

To: Assignment Editors, Managing Editors and Reporters
(For Immediate Release)

Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation
Live Symposium on Breast Health Education 2022
Introducing The Latest Breast Cancer Treatment Techniques and Data Analysis

A Significant Drop in Visits to Post-operative Services Amidst the Fifth Wave of Pandemic
Experts: Avoid Procrastination of Cancer Treatment!

(Hong Kong, 28 May, 2022) The continuing pandemic in Hong Kong led to anxiety and uncertainty for breast cancer patients.

Today, the Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation (The Foundation) successfully held the Live Symposium on Breast Health Education 2022, focusing on the COVID-19 and the latest breast cancer treatment technologies. It was broadcasted live on Facebook and YouTube and was held at the HKBCF Jockey Club Breast Health Centre (Kowloon) simultaneously.

The keynote speakers include Dr. Polly CHEUNG, the Founder of the Foundation; Dr. Ginette CHEUNG, clinical psychologist; Dr. Vicky CHAN, specialist in Medical Oncology; Dr. Wai Ka HUNG, Member of the Foundation's Management Committee; Dr. Joanne CHIU, specialist in Medical Oncology and Dr. Tsz Kok YAU, specialist in Clinical Oncology. A total of six experts in various specialties shared the impacts of the COVID-19 on breast cancer treatments, as well as the latest treatment techniques and research data.

Dr. Chun Chung YAU, Member of HKBCF's Management Committee, said: "This is the third year of the Live Symposium on Breast Health Education of the Foundation. On average, 13 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every day in Hong Kong, and a growing trend is observed. During its Breast Cancer Survivorship Month, the Foundation hopes to cheer up breast cancer survivors, promote mutual encouragement between breast cancer survivors and caregivers, as well as raise public awareness of breast health."

Dr. Polly CHEUNG shared that during the pandemic, cancer screenings and treatments were deferred. Some women hesitated to go to the hospital even if they had breast cancer symptoms, which affected

the diagnosis and treatment. During the fifth wave of pandemic, the visits to the Foundation for post-operative services significantly dropped. For example, lymphoedema measurement services decreased by about 47%. The number of patients receiving lymphoedema treatments decreased by 38%. Moreover, breast cancer screening services decreased by 69%. She reminded the public that the onset of breast cancer is unpredictable, and the growth of tumors will not slow down due to the pandemic. She recommended methods to avoid contracting the virus and complications during cancer treatments.

Dr. Ginette CHEUNG said the main sources of stress for cancer patients lie in the rescheduling of doctor's visits and drop in family income, etc. High levels of stress are associated with a higher risk of depression and anxiety. To cope with the stress, patients could start with changing their distorted thinking and behaviours, recording their sleeping patterns is one of the ways for improving sleep quality, and establishing social networks, etc., which are of great help in building resilience.

Dr. Wai Ka HUNG pointed out that breast cancer patients may have to suffer from different side effects when receiving chemotherapy. As for whether patients can benefit from chemotherapy, genetic gauging technology can be used to assess whether the patients can benefit from chemotherapy. Patients are divided into groups to assess the effectiveness of the chemotherapy, and the results can help guide the choice of further treatment.

Dr. Vicky CHAN mentioned that the new treatment options for high-risk breast cancer patients can significantly reduce their risk of death. For example, in HR+/HER2- high-risk breast cancer patients, combining new oral drugs with hormone therapy can reduce the chance of recurrence. Compared with breast cancer patients who only received hormonal therapy after adjuvant chemotherapy, the combination therapy reduced the risk of recurrence by about 30%.

Dr. Joanne CHIU pointed out that the targeted therapy for HER2-positive breast cancer has continued to improve in the past two decades. High-risk HER2-positive stage II to III breast cancer patients may receive dual-targeted drugs and chemotherapy before surgery. It can effectively shrink the tumor for resection. For patients with stage IV breast cancer, the new generation of the antibody-drug conjugate is more effective than the first-generation drugs. There is a more pronounced effect, and even patients with brain metastases can benefit.

Dr. Tsz Kok YAU pointed out that about a quarter of advanced breast cancer patients was at the risk of brain metastasis. New treatment techniques, such as Intensity-Modulated Radiation Therapy

(IMRT) and stereotactic radiation, can deliver higher radiation doses while avoiding surrounding brain tissue, reducing the risk of post-radiation cognitive decline.

For a summary of the symposium, please click: <https://bit.ly/38K7QLt>

To review the symposium, please click: <https://bit.ly/38jOM6O>

Download high-resolution photos: <https://bit.ly/39DTa0P>

Media enquiries:

Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation

Public Relations and Communications Department

Milla Cheung

Email: millacheung@hkbcf.org

Tel: 3143 7360

Anthony Lam

Email: anthonylam@hkbcf.org

Tel: 3143 7370