

# Volunteers for Elderly Day 2026 A Heart That Remains Unchanged After Thirty Years



The annual 'Volunteers for Elderly Day 2026' sent out 2,181 enthusiastic volunteers on January 25 this year to visit 1,080 elderly living alone or with a spouse at various housing estates across Hong Kong. We would like to thank all the volunteers who, for over 30 years, have constantly served the elderly, regardless of the cold winters or heavy rains.

Among the elderly beneficiaries this year, the oldest was 98-year old, with a total of 68 seniors aged 90 or above, and 134 seniors aged between 85 and 90. The visits brought heartfelt New Year blessings to this group of centenarians.

Every year's kick-off ceremony adopts a creative approach, and this year was particularly imaginative. The officiating guest pulled a ribbon to bring a white horse made of balloons from afar to the stage, symbolising 'immediate blessings' and representing the delivery of good fortune to the elderly. The lively atmosphere officially marked the start of the visits. Volunteers then set off in batches, visiting the elderly to bring warmth.

Each elder received a 'lucky bag', in which the food and supplies inside were generously sponsored by enterprises and individuals in the community.

Mr. Cheung Man-sun, the ambassador of HOPE worldwide, along with veteran presenter, Ms. Chea Shuk-mui, not only attended the kick-off ceremony but also visited an 80-year-old elder immediately after the event. Laughter filled the air as the duo engaged in warm conversations with her.

Mr. Cheung expressed, 'Our commitment to the elderly has remained steadfast since the inception of this initiative, which has now grown to its current scale.' Ms. Chea reflected, 'Every year on this day, it's not just about us bringing blessings to the elderly; it's also the elderly who warm our hearts with their life stories.'





## 'Fulfil a Wish' Programme

The 'Fulfil a Wish' programme is one of the activities associated with the Volunteers for Elderly Day. Its primary aim is to help the elderly fulfil their wishes while caring for and sharing warm blessings with them. This year, 50 elderly participants were involved, including cancer patients, visually impaired individuals, and those with mobility challenges. With the assistance and protection of volunteers, they had the opportunity to explore farther areas, enjoy delicious meals, revisit familiar places, and purchase necessary medicines or daily essentials.



### A Life Warrior Like No Other

Grandma Chan is a 72-year-old disable elderly lady. With the help of volunteers, she fulfilled a small wish by visiting the Our Lady of Fatima Church in Cheung Chau, a place she hadn't been to in over a decade.

Grandma Chan can truly be considered a life warrior. She had undergone more than 40 surgeries, with two of those times bringing her to the brink of death. During one of her comas, she dreamt of her father calling her, saw angels flying overhead, and heard God telling her, 'You still have many things to accomplish; you need to spread the gospel and pray.' Ultimately, she fought through these experiences, which have made her cherish life even more.

Now, Grandma Chan leads a vibrant life. She attends church daily, teaches Tai Chi and swordplay, and enjoys travelling to various places. These activities keep her energised and allow her to share her faith and the strength of life with more people. She believes that as long as one keeps one's eyes on the future, stays relaxed, and does not cling too tightly to materialistic things, one can overcome difficulties and live a long life.



### At 98, She Exemplifies True Wealth

A 98-year-old grandma joined an outdoor activity this year. The day's itinerary was simple: a visit to Science Park for dim sum, followed by a stroll along the waterfront and a visit to the Golden Egg. Grandma Lau relies on a cane for mobility and occasionally uses a wheelchair. She rarely has the opportunity to leave her familiar surroundings. Simply being able to enjoy the sea breeze and watch the puppies play was enough to make her smile like a child.

She enthusiastically recounted her 30 years of experience in volunteering: from visiting homes and distributing lucky bags to connecting with others through her beloved singing and handicrafts. Later, she even began assisting in claiming the remains of deceased elderly who lived alone, with an aim to accompany old friends on their final journey. 'I just wanted to help my old friends leave this world peacefully,' she said without any hesitation.

During the visit in Science Park, many elders approached her, eagerly shaking her hand and engaging in friendly conversation. Grandma Lau smiled and remarked, 'After running around different community centres for 30 years, I think all the elders in Lam Tin know me.'

Grandma Lau continuously expressed her gratitude to the volunteers and generously praised each one, repeatedly saying, 'I am so happy.' When the volunteers accompanied her back to her residence, they saw her walls were adorned with certificates, awards, and trophies from her years of volunteering, silently telling

the story of her decades of dedication. Looking at those mementos, she gently said, 'In the past, I was always the one giving; now that I have mobility issues, it's my turn to enjoy your care.'

This outing has planted a precious seed in the heart of the volunteers: a senior who has practiced care throughout her life, demonstrating the richness and tenderness of life through her simple example.





# Teaching Us to Cherish Every Moment



Grandma Pang is 92-year-old. In her youth, she worked in the garment industry. Known for her quick hands and efficient work style, she earned the trust of her superiors, who even entrusted her with managing the entire shop. After retirement, she continued to contribute quietly by helping to care for her siblings' children, accompanying them as they grew up. What she enjoys most is returning to church to gather with her sisters, as that is where she gains strength and joy.

Due to knee degeneration, her mobility is limited, and she rarely travels to distant places.

Her wish was to enjoy a buffet in Tsim Sha Tsui. Encouraged by a social worker, Grandma Pang decided to participate in the 'Fulfil a Wish' programme. Recently, she accidentally fell at home, injuring her back, which made moving difficult and shook her confidence about going out, as she did not want to inconvenience others.

On the day of the event, the volunteers chatted with Grandma Pang at her home. After assessing her condition, they felt she was capable of going out, so they accompanied her to enjoy a buffet with other seniors. Despite her back pain, she insisted on taking the bus to and from Kwai Chung and Tsim Sha Tsui, refusing the volunteers' suggestion to take a taxi, joking that she wanted to 'make the best use of resources.'

What was most memorable was her sincere gratitude after her wish was fulfilled. She shared that being able to step out of her home again was a tremendous encouragement. While chatting with Grandma Pang in the restaurant, her eyes filled with tears of joy. She said that although they had just met and were strangers, she was moved by the volunteers' enthusiasm and care for her.

For the volunteers, this service felt more like a life lesson: the resilience, positivity, and effort of the elderly reminded them that it is more blessed to give than to receive.



# Only the Marks of Resilience Remain



Uncle Wong was born and raised in Guangzhou, where he began working at a young age. Starting as an ordinary construction worker, his hard work and quick thinking gradually earned him the respect of his colleagues. He later promoted to the position of foreman and even started his own company. His philosophy is: 'You must lead by example. When subordinates find a project challenging, you should take the initiative to handle it yourself. Only then will everyone trust you.' His experiences left a profound impression on the volunteers, showcasing a spirit of self-reliance and perseverance.

About seven years ago, Uncle Wong was found to have jaundice, which affected his liver and gallbladder. His eyes turned white and his vision became blurry. Now, he can only distinguish colors from close distances, almost rendering him blind.

Uncle Wong's wish was to take a walk in Tsim Sha Tsui and enjoy a buffet. For the volunteers, it seemed like an easy activity, but Uncle Wang was filled with anticipation, waiting eagerly at his doorstep.

On the day of the event, the volunteers gave a framed photo to him as gift. Although he couldn't see who was in the photo, he expressed his gratitude while feeling the frame, and this moment deeply moved the volunteers. After the meal, they took a walk by the sea, where he shared stories about his life and taught the volunteers how to guide him using hand signals.

Uncle Wong did not back away while facing blindness, instead he actively embraced life. His confidence and resilience deeply inspired all the volunteers.





## Unconditional Love Exemplified in Her Life

Grandma Mak has always been kind-hearted, adopting children in her youth and caring for the offspring of deceased family members as if they were her own. In the 1960s, she moved to Hong Kong, seizing every opportunity to work hard, often juggling three jobs a day. She has never hesitated to help her friends, embodying a positive and energetic approach to life.

Even after the early passing of her husband, she remained undeterred in her pursuit of a fulfilling life, continuing to love and nurture children to help them succeed. Children in their teenage years might go through rebellious phases, but as they mature, they start to cherish family relationships, regularly visiting her and checking in by phone now. Even the nieces and grand-nieces whom she raised would frequently visit and offer their support.



At 92 years old, Grandma Mak enjoys volunteering and remains active, diligently exercising every day and engaging in card games to enhance her memory.

Through the 'Fulfil a Wish' programme, she got to enjoy the company and conversations with others. She sincerely expressed her gratitude to the volunteers.

Despite her life challenges, Grandma Mak exemplifies a spirit of positivity and resilience. She does not indulge in self-pity; instead, she is thankful for everything in her current situation, which in turn enriches her relationships.



## Continuing to Learn Despite Blindness



Uncle Yeung is a sociable elder who is visually impaired. He enjoys playing the harmonica and regularly attends a community centre where he performs with other seniors and participates in various activities. As he ages, his balance has gradually deteriorated, requiring assistance when going out, which has limited his opportunities to visit the community center and meet friends as frequently as before.

Living in Tsing Yi and rarely venturing far, he chose to visit Sai Kung for the 'Fulfil a Wish' programme. On the day of the outing, volunteers took him to a restaurant to enjoy seafood, followed by a leisurely stroll and conversations. Uncle Yeung brought along his beloved harmonica and played impromptu by the seaside, with everyone joining in to sing along, creating a warm atmosphere.

Uncle Yeung is eager to learn new things; he actively seeks to understand how to use a smartphone and wishes to learn to play the ukulele as well as expand his harmonica repertoire. He does not allow his age or blindness to limit his interests, truly embodying the spirit of 'live and learn'.



## Resiliently Overcoming Life's Hardships

Grandma Tang is a cancer patient living a simple and modest life. HOPE worldwide arranged volunteers to visit and assist her to purchase electrical appliances.

Grandma Tang moved to Hong Kong from the mainland with her husband in her early years. However, after facing significant challenges in her marriage, she found herself raising her daughter on her own. With a meagre salary, she managed to support her daughter until she grew up. Her greatest joy now comes from her daughter visiting her with the grandchildren, go shopping and dine together. Grandma Tang is grateful for her current simple public housing, which offers much better living conditions compared to her previous subdivided flat.

Nonetheless, her greatest challenge is the need for regular erythropoietin injection, which leave her feeling extremely weak afterward. Each time, her sister would have to come from the mainland to care for her, which is not always convenient. She hopes to seek additional support to help her during these times. Despite these difficulties, Grandma Tang remains very content, facing challenges with strength and maintaining a heart full of gratitude.





## Outdoor Activities and Visits to Elderly Care Homes

On the 'Volunteers for Elderly Day 2026', a total of 2,181 volunteers served the elderly. In addition to home visits where they delivered lucky bags and participated in the 'Fulfil a Wish' activities, HOPE *worldwide* arranged for volunteers to take 60 seniors on outdoor excursions. One group visited the Sam Tung Uk for sightseeing and vegetarian dining, while another group toured the Science Park and enjoyed lunch at a restaurant.

For many seniors, the opportunity to go on an outing is rare. The fresh air and sunlight not only enhance blood circulation and brain activity but also significantly promote mental health. Additionally, increased social interactions benefit both physical and mental well-being, reducing feelings of loneliness and depression.

To accommodate seniors with limited mobility, another group of 187 volunteers was divided into three teams to visit elderly care homes. They visited Madam Ho Sin Hang Home for the Elderly in Hong Kong Island, Po Leung Kuk Shek Mun Home Cum Day Care Centre for the Elderly in New Territories, and the Yi Wo Yuen Aged Sanatorium Centre in Kowloon, celebrating the arrival of the Lunar New Year with 250 seniors.

Volunteers thoughtfully organised suitable exercise and singing performances. They also engaged seniors in making festive decorations and writing spring couplets, sharing festive blessings together. Some volunteers dressed as the God of Wealth, distributing the lucky bags and joining the seniors in singing and playing games. When nostalgic songs were played, the seniors became enthusiastic fans, fully immersing themselves in the singing, and everyone enjoyed a joyful afternoon filled with laughter.



# Enhancing Home-Based Services for the Elderly Aiming for Everyone to Age at Home

The government has implemented support services based on home care, center-based care, or a hybrid model to ensure that seniors receive appropriate care and companionship within their familiar communities, alleviating the pressure on both themselves and their caregivers. Through the Elderly Community Care Service Voucher (community voucher), the financial burden is eased, allowing seniors to live with dignity in their own homes without struggling between the need for care and a lack of options.



## A Story of Companionship: Grandma Li

After hip surgeries left Grandma Li unable to walk, her mobility issues made admission to a residential home inevitable, a common challenge for seniors living alone. Though she received professional care, she never felt truly at home. Through a relative, she discovered HOPE *worldwide's* community care services, which allowed her to return home with support for cleaning, physical therapy, and medical visits.



This home-based assistance transformed her recovery. A dedicated physical therapist helped her regain the strength to move independently, finally ending the chronic pain that had ruined her sleep. Beyond the physical benefits, the staff's small gestures -- like carefully cleaning her wheelchair before entering her home -- made Grandma Li feel deeply respected and valued.

## 'It's Wonderful to Be Able to Live at Home'

Now, with her smile restored, she feels it is wonderful to be back in her own space. While her children visit often, the professional support has significantly eased their caregiving burdens. Supported by her assistants, Grandma Li enjoys a renewed sense of independence and peace within her own home.

## The Elderly Community Care Service Voucher Makes Choices Possible

HOPE *worldwide* is one of the recognised providers of elderly community care services by the Social Welfare Department, qualified to arrange professional or auxiliary personnel to deliver services based on the specific needs of seniors. Seniors aged 60 or above, who require long-term care, have chronic illnesses, or face mobility challenges, or those assessed as suitable for community care services or residential care services through the Elderly Service Unified Assessment Mechanism, can apply for various forms of home support through the Elderly Community Care Service Voucher.



Service offerings include rehabilitation therapy and exercise, nursing services, personal care, house cleaning, accompanied medical visits, meal delivery and soft food supply, caregiver training at home, home safety assessments and improvement recommendations, speech therapy, and more, covering areas from Tsim Sha Tsui to Kwai Tsing. Seniors can choose a suitable combination of services based on their individual circumstances. Currently, the monthly value of the community voucher for the 2026-27 fiscal year ranges from a minimum of \$4,526 to a maximum of \$10,824. The actual amount that users need to bear is calculated based on the asset declaration adjusted annually by the Social Welfare Department, generally ranging from 5% to 40%.

For seniors like Grandma Li, who wish to age at home while worrying about overburdening their families, this program offers not just financial assistance but also the choice to remain in the comfort of their familiar surroundings, aging slowly and peacefully. If you or a senior in your family have similar needs, please feel free to contact us at 2633 3163 or 5786 1383 (WhatsApp) to explore the most suitable arrangements together.

