

Govt urged to help elderly join volunteer work

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Researchers say the government should set up a one-stop platform offering different options for doing volunteer work, to encourage more elderly to sign up.

The Education University research team made the call on Thursday, saying a workshop it conducted showed if given awareness of different ways elders can join such work, many people are happy to volunteer.

The team said volunteering is good for the physical and psychological well-being of senior citizens.

The researchers conducted a workshop last year with 130 people aged 70 on average who used to do less than an hour's volunteer work a month. Six months after the workshop, the participants were found to have been volunteering for almost seven hours every month.

Professor Chou Kee-lee, who led the study, said participants in the study told them that they felt happy that they were still able to contribute to society after they retired.

Chou said elderly people are “valuable social capital”, but a previous study showed only six percent of those aged 65 or above had done volunteer work. That’s much lower than other age groups.

He said the government should also do more to promote the benefits of volunteer work to elderly people.

“The government should put more efforts to engage older adults so they could have a chance to engage in volunteer work,” he said.

“They should put more money to support all the elder centres in Hong Kong... so that we can mobilise more older adults who are living in the community to contribute to the society in the form of volunteer work.”

Website: <http://news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1414131-20180823.htm>