



## Media Coverage

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Re: Care plan helps patients on the road to recovery  
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South China Morning Post

### HEALTH



Physiotherapist William Kwong helps stroke victim Mr Ng regain muscle control and coordination by using a robotic hand. Photo: Dickson Lee

# CARE PLAN HELPS PATIENTS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Christian Family Service Centre aims to provide subsidised rehabilitation services for 1,600 people who have suffered strokes or broken bones

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When 57-year-old Ng suffered a stroke in May, he thought he had only one path – have his wife quit her job to take care of him as he was not eligible for subsidised rehabilitation services.

The public housing resident, who preferred to be known only by his surname, was temporarily paralysed down his left side and unable to walk properly.

As Ng is not yet 65, he does not qualify for subsidised day care services for the elderly. Hiring carers or private day care centres were not affordable options.

"I was lucky that it happened

during the summer because it meant that at least my 13-year-old son would be able to take care of me [during his school holidays], and my wife wouldn't have to quit her job [immediately]," Ng said.

A month after Ng was discharged from hospital, he was among the first batch of beneficiaries of a new three-year rehabilitation programme launched by the Christian Family Service Centre. The plan is supported by donations from the Keswick Foundation charity.

The HK\$7.8 million programme at the Lively Elderly Day Training Centre in Wong Tai Sin aims to help patients recover from strokes or bone fractures from the time they are discharged from

hospitals. The centre calls this window a "golden recovery period" where chances of successful rehabilitation are highest.

The programme aims to help 1,600 people in the next three years. It launched in June and has benefited 47 patients so far.

"The first six to 12 months are the most important for a better and faster recovery," William Kwong Lik-pui, the centre's physiotherapist and senior service manager, said. "But more importantly, we want to reduce chances of hospitalisation again as the risks of falling or encountering accidents at home for stroke patients can be high."

Ng is required to pay only 10 per cent of the fees for his

six-month rehabilitation. Services include physiotherapy and speech therapy sessions, as well as group activities for the elderly.

One of the highlights is a new rehabilitation system involving a robotic glove that helps patients like Ng improve muscle strength and hand-eye coordination through computer simulations.

For those aged 65 and above, the programme also fills a gap in the long wait for subsidised community care services for the elderly. Government figures showed there were 9,081 applicants on the waiting list for various community care services, with an average waiting time of 11 to 13 months, as of October.

Kwong said the programme also helped lighten the burden of carers at home, in a city with a rapidly ageing population where nursing and elderly care services are overwhelmed.





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