



CUHK INSTITUTE OF HEALTH EQUITY

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



CUHK INSTITUTE OF HEALTH EQUITY
香港中文大學健康公平研究所



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Reporting period: 1 August 2021 – 31 July 2022

THE INSTITUTE

The CUHK Institute of Health Equity is established in January 2020



The CUHK Institute of Health Equity is established in January 2020 with Prof. Jean Woo, Prof. Sir Michael Marmot and Prof. Eng-kiong Yeoh as Co-directors. The University College London Institute of Health Equity is the collaborative partner of the Institute.

Vision

The Institute aspires to establish CUHK as a leading institution in promoting health equity studies in the Asian region.

Mission

The Institute endeavours to examine and understand issues of health equity in Hong Kong, inform government policies and intervention programmes to improve health equity of Hong Kong, and establish a network for the Asian region.

Logo

The two intertwining rings symbolizes intersectionality of different social factors that interconnect with each other, while the transitional gradient of color of the two rings represents the socioeconomic gradient in health, which is a central concept to understanding and achieving health equity.



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Social Media Platforms



Steering Committee

- Chairman: Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Research (*ex officio*)
Professor Mai Har Sham
- Members: Dean, Faculty of Medicine (*ex officio*)
Professor Francis K.L. Chan
- Dean, Faculty of Social Science (*ex officio*)
Professor Chi-yue Chiu
- Co-Directors, CUHK Institute of Health Equity (*ex officio*)
Professor Jean Woo
Professor Eng-kiong Yeoh
- Secretary: Functional Manager, CUHK Institute of Health Equity (*ex officio*)
Mr. Wai-tong Richard Lee

Executive Committee

The Institute has established an Executive Committee to oversee the administration of activities and affairs of the Institute.

Directorship and Affiliated Members

Co-directors

Prof. Jean Woo Prof. Sir Michael Marmot Prof. Eng-kiong Yeoh

Associate Directors

Prof. Hung Wong Prof. Roger Chung

Affiliated Members

Prof. Samuel Wong Dr. Ning Fan

OVERVIEW OF OUR WORK

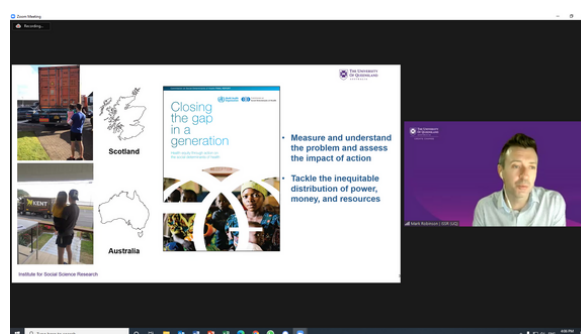
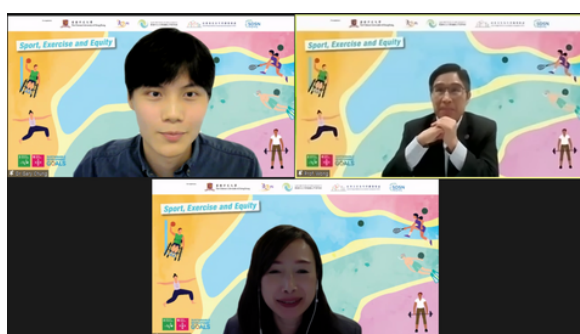
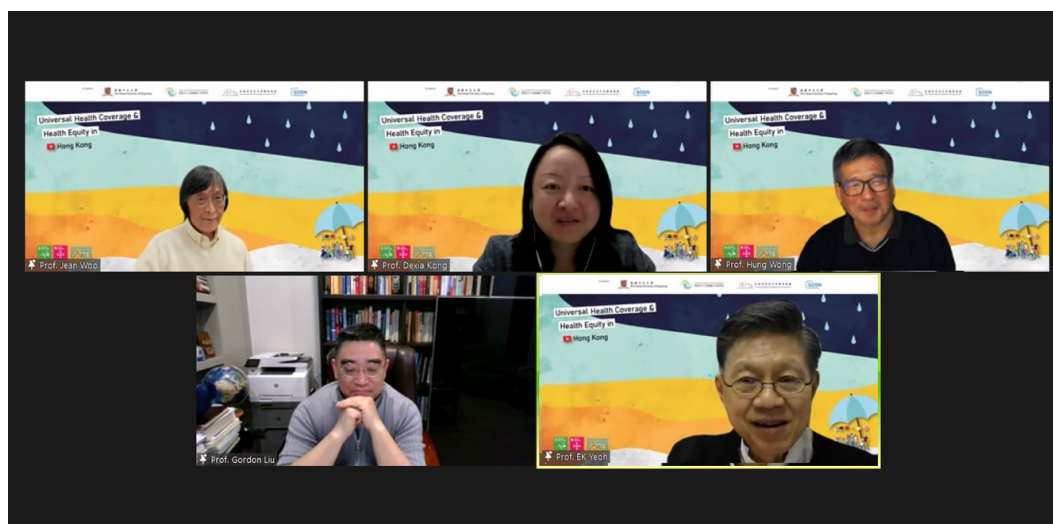
To establish CUHK as a leading institution in promoting health equity studies in the Asian region



RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Institute continues to raise public awareness on health equity issues through various channels to reach a wider audience this year.

Webinar series have been held throughout the year to engage and discuss with experts of local and international partners on wide-ranging topics from universal health care, sport and exercise with equity to ethical perspectives with equity amidst Covid-19. The webinars were joined by over 500 participants from general public, academia and practitioners from related sectors.



Two physical events were held by end of 2021. Officiated by Prof. Rocky S. Tuan, Vice-Chancellor and President of CUHK, the Institute co-organised with the CUHK Press to announce the book launch of the Chinese edition of the influential work *The Health Gap* authored by Professor Sir Michael Marmot, with presentation of the latest findings on health inequality in Hong Kong on 16 November 2021. In December 2021, an Ethnic Minorities Health Symposium were co-organized with Health in Action at Kowloon Mosque to explore how health inequalities can be addressed through upstream interventions and strategies.



In July 2022, the Institute has launched its blog where researchers could share their viewpoints on different topics through the lens of health equity. Some of the articles were also published in newspapers. The blog will serve as a platform to spark interest of the public and stimulate discussions.



Improving health is more than improving healthcare

While it is not surprising the disadvantaged among us are more prone to chronic illness, the good news is that the situation can be remedied through across-the-board efforts of government, civil society and city's businesses.

By Eric Lai

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the plight of the underprivileged in society. Imagine the life of a typical grass-root person in Hong Kong – for example, a contract cleaner working nine to 12 hours a day, six days a week, and earning just above the statutory minimum wage of HK\$37.50 (US\$8) per hour.

They can hardly afford any time for exercise or the money for a gym membership. The weather can be unforgiving – summer days are...



疫後「復常」，邁向平等身心發展（下）

上回提到，嚴格防疫措施除了影響學童的運動水平和精神健康，更加劇了社會經濟地位所導致的不平等。透過運動提升學童的抗逆力可能是其中一個具成本效益的普及性預防策略，以改善其精神健康和減低健康差異。惟要充分發揮運動對學童精神健康的益處，提高整體運動量和促進平等參與十分重要。

CAPACITY BUILDING

The Institute endeavours to build up the capacity of various stakeholders to understand and work towards addressing health inequalities in different sectors.

The Institute is the Thematic Partner to the Hong Kong Social Enterprise Challenge 2021-22, which is the first inter-collegiate social venture startup competition Hong Kong. IHE researchers grasped the opportunity to introduce health equity concepts and its implication on social enterprises in the inaugural talk officiated by the Undersecretary for Home Affairs as well as workshops with participating teams. A winning team was selected for the Timely Impact Award in the competition.



“Our vision is to have a world of inclusive and equitable access to quality education, including those with special needs. IHE inspires our project team to further quantify the health equity impact and health outcome through systematic approaches and indicators.” - Victor, Founder of Kinnectus

To provide a perspective of health equity to university students, the Institute delivered talks to over 450 students from medicine, business and social science disciplines in six universities and tertiary institutions. Researchers of the Institute also mentored students through briefings and discussion meetings to understand health equity issues through literature review and writing up briefs.

“Working on the health equity report has been personally fulfilling and meaningful. It has provided me the opportunity to explore my interest in public health and learn more about the health inequalities that exist in Hong Kong.”



Thiashya Jayasekera
(Medicine, Year 5)

ASSESS HEALTH EQUITY AND IDENTIFY SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

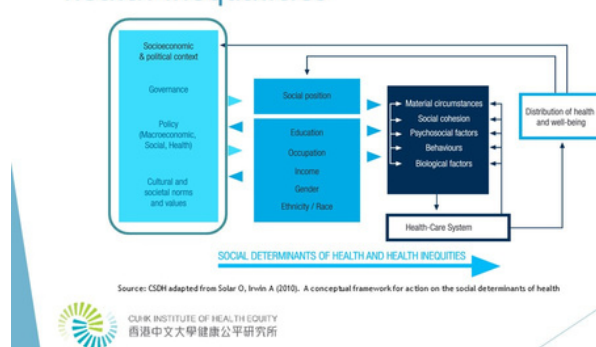
In December 2021, the Institute published the full report “*Build back fairer: reducing socioeconomic inequalities in health in Hong Kong*”. The report gives an overview of inequalities in health and the social determinants in Hong Kong, with a focus on the impact of different social conditions and the on-going COVID-19 pandemic on health. Subsequent reports will examine upstream determinants of health through life course and recommendations on strategies to achieve health equity, leading to the final report to address the key question of the longest life expectancy enjoyed by Hong Kong people in the world.



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Upstream structural determinants and health inequalities



A research initiated by the Institute to examine the impact of the pandemic on health equity in Hong Kong has led to four articles published to identify and elaborate the differential effects of social determinants of health such as multimorbidity, social capital, impact of socioeconomic inequality on the mental well-being of Hong Kong people as well as resilience and coping strategies of older adults.

Another cross-country research with grants obtained from Worldwide Universities Network to examine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on young people is in progress with research articles submitted and a conference to discuss the findings scheduled to be held by end of 2022.

Published: 23 September 2021

The mediating role of individual-level social capital among worries, mental health and subjective well-being among adults in Hong Kong during the COVID-19 pandemic

[Siu-Ming Chan](#) [✉](#), [Gary Ka-Ki Chung](#), [Yat-Hang Chan](#), [Jean Woo](#), [Eng Kiong Yeoh](#), [Roger Yat-Nork Chung](#), [Samuel Yeung-Shan Wong](#), [Michael Marmot](#), [Richard Wai-Tong Lee](#) & [Hung Wong](#)

[Current Psychology](#) (2021) | [Cite this article](#)

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has substantially induced worries and affected individual mental health and subjective well-being. Nonetheless, a high level of social capital could potentially protect individuals who suffer from mental health problems and thus promote their subjective well-being, especially under the social distancing policies during the pandemic. To this end, based on a random sample of 1053 Hong Kong adults, structural equation modeling was ...



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WUN RESEARCH PROJECTS

APR 12, 2021

Health & Social Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Young People across the Socioeconomic Ladder: A Cross-Country Comparative Study



Young people are facing devastating health and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during their critical developmental period. However, their health and well-being are often neglected and superseded by other immediate considerations over the pandemic control and the economy. As the UN Inter-agency Network on Youth Development emphasizes, sustainable recovery from COVID-19

ACADEMIC LEADS

Hung Wong
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
[Contact](#)

Roger Chung
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
[Contact](#)

PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES

- The University of Auckland
- University of Bristol
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Maastricht University

ASIAN NETWORK AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

The Asian Network has been progressing steadily to explore factors driving good health outcomes in the East Asian region. The Institute is conducting in-depth examination of trends in social determinants and health outcomes of Asian countries with a view to identify key factors which could also enlighten comparison with western countries.

The Institute is also establishing network with universities in other regions to expand its research capacity. Following the UQ-CUHK Health Equity Webinar Series, IHE continued to work with professors of the University of Queensland on healthy ageing with the support of a seed fund obtained as well as health inequality monitoring in Hong Kong in the light of the experiences in the UK and Australia. Discussion with University of Manchester for in-depth collaboration is in progress.

IHE researchers have also been invited as guest editors for special issues "The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Health Inequalities" and "Tackling Health Inequalities in Ageing Societies" in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.

GRANT AND PUBLICATION

The Health and Medical Research Fund has approved a grant in April 2022 to assess the trend and project the trajectory of healthy life expectancy in Hong Kong. It will give impetus to understand the wellbeing in addition to the life span of longevity in Hong Kong.

In the reporting period, the Institute has published 13 articles to enhance the understanding of health inequalities in Hong Kong and other countries.

Chan, S. M., Au-Yeung, T. C., Wong, H., Chung, R. Y., & Chung, G. K. (2021). Long Working Hours, Precarious Employment and Anxiety Symptoms Among Working Chinese Population in Hong Kong. *The Psychiatric quarterly*, 92(4), 1745–1757. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-021-09938-3>

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Fung, E., Chiu, S. W., Lam, H. M., Chung, R. Y., Wong, S., Chan, S. M., Dong, D., & Wong, H. (2021). The Impact of Bedbug (*Cimex* spp.) Bites on Self-Rated Health and Average Hours of Sleep per Day: A Cross-Sectional Study among Hong Kong Bedbug Victims. *Insects*, 12(11), 1027. <https://doi.org/10.3390/insects12111027>

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