

PolyU-WHO Synergy: Healthy Ageing Conference 2025

The world is facing the challenge of an ageing population, making the maintenance of health and quality of life for the elderly an urgent issue. As the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Community Health Service, the School of Nursing at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), in collaboration with the PolyU Research Institute of Smart Ageing (RISA), held the Healthy Ageing Conference 2025 from 29 – 30 May. The conference aimed to promote healthy ageing efforts in the Western Pacific region and beyond, bringing together over 200 experts from 15 countries and regions.



Distinguished guests presided over the inaugural ceremony, including Dr Libby LEE, the Acting Secretary for Health of the Government of HKSAR (centre); Prof. Jin-Guang TENG, President of PolyU (6th from the right); Ms Xinjie Qi, Second Class Counsel (Deputy Director-General Level) of the Department of Ageing and Health, National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China (6th from the left); Dr Ching-Choi LAM, Member of Executive Council of HKSAR Government and Chief Executive Officer of Haven of Hope Christian Service (5th from the right); Dr Hiromasa OKAYASU, Director of the Division of Healthy Environments and Populations at the WHO WPRO (5th from the left); Prof. Kar-kan LING, Interim Vice President (Campus Development and Facilities) of PolyU (4th from the right); Dr Raymond HO, Assistant Director (Elderly Health) of the Department of Health of HKSAR (4th from the left); Prof. Angela LEUNG, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services HKSAR (3rd from the right); Prof. David SHUM, Dean of Faculty of Health and Social Sciences of PolyU (3rd from the left); Prof. ZHENG Yongping, Henry G. Leong Professor in Biomedical Engineering, Chair Professor of Biomedical Engineering of the Department of Biomedical Engineering, and Director of RISA of PolyU (2nd from the right); Prof. Janelle YORKE, Chair Professor of Nursing and Head of School, School of Nursing of PolyU (2nd from the left); Prof. Jed MONTAYRE, Associate Head (Strategy) and Associate Professor, School of Nursing of PolyU (1st from the right); and Prof. Ivy ZHAO, Assistant Professor of School of Nursing, and Deputy Director of WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services of PolyU (1st from the left).



Launching of the ICOPE 2.0 video at the Conference.



Prof. Angela LEUNG

Professor & Associate Head (Research)
Director, WHO Collaborating Centre
for Community Health Services, School of Nursing
Tel: (852) 2766 5587
Email: angela.ym.leung@polyu.edu.hk



Prof. Ivy ZHAO

Assistant Professor
Deputy Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for
Community Health Services School of Nursing,
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University,
Hong Kong SAR
Tel: (852) 2766 4550
Email: yan-ivy.zhao@polyu.edu.hk

Contact Us:

Website: <http://sn.polyu.edu.hk/whocc>
Email: sn.whocc@polyu.edu.hk



The WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services has developed comprehensive online and offline educational materials for ICOPE 2.0, with a training video premiered at the conference.

Dr Hiromasa OKAYASU, Director of the Division of Healthy Environments and Populations at the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO), reaffirmed that the conference offered an exceptional platform for policymakers, stakeholders, practitioners, researchers, and academics to come together and address the pressing trends and challenges related to population ageing in the region. He stated, “PolyU’s School of Nursing made significant efforts to facilitate a wide range of discussions, encompassing research and practical ideas, all with the aim of enhancing healthy ageing.”

In 2019, WHO introduced the Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) framework, transitioning from a disease-centred approach to one that assesses the intrinsic capacities of older adults—encompassing both physical and mental abilities. This comprehensive, person-centred model is designed to identify early signs of decline in intrinsic capacity, enabling timely interventions to mitigate, halt, or reverse frailty and dependence in older individuals. Building on expert feedback and the latest research, WHO has recently launched ICOPE 2.0, featuring the following key enhancements:

- 1. Inclusion of Three Essential Factors in Ageing:** In addition to evaluating six intrinsic capacities—cognition, mobility, nutrition, vision, hearing, and mental health—ICOPE 2.0 now incorporates “urinary incontinence management”, “social care and support”, “carer support” and vaccination advocacy, thus providing a more accurate representation of older adults' health status and quality of life.
- 2. Introduction of Three Filter Questions:** To streamline the assessment process for cognitive, hearing, and vision capabilities, a rapid screening system has been established. If an older adult responds “yes” to any of these questions, they will be referred directly for a comprehensive evaluation.
- 3. Provision of Immediate Recommendations and Interventions:** Following the completion of the ICOPE 2.0 assessment, the responsible assessor is equipped to offer tailored health advice and community support based on the individual needs of the older adult.

Prof. Angela LEUNG, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services, remarked, “ICOPE 2.0 enhances the entire assessment and intervention process, facilitating the early identification of older adults in need of support and care. This approach helps to mitigate or slow the decline in quality of life associated with ageing. Additionally, the HKSAR Government has been actively reinforcing support for caregivers in recent years, which aligns seamlessly with the inclusion of caregiver elements in ICOPE 2.0. This underscores the importance of recognising that caring for older adults involves not only the individuals themselves but also the necessity of bolstering support for caregivers, as this is crucial for sustainable solutions.”



Dr Libby LEE, the Acting Secretary for Health of the Government of HKSAR



Prof. Jing-guang TENG, President of PolyU



Ms Xinjie QI, Second Class Counsel (Deputy Director-General Level) of the Department of Ageing and Health, National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China



Dr Hiromasa OKAYASU, Director of the Division of Healthy Environments and Populations at the WHO WPRO



Group photo with our distinguished Guests of Honour, organizers, WHO representatives, local advisors, keynote speakers, and dedicated organizing committee members.

To enhance the understanding of ICOPE 2.0 among healthcare professionals and stakeholders in elder care, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services has developed comprehensive online and offline educational materials for ICOPE 2.0, with a training video premiered at the conference. The video not only elucidates the ICOPE 2.0 framework but also demonstrates its application through real-life case studies. Additionally, the conference featured an ICOPE Community Practice Workshop which attracted experts from various countries to explore the updates in the new version, share insights, and discuss community application strategies. This initiative aims to benefit older adults globally and foster cross-regional knowledge sharing and technology transfer.

Beyond promoting the implementation of ICOPE 2.0 in communities, the conference addressed a variety of topics related to healthy ageing, including policies on elderly health, technological innovations, and the latest developments in community care. Key areas of focus encompassed geriatric medicine, mental health, and smart ageing technologies, while also highlighting the latest research findings and practical examples of ageing studies from the Western Pacific region.

Prof. Leung envisioned that the conference and resource-sharing initiatives will inspire more community organisations, healthcare professionals, and policymakers to actively promote healthy ageing initiatives. The School of Nursing at PolyU will continue to uphold its leadership role as a WHO Collaborating Centre, driving the development and implementation of innovative solutions for elder health, thereby making a significant contribution to the global goal of achieving healthy ageing.

WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services (WHO CC) team's ICOPE progress sharing

“中國香港地區實施老年人整合照護模式的挑戰與機遇 Challenges and opportunities of implementing Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) in Hong Kong” was published on Chinese Nursing Management on 15 July 2025. With the global trend of population ageing, the World Health Organization (WHO) has introduced the Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) model, which emphasizes the maintenance of intrinsic capacity as a core and advocates for the development of a person-centred care system through cross-departmental collaboration. Since 2019, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University's WHO Collaborating Centre (WHO CC) for Community Health Services has been designated to take a leading role in the implementation and research of the ICOPE model in the Western Pacific Region. Progressing from the investigation of the reliability of the ICOPE screening tool to the implementation of the ICOPE model in community, from the adoption of ICOPE in primary healthcare settings to the preliminary trial in long-term care settings, the PolyU's WHO CC team continues to explore how to support practitioners and policy makers to agree and accept integrated care. This paper provides a comprehensive account of the adaptation of the ICOPE model in Hong Kong, China, critically examines the challenges encountered throughout the process, and discusses future opportunities for development, with the aim of providing evidence for other nations and regions for consideration when implementing ICOPE in the society.



The image shows the cover of a journal article. At the top left is the WHO logo. The title is '特別策劃 · 老年人整合照護模式 Special Planning' and '中國香港地區實施老年人整合照護模式的挑戰與機遇'. The authors are listed as '梁綺雯 趙妍 黃亞琪'. There is a small portrait of a woman on the right. The abstract and keywords are provided in both Chinese and English. The journal information at the bottom includes 'Chinese Nursing Management, 2025, 25(7):966-971' and the DOI: 10.3969/j.issn.1672-1756.2025.07.002.

梁綺雯, 趙妍, 黃亞琪。中國香港地區實施老年人整合照護模式的挑戰與機遇[J]。中國護理管理2025,25(7):966-971。
DOI:10.3969/j.issn.1672-1756.2025.07.002.

PolyU School of Nursing welcomes WHO Regional Director for Western Pacific to advance healthy ageing initiative

(10 September 2025) As the global population ages, ensuring the health and well-being of older adults has become a key priority. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) School of Nursing, serving as a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services, welcomed **Dr Saia Ma'u PIUKALA, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific**, for a visit to strengthen regional partnerships in promoting healthy ageing and advancing community-based integrated care for older populations.

During his visit to PolyU, Dr Piukala emphasised three key objectives: promoting healthy ageing, enhancing regional collaboration and empowering communities. He stated, "Our partnership with PolyU's WHO Collaborating Centre is pivotal in addressing the needs of ageing populations in the Western Pacific. By advancing tools like the Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) 2.0, we empower communities to deliver sustainable, equitable care for older adults, ensuring they thrive in their later years."

Prof. Ben YOUNG, PolyU Vice President (Student and Global Affairs), said, "We are honoured to host Dr Saia Ma'u PIUKALA with a view to furthering our shared mission of transforming elder care. PolyU School of Nursing's leadership in person-centered care, supported by innovative research and educational resources, positions us to drive meaningful change in healthy ageing across the region."

Led by **Prof. Angela LEUNG, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services at PolyU**, the School is advancing ICOPE 2.0 to enhance early identification and intervention for older adults. Prof. Leung remarked, "ICOPE 2.0 streamlines assessments and interventions, enabling timely support for older adults and their caregivers. With the HKSAR Government's emphasis on caregiver support, this framework aligns with our commitment to sustainable, community-driven care."

To support the adoption of ICOPE 2.0, the WHO Collaborating Centre has developed comprehensive online and offline educational materials, including a promotional video featuring real-life case studies. The Centre has also recently organised training programmes in Mainland China, Fiji, Cambodia and the Philippines, reaching over 6,000 participants through 54 webinars from 2021 to 2024. These initiatives foster cross-regional knowledge exchange and strengthen community-based care models.

Dr Piukala's visit also included discussions on geriatric medicine, mental health, smart ageing technologies and evidence-based policies, further reinforcing PolyU's role as a global leader in ageing and health research.



Dr Saia Ma'u PIUKALA, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific (4th from left); Prof. Ben YOUNG, PolyU Vice President (Student and Global Affairs) (4th from right); Dr Joanna Shuk Kuen SO, Assistant Director of Health (Elderly Health) and Member of the Local Advisory Committee of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Community Health Services (3rd from left); Prof. Janelle YORKE, Head of the School of Nursing of PolyU (1st from right) and Prof. Angela LEUNG, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre at PolyU (1st from left), pictured with other members of the WHO delegation.



Dr Saia Ma'u PIUKALA capturing a selfie with the meeting delegates.



Dr Saia Ma'u PIUKALA and Prof. Angela LEUNG pointing to their respective places of origin.



Exploring ways to strengthen regional partnerships for promoting ICOPE in the Western Pacific area.