

## Relocation Notice

Please be advised that our Central office has been relocated to the following address effective on 25 July 2009:

**22/F, Jupiter Tower, 9 Jupiter Street, North Point, Hong Kong**

(Our telephone and fax numbers remain unchanged)



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### Survivor Story

#### Don't just focus on your adversity

Being diagnosed with cancer is not an easy thing to accept. Patients are overwhelmed with all the unknown treatment procedures. Moreover, they also have to worry about their families, work, and financial situation, but then as they recover there is also the chance of cancer recurrence. The

support from family members and friends is important, but the ability to adjust in the patient is also essential. It helps patients to cope better.

Today, we interviewed a breast cancer survivor, Anne, who has been cancer-free for six years. "I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002. It was Stage 1A. Although it was in the earliest stage of cancer, I found it hard to accept. I was very nervous and scared. When I thought about my 10-year-old son, I didn't know what to do. I was totally lost." At the beginning, Anne's emotions were very unstable. She was deeply worried and anxious. She got upset easily. Fortunately, she realized she needed to seek help for her emotional problems.

Anne always talked to her husband, family members and friends. They told her not to focus too much on adversity, but to think about all the things she had to be positive about. "I have a friend who lived in the U.S. She was a breast cancer survivor. After I was diagnosed with breast cancer, I always called to talk to her even though it was a long distance call. She is a very open-minded person, she told me that I am the only one who could make my life better. She also told me that she never thought about why she had cancer before. I was affected by her optimistic outlook and gradually, I found peace and joy."

Anne completed her treatment smoothly but whenever she attended her medical check-up and found some of the survivors relapsed, Anne became anxious again and felt very stressful and scare. Anne realized she needed to seek help to deal with her anxiety. With help from a psychologist she learnt to manage and overcome her fears quickly.

Anne always tells the breast cancer patients to stay positive. "I will use a constructive way to confront problems. If it is beyond my ability, I will hand it to God. I know God will arrange everything for me and I trust him. I am glad that I have my family and friends who love me so much. They have shared in my stress and happiness."

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## I Care

### Encourage others and uplift myself

**"If my experience can help more people to learn about breast cancer, I will never say no to sharing of my story"**

Survivor experience sharing is an important and enlightening part in educational seminars the Foundation hosts for the public. Mary is a breast cancer survivor who volunteers regularly to talk about her experience. Every time we extend an invitation to her, she never says no. "I think it is necessary to spread the message about breast cancer prevention to the community. Many people have a very shallow knowledge and understanding about breast cancer. Even if they know, they may not be aware of how destructive it can be. I never thought getting breast cancer is something to be ashamed about. If my experience can alert more people and make them aware of the disease, I will not be afraid to step out and tell everybody."

Mary tirelessly volunteers herself to share her story because of this strong belief. Sharing her experience not only extends comfort and support to other breast cancer patients, but also helps to uplift her own spirit. "I have reached out to a breast cancer patient who was very depressed at the

beginning. She could not believe that she has got cancer. After hearing me tell her that I find sharing my experience helps me, she was able to express her feelings and finds a way to relieve stress. Maybe it was because we both have gone through the same path; she realizes that I understand her situation." After her successful treatment, this patient then went on to get breast implants and her outlook on life became more positive. This experience was one of the most rewarding for Mary.

When you look at Mary, you can see that she is always very happy. She loves her life and has passion for everything. "I see it as a gift that I am capable of helping others. Being a volunteer makes me feel satisfied and it is its own reward."

Mary is a successful businesswoman but she feels that monetary rewards are only temporary. Life's real satisfaction is in helping others; this is where there is long-lasting gratification.

Mary serves as a council member of the Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation; she hopes to contribute more of herself in benefiting people in need.



Mary shares her story in our educational seminars.

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## Focus

### **Breast Cancer Drug Financial Assistance Program**

One of our missions is to provide total care and support for breast cancer patients on their road to recovery. We realize that prescription drugs can be a big financial burden, causing them undue stress and anxiety. With this in mind, in conjunction with the existing psychosocial and informational support we offer, we launched the "Breast Cancer Drug Financial Assistance Program" on 6 June this year to help breast cancer patients who are financially challenged by their medication costs.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) is the first pharmaceutical company to join this program, offering sponsorship of up to HK\$7 million. GSK's financial assistance program is specifically targeting HER2+ patients from both the public and private health sectors. The main criteria is that the candidate must be prescribed with target therapy drug lapatinib; a HKSAR permanent resident with a monthly household income not exceeding HK\$40,000 and annual household disposable income not exceeding HK\$300,000. As well as compliance of other terms and criteria of the Program, the maximum subsidized amount could be up to HK\$100,000 per year for each qualified applicant.

If you wish to learn more about the "Breast Cancer Drug Financial Assistance Program", please contact us by telephone on 2525 6033, by email at [info@hkbcf.org](mailto:info@hkbcf.org) or visit [www.hkbcf.org](http://www.hkbcf.org).



The “Breast Cancer Drug Financial Assistance Program” launch ceremony was held at Olympian City II on 6 June 2009; breast health exhibition and game booths attracted large crowds throughout the event.



Officiating the event: (From left) Mrs. Joanna Choi (Chairman of HKBCF); Ms. Phoebe Ho, (VP & General Manager of GSK); award-winning actress Ms. Karena Lam; Dr. Kwan Wing Hong (Specialist in Clinical Oncology cum Honorary Advisor for the Program)



Karena pointed out that breast cancer can be cured if detected early and appealed to all women to check monthly with a breast self-examination.



Renowned Tai-chi master Madam Li Fai performed Tai-chi with her pupils.

### “Angels & Demons” Charity Gala Premiere

HKBCF hosted a premiere of “Angels & Demons” to celebrate Mother’s Day this year. The Charity Gala Premiere was held at AMC Pacific Place, Admiralty, on 8 May 2009. The premiere raised funds to support the work of HKBCF in education and patient support services.



HKBCF Ambassador, Ms. Bernice Liu made an appearance at the premiere to appeal to the female audience to perform monthly breast self-examinations.



HKBCF council members gathered together to celebrate mothers everywhere and support such a meaningful event.



We were honored to have the generous support of many sponsors and donors.

HKBCF would like to take this opportunity to thank the following generous donors and organizations for their support in The Charity Gala Premiere (in no particular order):

- Mr. Chan Yuk Kwan
- Sa Sa International Holdings Co. Ltd.
- Dr. Patrick Tong
- Ventura International Limited
- Tai Hung Fai Enterprise Co. Ltd.
- Dr. Wai Yuk Chun, Veronica
- Hong Kong Imaging and Diagnostic Centre
- iRAD Medical Diagnostic Centre
- Dr. Polly Cheung

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### **Pink Ribbon Partners**



#### **Charity Dinner by Slim Beauty Group Limited**

Slim Beauty Group Limited held its 21st annual dinner earlier this year. Through this event, they raised funds to support HKBCF. Ms. Daisy Kwan, our Executive Director presented a certificate of appreciation to Ms. Fanny Tse (right), General Manager of Slim Beauty Group Limited for their generous support.

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### **MGB Hiking**

The wholesale and retail group Metro Group Buying HK Limited (MGB) organized a staff hiking fundraising event on 9 May 2009 for HKBCF. MGB staff wore a specially designed T-shirt for this event and enjoyed a great day out full of meaning at the Lion Rock Country Park.

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### **Wine Tasting with Love**

Cottage Vineyards (International) Limited hosted the Wine Divas wine-tasting function at Café Landmark on 20 July 2009; the proceeds from the event were donated to HKBCF. Part of the sales proceeds generated from the event and at the Cottage Vineyards shop for the remainder of July was also donated to our Foundation.

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Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation is extremely grateful to our Pink Ribbon Partners for their philanthropic commitment. Their support, both in the form of underwriting for specific projects and in mutually beneficial promotional activities, has helped our work in the fight against breast cancer.

Our Pink Ribbon Partner Campaign highlights a number of retail brands, organizations and individuals who support HKBCF's mission and vision on breast cancer awareness. If you are interested in participating in our program, simply identify a product or service – a "Pink Ribbon Product" and donate a portion of or all sales to our cause for a period of time. To explore a mutually beneficial partnership with our cause, please contact us on 2525 6033 or [info@hkbcf.org](mailto:info@hkbcf.org).

Nevertheless, we do not endorse or promote any products, services or information provided by our partners in these activities. We encourage consumers to ask critical questions before buying products/services supporting breast cancer.

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### **Newsbreak**



### **Hopewell Holdings Limited promotes breath health**

In the weekend of Mother's Day this year, Hopewell Holdings Limited supported the Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation by displaying a health message on the exterior LED wall of Hopewell Centre. The message: "Brought to you by Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation: Early detection saves lives" was shown to remind Hong Kong women about the importance of breast health

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### Member Agency of the Hong Kong Community Chest

Commencing April 2009, HKBCF has become a member agency of the Hong Kong Community Chest. Our patient support services for the year 2009 to 2010 will be subsidized by the Chest fund.

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### supports "Free Mammography Service"

CLP Holdings Limited is generously supporting our cause by sponsoring 400 people for the "Free Mammography Service" for underprivileged women, with the aim of educating women at large of the importance of biennial mammography screening.

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### Over 2,000 participants

The first public report of the first- of- its kind "Hong Kong Breast Cancer Registry" will be released in mid September this year. The research findings will be uploaded to our website for public access.

The HKBCR is making steady progress with over 2,000 patients and survivors participating so far. However, the success of HKBCR counts on the continuous support and participation of breast cancer survivors and patients. If you have not participated and would like to be involved, please sign and return the HKBCR Consent Form, this will allow us to collect your information. Your contribution is invaluable towards achieving the important objectives of this long-term project.

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### Latest Publications

The latest breast cancer statistics reports that there are alarmingly 7 new breast cancer cases being diagnosed everyday in Hong Kong. This makes our work in education and prevention at HKBCF vital and imperative. We have produced an updated "A Guide to Breast Healthcare" DVD and "Breast Self-examination" bookmark with enriched contents for public access. Adopting the creative concept from the "Breast Cancer Won't Wait" commercial from the National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre in Australia, we produced a local version to reinforce the importance of early detection



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## Forum

### Insurance Issues

Contributed by Helen Tortoisshell

Many of us are covered by private health insurance and yet when it comes to making a cancer related claim we can face problems getting the insurers to pay. Of particular concern is coverage for reconstruction following mastectomy and cover for elective surgery. Many Hong Kong based and international policies exclude reconstructive or plastic surgery unless it can be classed as a medical necessity.

There is usually no definition of what a medical necessity means but recently one of our members had to deal with this issue. With the assistance of her surgeon she sent in her claim with a covering letter setting out the circumstances of her surgery. The member had a bilateral mastectomy with immediate reconstruction. Whilst she had been advised to have a left breast mastectomy, the right breast mastectomy was elective. Plastic or reconstructive surgery was excluded from the policy unless it was a medical necessity. The surgeon involved was able to advise that the bilateral mastectomy and the reconstruction were advised because without them there could be a need for further medical treatment to problems that might arise from a single mastectomy (such as posture and back issues). The surgeon did not state that this was a medical "necessity", merely that it was advisable. The insurers accepted this and paid the claim in full.

The experience of other members has not always been so fortunate and there have been incidences of claims not being paid in full. Obviously much depends on the wording of the policy but as the above example shows it is worth reviewing the policy cover in detail and then assessing how best to present the claim to the insurers. It is for many of us worth having a go anyway to see whether the boundaries can be pushed.

With the cost of surgery being so high, any information we can share as to insurance coverage will benefit us all.

(The content of this article reflects personal opinions of the contributor and does not represent the views of HKBCF.)

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HKBCF members are welcome to express themselves in their own words at "Forum". Topics include: life experience or thoughts, dietary advice, recipes, and treatment journey. If you would like to submit a work of your own to HKBCF, you can do so by mail, fax or email (fanniekei@hkbcf.org). Please write "Submission for Forum" in the contribution with your name and telephone number. The writers will be awarded a souvenir once their contributions are published. We reserve the editorial rights on all submissions.

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## Public Education

During the past few months, we organized breast health talks for schools including: Queen Elizabeth School, Wong Kam Fai Secondary School and Belilios Public School. For companies and women associations, we have reached out to the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong, the law offices of Minter Ellison, and the Association of Women with Disabilities Hong Kong.

### “Breast Health Dessert Workshop”

The Home Management Centre of Hong Kong Electric (HMC) organized the “Breast Health Dessert Workshop” on 25 March 2009 in collaboration with Royal Selangor (HK) Ltd. to raise its members’ awareness on breast cancer and to raise funds for HKBCF. The workshop started with a breast cancer talk followed by a tutorial on how to make an almond pudding dessert. The jelly moulds used at the workshops were sponsored by Royal Selangor (HK) Ltd. in which all of the sales proceeds were donated to HKBCF.



Ms. Law, a registered nurse of HKBCF, explained how to perform breast self-examinations to class members of the Home Management Centre.



Actress Lily Hong was the special guest and made dessert with the members.

### Association of Women with Disabilities Hong Kong

In our public education work, we do not neglect people with special needs. We understand that due to different degrees of disabilities, handicapped women may face various difficulties in doing breast self-examination. On 26 May 2009, HKBCF organized a talk for the Association of Women with Disabilities Hong Kong. Our registered nurse, Ms. Cheung, explained breast health knowledge and demonstrated to the audience how to perform a breast self-examination.



## Breast Cancer Update

### Diet management after breast cancer surgery 21 March 2009

Ms. Chan Wai King, an experienced registered Chinese medicine practitioner, shared her views on diet management for breast cancer patients and survivors from a Chinese medicine perspective. She also provided tips for breast cancer patients who are undergoing radiotherapy or chemotherapy on ways to choose a suitable diet.



### Health effects of soya bean products in women 18 April 2009

Recent research found that soya bean products have positive effects on lowering prostate cancer as well as breast cancer risk, while some other reported that soya products would stimulate cancer tumor development.

Should women, especially breast cancer patients or survivors, take soya bean products? Professor Suzanne Ho (pictured), Director of Centre of Research and Promotion of Women's Health shares her views on this controversial issue.

### Update on Targeted Therapy for Breast Cancer 23 May 2009

Dr. Michael Cheung, a clinical oncologist, explained the effectiveness of targeted therapy for curing breast cancer, and introduced the latest developments of this treatment to our members.



### Decision making in breast reconstruction after mastectomy 13 June 2009

What is the procedure for breast reconstruction? How does one prepare for breast reconstruction? How can one tell if they are suitable for it? Dr. Ho Chiu Ming (pictured), a plastic surgeon, provides answers for the above using case studies as well as illustrative pictures.

Monthly Breast Cancer Educational talks from March 2009 to February 2010 are sponsored



### Breast Cancer: Drug Therapy 5 March 2009

Dr. Diana Siu, a Medical Oncologist, explained the effects and nature of various kinds of drugs to be used during breast cancer treatment, and how these drugs are applied for hormone therapy or chemotherapy. Around 100 HKBCF members attended as well as members of the general public.



### **Update on Hormonal Therapy for Breast Cancer 10 June 2009**

Clinical Oncologist Dr. Michael Cheung explained the effectiveness of hormone therapy for curing breast cancer, and introduced the latest developments in this treatment. Over 100 HKBCF members attended as well as members of the general public.



The above seminars are sponsored by

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### **Member Activities**



#### **Organic Farm Outing**

In November 2008, our members had a pleasant visit to the Hong Kong Organic Country (HKOC) in Yuen Long. Upon request by members to revisit the farm, we organized another outing again in March this year. Over 50 members with friends and families joined, and enjoyed a green, refreshing and organic Sunday.

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### **Please Support Us!**

As a non-profit making charity, we rely on public donations and corporate sponsorships to sustain and expand our services. With your donation, we will be able to:

- Conduct breast health talks at schools and to women at large
- Produce more educational materials reinforcing breast health knowledge to the public
- Sustain our patient support services on their road to recovery
- Expand our Free Mammography Service to those in need
- Collect breast cancer data for the Hong Kong Breast Cancer Registry to enhance effectiveness of diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer and to help bring about changes in public policies for improved breast healthcare in Hong Kong

### **[Make a Donation](#)**