



PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Mrs Alice Chiu Tsang Hok-Wan, JP

Mrs Alice Chiu is Director of Henyep Development (Holdings) Limited, one of the most established financial services and investment management companies in Hong Kong. She founded the Sheen Hok Charitable Foundation in 1994, which has helped over 100 organizations both in Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland, and is an active supporter of local education development. In 1989, when the Yan Chai Hospital established its third primary school, it was named in honor of Mrs Chiu. Mrs Chiu also actively participates in various community services. She is the Fund Raising Chairman of Operation Smile, President of Hong Kong Marrow Match Foundation, Founding Fund Raising Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, and Member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority Appeal Panel.

Mrs. Chiu is a tireless fund-raiser whose work has been recognized by receiving awards such as “Outstanding Philanthropist” on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Hong Kong Council of Social Service. . In 1999, she was awarded “The Most Amazing Woman Award in Hong Kong”. In 2000, Mrs. Chiu was honored with “Knight in the Leopold II Order” by the Belgium Government, in recognition of her enormous contribution to the underprivileged and the needy. In year 2001, she has been honored with “The Leading Women Entrepreneurs of the World” award.

She is known for her hands on approach, and has shown that she is a businesswoman with a heart.

OSTEOPOROSIS FACT SHEET - ASIA

ALICE CHIU

The Facts

- Osteoporosis is a major health problem in Asia, but it has not been a priority for health authorities, in terms of prevention and treatment.
- Osteoporosis and its related fractures seem to be particularly prevalent in urbanized Asian cities such as Hong Kong and Singapore
- It is known that as many as 40% of older Hong Kong women and 12% of older Hong Kong men have osteoporosis.
- Moreover, 30% of older women and 16 % of older men may have vertebral deformities resulting from osteoporosis
- It is envisaged that with urbanization, osteoporosis will become as prevalent in other Asian countries
- Hip fracture is the gravest consequence of osteoporosis. In Hong Kong, the incidence of hip fracture increased by 300% in the last 3 decades. Currently 10 subjects are admitted into hospital for hip fracture everyday. The incidence of hip fracture among women is as high as 8 per 1000
- It has been projected that by 2050, more than 50% of all hip fractures around the world would occur in Asia ie there will be a total of 3.2 million hip fracture in this continent.
- Despite the grave situation, osteoporosis has not been a priority for health care financing in Hong Kong. For instance, while diabetic drugs are provided to all patients for free by the public health care system, osteoporosis drugs have to be paid for by patients. This situation is far from equitable.
- Fortunately, in Hong Kong, health care professionals and philanthropist have taken major initiatives in the battle against osteoporosis. For example, organising public information sessions and gaining funding for additional DEXA machines.
- There is more than one charitable organizations devoted solely to osteoporosis in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Osteoporosis Foundation is devoted to patient education and advocacy. The Osteoporosis Society of Hong Kong devotes itself to supporting scientific research and the training of health care professional. With their concerted efforts, osteoporosis has become a well known health problem among women, and the percentage of women who are taking positive actions and receiving drug treatment against osteoporosis have risen tremendously.
- The battle on convincing health authorities that osteoporosis should be a priority in healthcare will be an uphill one. The concerted efforts of philanthropists, osteoporosis organizations and most of all, women themselves, are required for this tall order.
- The International Osteoporosis Foundation has a pivotal role in uniting all Asian nations in the battle against osteoporosis

PERSONAL STATEMENT

WORKING FOR CHANGE

ALICE CHIU

First of all, let me introduce myself. I am Alice Chiu from Hong Kong.

I am honoured to join the International Osteoporosis Foundation as part of their family and participate in the Women Leaders Roundtable. It is a privilege for me to meet and communicate with so many extraordinary professionals and work hand in hand for the prevention of this disease.

I have engaged myself in charity work for 26 years. My first encounter with osteoporosis began in 1987, when I joined the Board of Directors of the Yan Chai Hospital in Hong Kong. I encountered many elderly patients and could not help noticing how many of them suffered from osteoporosis. Of every two elderly subjects that I met, one would be struck by osteoporosis. Many of them were severely kyphotic, or were wheelchair bound.

Since 1987, my voluntary work has spread from Hong Kong to China. I have traveled far and wide, to urbanized cities, as well as to the most rural parts of China. Where ever I go, I am struck by the large number of men and women with osteoporosis, and the enormity of their pain and distress.

Osteoporosis is indeed a major health problem in Asia. In my homeland, Hong Kong, one third of women suffers from osteoporosis. Every day, at least ten subjects are admitted into hospital with hip fracture. We now know that by the year 2050, more than half of all hip fracture would occur in Asia. We will face the daunting burden of 3.2 million hip fractures.

Unfortunately, many Asian countries do not have adequate resources to devote to osteoporosis. For the more affluent Asian countries, government and communities are not fully aware of how disabling osteoporosis is. Unfortunately, osteoporosis remains very low on health care priorities in terms of prevention and treatment.

Efforts to change this must be ongoing. I was struck by the foundation's great and realistic mission. It did not take me long to join the IOF family.

Most of my work in the field of osteoporosis is conducted with two members of the IOF family: the Hong Kong Osteoporosis Foundation and the Asian Pacific Osteoporosis Foundation. We strive to combat osteoporosis by advocacy, health education and patient support. In 2005, we have hosted several symposiums for the public, lobbied our health ministers, and we have raised funds for needy patients so that they can have drugs for osteoporosis. During World Osteoporosis Day in 2005, we set the World record by hosting a mass exercise rally for a thousand people.

I hope to broaden my service base to China and other Asian countries, for I realize that our work will mean much more if we can share our experience with our alliances in Asia. It is our mission to foster such coalition. We will only succeed if we stand united.

Osteoporosis is now a top priority for my family trust-the Seen Hok Charitable Foundation. For this year's World Osteoporosis Day, we plan to organize a charity dinner to raise funds for osteoporosis patients and their families, host the "Taste and Show Carnival", as well as a symposium for the medical profession.

I believe that women have the power to do many great things to care for and help other people. In the last 20 years, I have traveled to mainland China frequently to deliver major charity programs. This involves travels to the most remote regions of China. This would not have been possible if I did not have a strong body. Strong bones are essential for supporting a strong body. For instance, many women who experience hip fractures are disabled for life. I have tried to maintain strong bones by keeping to a strict regime of regular exercise and a healthy diet. This has paid off. My bones are strong and I have the strength to help others. Strong women have the strength to help others. Strong women have strong bones.

Osteoporosis will remain as a major health challenge for Asians in the decades to come. We must work with the International Osteoporosis Foundation to generate resource, lobby governments, and empower women in their fight against osteoporosis. We must unite in the fight against osteoporosis.