

Our Carer Stories

Story 1:

“My mother was diagnosed myeloma in October 2005 and coming from a Chinese and Western background, I have difficulties in communication due to a language barrier. Although I am fluent in spoken Cantonese, I particularly found it extremely difficult to explain a lot of terms, meanings that were associated with cancer.

I found it very frustrating and at times emotional that I could not express the same support to my mother the way that the doctor and the nurses did, since it was my responsibility and it was all about what was happening to my mum in the coming months. I could not be sympathetic, understanding or accepting the decisions that were made since I could not fully interpret and knowing that my mum had felt the worse at the thought of the word 'cancer', feeling frightened, scared and emotional. I also felt that way too.

It was then we came across MECOPP's Macmillan Chinese Cancer Link Worker through a mutual friend of the family. I have to thank her for helping, the support that she has provided for my mum and my family. With her knowledge of Cancer and her ability to interpret all of the terms in Cantonese and Chinese, she has always been there to take us through this difficult time from day one since we had first met. From slowly explaining to mum the awareness of cancer, taking us through the steps of each treatment and being there after each treatment, the side effects and accompanying my mum to all her doctor appointments and basically just the reassurance that mum had all the support she needed. She was like an angel by my mum's side.

From knowing her, my mum had the reassurance, confidence and support to carry on with treatment and life. Not only has she been there for my mum but for the rest of the family and life could have turned out differently if we did not have this kind of support. The support that was given to my mum was nothing that I could have offered. Thanks for building the support and confidence with mum and getting all our lives back on track”

Story 2:

“I have a 94 year-old mother who used to live alone in a sheltered accommodation. My brother and I always shared the care responsibilities amongst ourselves. To ensure our mother was safe, we took turns to visit her before and after work, nearly everyday.

Last year my mother had a fall at home and was hospitalised for 5 months. She was assessed as no longer fit enough to live on her own. We were very worried at that time as we did not know what to expect. Fortunately, with the extensive help and support from MECOPP, my mother has moved to a council run residential home for older people.

During the transition period, MECOPP staff did not merely provide language support; they also gave us professional advice, so that we could decide what was best for my mother. It took away a lot of stress from us when making decision, especially a big one like this. At the beginning, we were still not sure if this was suitable for my mother because of the cultural differences.

However, MECOPP assured us that the staff in the residential home would be trained with Chinese culture. The experience turned out to be a very positive one. There was Chinese food offered occasionally. Her room was decorated with traditional Chinese hangings. To our surprise, the home celebrated my mother's 94th birthday with a cake in red icing and an egg dyed in red, which are the must have on birthdays of Chinese people.

I can have proper rest at night now because I do not have to panic when the phone rings. It is a big relief for me that I know my mother is in good hands. I would like to take this opportunity to thank MECOPP staff for their dedication and their comprehensive support. Without them, I am not sure if I could achieve this on my own."