and masks, complete health declaration, temperature check etc. Plan ahead before leaving home. Don't go to unnecessary places. Return home immediately after work to minimize the infection risk. Do the right thing to protect yourself, the elderly and their family members.'

Life Hanging on a Balance Saved by Frontline RN during the Pandemic



Worried about getting infected, many elderly people dared not leave their home to see the doctor despite feeling unwell and bearing the discomfort. Doing so might mean missing the best time of cure. Linda Kang, our Home Care Service RN, in one of her regular home visits (despite the pandemic) for elderly consumers detected a warning physical symptom. Luckily this elderly consumer was admitted to hospital in time for a life-saving treatment.

‘Our care staff reported that this elderly consumer had two falls at home recently.’ Linda analysed the case, ‘When our Home Care Manager discussed this with me, I doubted the possibility of falls without a reason. The cause had to be identified. In the home visit, I found that her blood pressure was very low, perhaps she didn’t even realize that she had actually become unconscious. I therefore called her family doctor who shared the same thought with me that she had to be admitted to the hospital.’

Yet both the elderly consumer and her family members were a bit reluctant about this for fear of being infected during the pandemic. Having considered Linda’s explanation and after an immediate discussion among family members and their request, Linda accompanied the elderly consumer to the hospital. The diagnosis was urethritis and pneumonia. All inflammations could be fatal. Luckily the timely decision turned out to be total recovery.

On that day it took Linda at least three hours for staying in the consumer’s home, discussion with the family doctor, waiting for family members’ decision, waiting for the ambulance... To Linda, that was all worthwhile in exchange for the consumer’s recovery. Linda humbly believed it was seamless teamwork, not individual effort, that should be counted. ‘The very first thing was the genuine concern of our frontline staff who reported the falls, then there was the professional work attitude of our Home Care Manager who did not overlook any falls. There was also the family doctor who cared about his patients and answered all my queries patiently and the trust of the family members in my suggestions. This case further strengthened my understanding of the importance of teamwork. As long as we fight the pandemic with concerted efforts and safeguard one another, I believe that Australia will soon be out of it!’

All Hearts as One in Fighting the Pandemic

To protect the safety of nursing home residents, staff must receive professional training. Ruby Li, Care Manager of Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre, emphasized that Infection Control was an annual mandatory training. During the pandemic, more intensive training on hand washing, mask wearing, shoe protectors, protective aprons etc were conducted. Staff were also trained on responsive measures during an emergency. Quizzes with prizes were held to help staff remember every procedure, consolidate their knowledge in infection control and build up confidence in fighting the pandemic together.

As the pandemic surged drastically in Sydney, was our manpower stretched? 'I was so impressed by the passion and commitment of our staff.' Said Ruby. 'Though some lived in hotspot areas and had to do the COVID-test every three days as required by the government, they didn't take this as an excuse to be absent from work but held fast to their duties. When staff knew that their teammates had to self isolate because their family members had been to COVID-19 hot spots, they eagerly offered to adjust rosters or even cancel their leave to help.'

May, the Lifestyle Coordinator at Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre shared her thoughts: 'You couldn't go anywhere during the pandemic. Working together at the facility was more practical and enjoyable.' To May, other than protecting the health of the residents, caring for their emotional needs was also crucial. That was why our nursing homes introduced Connection Ambassadors during the pandemic to assist the elderly to use IT and audio visual equipment like smart phones, computers etc to stay connected with their family members as they missed one another.

Different daily activities were arranged by the Lifestyle Officer. No volunteers to dance and sing? Staff put on their dance attire for performances that made everyone roll with laughter. No going out for meals? We purchased take away dim sims, fish and chips, Vietnamese pho etc...residents never missed the great variety of food they loved. Evening activities were added after dinner to help elderly residents forget about their worries during the pandemic by bringing more joy to daily life.



Unsung Heroes behind the Pandemic – Assets and Property Officer and Procurement Officer



To protect the safety of the elderly and staff, ample supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) was a must. In ANHF, the Assets and Property Officer and the Procurement Officer well deserved to be named the unsung heroes who worked tirelessly behind the scenes in purchasing and distributing PPE items to our nursing homes, seniors wellness centres, community housing premises and offices to ensure all facilities were fully equipped to face the menacing pandemic. Here in this issue they would share with us ANHF procurement strategies and the centralised system as well as their feelings during the pandemic.

ANHF has in place strategic procurement processes and a comprehensive monitoring system. Even before Covid-19, we had built strong relationships with a trusted network of suppliers to service ANHF and this became vital when supplies were in shortage and in huge demand. Even with short notice there were adequate quantities to fill the stock.

- ANHF has built strong relationships with our trusted network of local and overseas connected suppliers who can readily deploy stock from their own warehouses or reserve arriving shipment with reliability and deliverable time-frames.
- Leverage obtained through our purchasing quantities has enabled ANHF to be a preferred customer due to our on-going commitment, trust and partnership established.
- The PPE items purchased has undergone quality, specification needs and compliance checks, assisted by our Quality Risk and Compliance team, TGA certificates obtained from suppliers, samples for trial usage and suppliers who can provide specialised advice and support for usage.
- Pre-negotiated delivery time-frames, allocation and allowance for ANHF and secured pricing.
- Weekly monitoring of PPE stock through an itemised registry of specific items: stock-on-hand, usage and top-up quantities required for each RACF. The procurement officer reviews the centralised PPE stock monitoring data. This is also supported by needs reflected by our facility managers and local team members across the sites.
- Stock levels at each RACF and centralised reserve stock align with our COVID-19 Outbreak Management and Control Plan. The Assets and Property Officer rapidly responds within a 24-hour period to deliver essential PPE items to the residential homes and Senior Wellness Centres and sites.
- Alongside to ensuring each site is adequately stocked, the Assets and Property Officer has attended to emergency requests and servicing from the residential homes. The prompt actions of the APO then allow for the residential team to focus on the care and wellbeing of their residents rather than worry about PPE supplies.

Hard times overcome by 'One Team One Spirit'

CM Chan, Assets and Property Officer

I experienced the 'One Team One Spirit' and felt proud to be working alongside with teammates and front-line staff. We could overcome the hard times because we did not work alone, instead we had many staff in ANHF with the same positive attitude. Our duty and sense of purpose each day was not only for our residents and consumers but also for one another. If I did not maximize my efforts, someone else had to do more. Selfless mutual support made it easy for us all.

During the height of the lockdown where the 12 Sydney LGA's were impacted caused a great deal of concern and caution for me. Especially when our 3 homes, housing complex and home care services experienced areas of concern restrictions and at that time, uncertain when the situation would ease. The safety of our staff and residents was in the forefront of my mind and one of the important ways I could help was to make sure our facilities and services had enough stock to cover their daily PPE needs and maintain vital supply of emergency stock. I answered the requests for top-up supplies by delivery stock as soon as possible.

Another challenge was our stock was predominately stored in Campsie which was an area of concern. I had to take extra precautions. However, I had completed the Govt's Covid-19 PPE training and felt equipped with enough knowledge on how to protect myself and others, by following social distancing, hand hygiene, wearing a face mask, doing the QR codes check in/out and being aware of the environment around me.

My handyman team was a great asset as we took the strategic measure to assign one handyman to each facility in order to avoid cross contact with each other. By doing this, we were able to keep ourselves and each other safe so we could keep doing our job during these crucial times.

Equipped with stronger professional expertise

Cindy Wong, Procurement Officer

There were some challenges in preparing for Covid-19 with adequate supplies of PPE initially due to global shortages. The disease was also unknown and we had never experienced such changes to our lives before.

However, once I learnt about measures to support infection control and adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) required, I had a sense of purpose towards my work as I knew this was vital to keep everyone safe, and for staff to continue caring for our elders as safely as possible.

The PPE supplied to our staff assured staff protection for themselves and the elderly. This in turn made me proud in having played a small role in their care.

Even during our most challenging times, I felt a greater sense of professional confidence and competency as we overcame immense challenges.

Everyone had an important role — from the facility/care managers, care staff, cleaners, handyman, kitchen and staff. Our combined care and efforts give reassurance to our clients and their families that ANHF is keeping their loved ones safe and healthy.

Good News : Two New Government Fundings Despite the Pandemic

Willoughby City Council's funding

ANHF was successful in securing The Concourse Cultural Performance subsidy from the Willoughby City Council. This subsidy allows us to host an artwork exhibition in Chatswood for promoting active and healthy ageing, and celebrating a successful aging process. The Artwork Exhibition will display a variety of Southeast Asian artworks such as Chinese paintings, calligraphy, art pieces using recycled materials etc. These artworks were created and made by our ANHF consumers during the COVID lockdown period.

Such creativity demonstrated our consumers' experience in keeping well and dealing with COVID disease and their positivity about ageing and maintaining motivation. In addition, this exhibition delivers the message of living positively for older people who embrace their own priorities, choices, values, cultural preferences as well as demonstrates that older people participating in art work can improve their self-confidence and self-identity.

The date of the Artwork Exhibition will be confirmed after the COVID restrictions are eased. We are very excited to host this event and look forward to seeing you in the exhibition.

EnCOMPASS Connector

ANHF is also successful in securing funding from the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council (FECCA) for the EnCOMPASS Aged Care Connector Program at Northern Sydney Region.

This program aims to provide support for people aged 65 and older from non-English speaking backgrounds, as well as their carers and families, to access the aged care system (such as My Aged Care) and other services. In this program, ANHF EnCOMPASS Connector will provide one-on-one support to Chinese-speaking older people and their families in their preferred language, to obtain accurate and independent information on aged care support. Our Connector will support older people and their families through accessing My Aged Care until the referral is made to their preferred provider. If older people are already registered with My Aged Care, our Connector can also help them to change the type of aged care service they receive.

Your Support Takes Us Further 你的支持，讓我們的服务更進一步

You can also donate securely via our website : <http://anhf.org.au/contact-us/donations>

Thank you for your support. Below are the donations received from **July to September 2021**
謝謝各位的支持。下為**2021年7月至9月**期間之捐助人士芳名。

100以下/ <100	\$100—\$499	\$ 500—\$ 999	\$1000—\$4999	\$5000以上 / \$5000 and above
John A Ebrahim				余大超醫生
Jong Sook Ryu				Angela Tsui
				Anonymous
				2CR China Radio Network
				Peter Tjeuw
				Julina Lim
				蔡桂友女士
				魯洋女士(Maggie Lo)
				Estate of Lilian Guan
				Mr & Mrs William Lai
				Warren & Daisy Lam

A Happy Moon Festival despite the Pandemic 疫情下，一樣中秋節快樂



Despite temporary closure of all seniors wellness centres, staff continued to maintain contacts with the elderly via audio visual means. To celebrate the Moon Festival with the elderly, staff and volunteers at Stanley Hunt Seniors Wellness Centre made a special short video which brought festive joy to everyone despite the pandemic! Many thank you notes and well wishes were received from our happy consumers.

A BIG thank you to Annie's design and Jenny's editing! Though we could not meet during the pandemic, this short video quenched our thirst for festive joy in the Moon Festival. Having attended the centre for so many years, my mother has a great time in knowing so many friends there! May I take this festive opportunity to wish everyone good health and happiness!

~~ Kitty Kong

You just felt great in seeing so many old pals again via social media. A BIG thank you to their well wishes and the wonderful work of all those behind the scene. Their ideas, combined efforts, editing and production had made such an awesome video that gave everyone a very meaningful Moon Festival.

~~Helen Au Yeung



The video was edited superbly to reach such high standards! Thank you all, dear friends at Stanley Hunt Seniors Wellness Centre, for your well wishes and your fantastic singing. This Moon Festival was made a very special one by the amazing video prepared by staff at SHSWC. A happy Moon Festival to you all!

~~ Sally Au



Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre (LCACC)



Bernard Chan Nursing Home (BCNH)



Chow Cho Poon Nursing Home (CCPNH)

