Press Release

Preventing mismanagement of unused medicines
Residents of Rhythm Garden returned the residue of drugs to HKAP

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For immediate release

Rhythm Garden at San Po Kong, under the management of Urban Group, organised the “Medication Waste Disposal Program” on 21 August, appealing the residents to return the unused or expired medicines to the Hong Kong Academy of Pharmacy (HKAP) for disposal. This Program relieves any medicine from polluting the environment and increases the awareness of environmental protection.

Most families in Hong Kong tend to retain medicines for future uses, with an attempt to save money. Yet problems arise due to limited knowledge on the shelf life of medicines and their harmfulness to the environment if casually discarded in the rubbish bin or the toilet bowl.

Dr Edmond Cheng, Managing Director of Urban Group said, "Our management services would be customized according to the needs of the residents living in each estate. Majority of the families in Rhythm Garden have children and they are usually more vulnerable than adults. Elderly residents also dominate in this estate and they are more often to take drugs due to various sicknesses at their age. The idea of ‘Medication Waste Disposal Program’ comes from their needs. This is the second year of organizing this Program as response was encouraging last year. We collected many boxes of unused and expired drugs from more than 100 users within a few hours.”

“Lesser drugs are collected this year which is a good news indicating that more residents have properly used the given drugs. HKAP will send the collected drugs to Environmental Protection Department for disposal. EPD will burn the drugs as they are unable to decompose in the environment and the toxicity of the drug would cause pollution or even harm to the ecosystem if they are wrongly disposed in the sea or the landfills,” Dr Cheng said.
Ms Rosa Cheng, President of the Hong Kong Academy of Pharmacy is deeply concerned on certain drug users, especially the elderly people, who return a large amount of drugs. "It is important to find out the underlying reasons of why the patients are not following the doctor's instructions - whether the patients have not clearly communicated their conditions to the doctors or the side effects have caused them to stop taking the drugs at their own decisions, our pharmacists should follow up on this," she said.

Dr Edmond Cheng continued, "This Program provides an opportunity for the residents of Rhythm Garden to meet pharmacists whose explanation can provide the correct method of taking the drug, reduce the patients' concerns and avoid any waste of drugs. It also serves to promote the importance of proper disposal of drugs, contributing to environmental protection. We are very grateful to have the participation and support from the Hong Kong Academy of Pharmacy, which sends pharmacists to participate in this activity and teach the residents the proper way of using drugs."

Rhythm Garden Management Office is keen to promote and implement green and waste management for its residents. In addition to the “Medication Waste Disposal Program”, Rhythm Garden provides used clothes, glass bottles, fluorescent tubes, CFLs, rechargeable batteries and optical disc recycling facilities. The Office has also introduced odor-free kitchen waste recycling, turning the kitchen waste into compost. In response to carbon reduction, Rhythm Garden Management Office just organized the “Carbon Reduction Cycling Campaign” which stored electricity through cycling. The electricity generated by the effort of the residents is used for the illumination device in the public area.

Urban Group is one of the leading property assets and facility services companies in Hong Kong. Currently, the Group manages 368 projects territory-wide and is serving 1 million people in Hong Kong. The Group plays an active role in shouldering corporate social responsibility and its efforts in caring for the community has been well recognized over the years.

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Should you need further information, please contact Ms Rose Cheng of the Marketing and Communications Department of Urban Group at 2626 7890.
(Left) A pharmacist is trying to understand why an elder stores up a large amount of unused drugs. (Right) He also explains the proper use of drugs to a user living in Rhythm Garden.