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Towards the goal of a healthy university in Hong Kong: The Pilot Health Promotion Projects

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Background and Aim: Since the Ottawa Charta for Health Promotion in 1986, health promotion in higher education has gradually drawn to attention at the global level as universities play an increasingly important role in the society due to increasing proportion of adults receiving higher education. While network for Health Promoting Universities are well established in Europe providing mutual support at the organizational level, there is much room for improvement in enhancing Asia-Pacific Network including Hong Kong. This study aims at exploring the feasibility and effectiveness of organizing Pilot Health Promotion Projects with multidisciplinary coordination in a local university in Hong Kong.

Method: To start from University Health Service UHS, 6 health campaigns were organized in 2014/15 overall in-charge by the Senior Medical Officer. Each team was led by a Medical Officer, with members including Nurse, Chinese Medicine Officer, Allied Health members, University students major in health related disciplines, external departments and supporting staff.

Results: The 6 health campaigns were Travel Health Campaign, Well Women Campaign, Skin Health Campaign, Cardiovascular Health Campaign, Student Mental Health Week, and Campus Jog for Health. Campaign activities throughout the year included Health Talks, Exhibitions, Interactive Workshops, Health Check-ups and jogging around the campus. There were 20 departments within the University and from external bodies involved in the collaboration, with positive feedback from both students and staff received.

Conclusions: With the encouraging experience from the Pilot Health Promotion Projects organized by UHS, it is reinforced that the way of upgrading the previous ad hoc one-off health campaigns organized by individual unit in a University, to large-scale, systematic and sustainable movement by multidisciplinary units require strategic planning with the health policy at the organizational level and support from senior management.