



新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE

To News Editor
For Immediate Release

September 30, 1995

CU trains first batch of home-grown cancer nurses to boost patient care

How do you comfort a successful businessman in his 40s who is dying of cancer in three months? What do you say to an old woman who cannot stand the painful side-effects of cancer treatment and pleads with you to take her life? How do you tell a mother that her three-year-old daughter is not going to live through her next birthday because of leukaemia?

These are but a few of the challenges which many of the 17,000 nurses in Hong Kong face daily in hospital wards and outpatient clinics.

To train cancer nursing specialists and promote quality care for cancer patients, **The Chinese University of Hong Kong** has organized the territory's first integrated hospital-based **Specialist Course in Cancer Nursing**. The first batch of 46 nurses -- who graduate today after completing a year of comprehensive and intensive training at the University's teaching hospital, the Prince of Wales Hospital -- are vowing to apply what they learned in the course to improve patient care in the 13 hospitals from which they come.

"Far from being a dead-end job, cancer nursing is in fact the job of a specialist who can help to alleviate the physical and emotion pains of patients and their families, and speed up the rehabilitation process," said **Prof. Philip Johnson**, the **Chairman of the Department of Clinical Oncology**, CUHK, at today's ceremony to award certificates to the graduating cancer nurses.

"Cancer remains Hong Kong's number one killer disease. However, the tremendous progress in cancer care over the last two decades has resulted in approximately one-third of our patients having a good chance of cure. Treatments are also available to enable the remaining two-thirds, whose diseases are less curable, to enjoy a longer and better-quality post-diagnosis life-span." he said.

With the inauguration of sophisticated cancer treatment facilities -- such as the ones in Hong Kong's first dedicated multi-disciplinary Cancer Centre at the Prince of Wales Hospital -- nurses not only have to update their knowledge, they also need to sharpen their skills in handling patients who are now undergoing more extensive and intensive therapy and require a lot of emotional support, said Prof. Johnson.

The launch of this first specialist course in cancer nursing will help to promote the status as well as the awareness of the importance of cancer nursing, he said. It is envisaged that the course will evolve into a continuing educational facility for nurses throughout Hong Kong as well as the Asian region, he added.

Modelled on the post-basic cancer nursing curriculum developed by the European Oncology Nursing Society, the one-year part-time course aims to help nurses face up to the many daily challenges in the cancer wards.

A comprehensive range of topics has been covered including everything from the principles of cancer treatment using radiotherapy and chemotherapy, to pain management, body image and sexuality, whilst not forgetting the importance of emotional and spiritual aspects, particularly with reference to the care of the dying and how to help relatives handle bereavement. The participants also visited various hospitals to gain first-hand knowledge of chemotherapy, radiotherapy, bone marrow transplant and hospice care.

The majority of the 46 graduates are working in oncology wards or related areas, with experience in cancer nursing ranging from six months to seven years.

Today's ceremony was officiated by Prof. Johnson; Ms Susie Lum, Senior Executive Manager (Nursing) of the Hospital Authority; and Ms Alison Reid, Hospital Chief Executive of the Prince of Wales Hospital.

For press enquiries, please contact Mrs Shirley Kwok of the University's Information and PR Office at 2609-8897.

a:cancer.pr