

## Roles and Functions of the NGOs in Responding to the SARS Crisis in Hong Kong

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As social work academics, we have the social responsibility to provide service and information to the general public and the social work profession, to enable them to encounter the SARS crisis. With coordinated efforts of the colleagues of the Department of Social Work at CUHK, we

- organized an emotional support counseling hotline with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong from March 24 to April 26.
- organized two educational seminars for managers, social workers and nurses who were working in the elderly hostels for preventing and handling the outbreak of SARS in their work sites.

Other than universities, lots of NGOs, namely the welfare agencies, schools, religious organizations, as well as the community and grassroots organizations have initiated and organized numerous actions and responses to handle the SARS crisis. During the crisis, the civil society of Hong Kong has shown its committed moral obligation and responsibility, which can be mobilized for building a society of concern and trust.

We would like to conduct research and with other academics to examine on the NGOs' roles, functions, actions and responses in the SARS crisis. In the suggested research we may investigate how the duties of the government and the NGOs of the civil society were negotiated during the SARS crisis. We can also evaluate the roles and functions of the state and the civil society in dealing with the crisis. The research would provide insight and recommendation about the roles and functions of the government and the civil society, so that both parties may have a more efficient division of labour, a better coordinating mechanism and a more unified mission and vision when dealing with SARS and other pandemics in the future.