



**Hong Kong's first procedural learning method in cooking  
to alleviate MCI symptoms  
Towngas and Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited  
launched "Chef Anchor" cooking programme  
90% of participants show improvement after the course**

(8 June 2017) A local survey showed that 9 out of 100 elderly people over 70 years old suffer from Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI). The transformation rate from MCI to Alzheimer's disease is 10-15% and currently there is no permanent cure for Alzheimer's disease. Therefore, early interventions with suitable treatments and assistance are necessary to alleviate the MCI symptoms. The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited (Towngas) and The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited (Welfare Council) launched a collaborative cooking programme, "Chef Anchor", designed by occupational therapists to offer training to MCI participants. Survey revealed that 90% of MCI participants showed improvements on self-confidence, cooking skills and cognitive ability after completion of Phase One of "Chef Anchor".

**The first multidisciplinary procedural learning method in cooking course for MCI patients launched by social welfare and business sector**

"Chef Anchor" is a multidisciplinary programme launched by social welfare and business sector. In March 2017, Welfare Council conducted a cognitive screening test for 350 elderly people from its elderly centres. 20 participants showed the tendency of MCI and difficulties in daily cooking.

"Chef Anchor" is a systematic programme with 4 steps to alleviate the symptoms of MCI, including:

1. Occupational therapists of Welfare Council and social workers designed the session plan of the course and the data collection forms for the analysis.
2. Occupational therapists of Welfare Council, social workers, Towngas cooking instructors and designers worked together to tailor-make the task-analyzed recipe. This recipe featured all necessary ingredients for the dish with cooking procedures written in simple, concise and clear wordings. Safety instruction, colours, word and image explanations were also used for easy understanding.



3. Occupational therapists of Welfare Council and social workers provided optimum assistance for MCI patients in small group sessions.
4. A safety in cooking song was composed, using the melody of Towngas commercial theme song with new lyrics. Participants were then required to sing the song in every session. The objective of this practice was to provide cognitive training and rebuild participants' self-confidence.

Isaac Yeung, Towngas Head of Corporate Affairs shared, “The objective of this collaborative programme was to improve the self-confidence and cognitive ability of MCI patients through regular practice of their daily habits such as cooking. Towngas would like to offer our specialty – flame cooking, to help the MCI patients and create shared value. Meanwhile, we encourage our colleagues, clients and volunteers to participate so that we could also learn more about the situation of MCI patients.”

Pauline Wong, Towngas Cooking Centre Manager shared, “task-analyzed recipe is different from normal recipes. More details are given in every procedure with the use of different colours, bigger font size and photo images, so that participants could enjoy the fun of cooking in a safe environment.”

Charis Wong, Occupational Therapist of Welfare Council said, “MCI patients have generally lower ability in analysis and reasoning. Therefore, they need a longer period of time to learn a new skill. Normal recipes usually lack a clear breakdown of the whole cooking process into small steps, which may be difficult for participants with MCI. Hence, task-analyzed recipe is specially designed for MCI participants. Through the use of task-analysis, colour coding, pictures, and simple wordings, the instructions are broken down in a clearer way.

### **The findings of “Chef Anchor” programme” in Phase One: Improvements on 90% of MCI patients**

1. Upon the completion of five courses in Phase One, 19 elderly with MCI were surveyed. Results are as below:
2. Participants who accepted the task-analyzed cooking method has improvements in self-confidence, cooking skills and cognitive ability.
3. Participants' ability to follow the cooking procedures improved.



- Participants shared that the programme developed their self-confidence. Errors such as messing up cooking procedures were reduced.
- 90% of participants had higher scores.

Joe Sham, Assistant Director of Welfare Council said, “We are pleased to have collaborated with Towngas and launched the ‘Chef Anchor’ programme. We look forward to the future development. By drawing more MCI participants, we would be able to reinforce the patients’ family relationships.”

Mr Chan, one of the participants over 90 years old, shared that he cooked less due to his deteriorating physical condition. Daily meals are needed to be delivered by volunteers. During the “Chef Anchor” programme, he is able to redevelop his cooking skills and enjoy the fun of cooking every day.

Cindy, Towngas volunteer said, “Since I joined the ‘Chef Anchor’ programme, I understand the challenges of having a normal daily life and memory loss encountered by the MCI elderly. Now I am able to communicate with them with patience.”

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**Press Photo :**



Photo 1: Joe Sham, Assistant Director of Welfare Council is pleased to have collaborated with Towngas to launch Hong Kong’s first procedural learning method in cooking to alleviate MCI symptoms.



Photo 2: Isaac Yeung, Towngas Head of Corporate Affairs hopes the “Chef Anchor” cooking programme will help to improve the ability of MCI patients through regular practice of their daily activities such as cooking.



Photo 3: (From the left): Dr. Adrian Wong, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine and Therapeutics and register clinical psychology (DCP,HKPS), Isaac Yeung, Towngas Head of Corporate Affairs and Joe Sham, Assistant Director of Welfare Council, at the launch ceremony of “Chef Anchor” cooking programme.



Photo 4: (From the left) Pauline Wong, Towngas Cooking Centre Manager and Charis Wong, Occupational Therapist of Welfare Council share the experience of how the specially designed task-analyzed recipe is helpful for MCI patients.



Photo 5: Elderly participant and Towngas volunteer share how the “Chef Anchor” cooking programme helps them in different ways.



Photo 6: Isaac Yeung, Towngas Head of Corporate Affairs pictured with participants and volunteers at the “Chef Anchor” cooking class at Towngas Cooking Centre.





Photo 7 to 10: Elderly participants and Towngas volunteers are great partners at making an udon dish using task-analyzed recipe, specially designed by occupational therapists and Towngas cooking instructors.

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