



應對智障人士的高齡挑戰

Embracing Ageing of persons with intellectual disabilities

隨着科技進步及醫療發展，智障人士的一般平均壽命有所提高。根據香港理工大學「智障人士老齡化趨勢」研究報告(彭耀宗(2015))顯示，智障人士比同齡的一般人士有提早出現老化的傾向，亦較易有長期病患及相關功能障礙。扶康會關注智障人士老年化工作小組倡議以「樂活老齡」模式，包括協助服務使用者建立「社交連繫」，以促進服務使用者身心健康。與此同時，本會亦推動生死教育活動，讓智障服務使用者能及早認識死亡，為面對生離死別作好準備，更能珍惜生命，活好當下。

以本會輔助家舍——柔莊之家為例，當中有 95% 的服務使用者已超過 45 歲，平均年齡達 54 歲，更有兩位超過 70 歲。輕度智障的服務使用者有一定的認知能力，可以如何教導他們面對親人、朋友，甚至自己的死亡呢？面對生離死別從來不易，本會就透過小組的啟蒙活動，讓服務使用者建立一定程度的心理準備。

去年 5 月，本會藝術導師帶領柔莊之家 14 位服務使用者，進行 6 節「閃耀生命表達藝術」小組，透過藝術，與智障人士談生說死，積極面對死亡。一同學習欣賞生命、失去與離別、死亡與哀傷、道愛、道謝、願望(道歉)及道別的課題。

過程中，有服務使用者表示擔心死亡；亦有服務使用者表示「唔驚」，因為父母已上天堂，死亡便可與他們重聚。

服務使用者積極參與小組活動，十分投入過程，透過創作表達及欣賞生命。他們的作品稍後將於賽馬會創意藝術中心舉行展覽。

資料來源：彭耀宗(2015)。「智障人士老齡化趨勢」研究報告。香港理工大學康復治療科學系。

As technology and medicine advance, the average lifespan of persons with intellectual disabilities grows. According to the study "Trends of Ageing among Persons with Intellectual Disabilities" from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Pang Yiu Chung, 2015), persons with intellectual disabilities tend to show signs of ageing earlier than the general population of the same age and are more likely to suffer from chronic illnesses and related functional disorders. Fu Hong Society's Task Force on Ageing of persons with intellectual disabilities pushed forward the "Active Ageing" service initiative, which assists service users to build social ties that maintain mental wellbeing. The Society also carries out Life and Death Education that encourages service users with intellectual disabilities to accept death and separation as essential parts of life, recognize the value of life and live in the moment.

Take Yau Chong Home, the Society's supported hostel as an example, 95% of its service users are over 45 years old. The average age of its service users is 54 years old, including two service users that are over 70 years old.

Conscious of the cognitive abilities of service users with mild intellectual disabilities, how do we guide them to face the death of their families, friends or even themselves? Life and death are no easy subject. The Society mentally prepares its service users through group enlightening exercises.

In May 2023, our art instructor engaged 14 service users from Yau Chong Home through 6 sessions of "Celebrating Life through Art" that explored the issue of life and death with positivity. Participants explored topics such as appreciating life, lost and departure, death and sorrow, expressing love, thanks, wish (to apologize) and saying goodbye.

Some service users were worried about the prospect of death, while others took a more relaxed view, as they saw death as an opportunity to reunite with their parents who had already passed away.

With great enthusiasm, service users expressed themselves and celebrated life through the artworks created in the group activities. Their artworks will be displayed at the Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre.

