



International Conference on Well-being of Citizens under Emerging  
Public Policy Agenda  
Strengthening Public Health System as a Central Pillar of Sustainable  
and Resilient Societal Development  
College of Professional Continuing Education  
Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
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**Professor Albert LEE** MB BS(Lond) LLB (Hons-Lond) MPH LLMArbDr (Distinct-CityUHK) Dmed (NUIrel) MD (CUHK) FRCP  
(Lond & IreI) FRACGP (Aus) FHKAM(FamMed) HonFFPH (UK) FCI Arb (UK) FACLM(Aus) FCLM(US) FACHSM(Aus) GDLP (Aus.Coll.Law)

Emeritus Professor in Public Health and Primary Care, Consultant in Family Medicine, Founding  
Director of Centre for Health Education and Health Promotion, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Law, and Senior Research Fellow of Centre for Medical Ethics and  
Law, University of Hong Kong

Adjunct Professor, International Centre for Future Health System, University of New South Wales,  
Australia

Honorary Fellow, Faculty of Public Health, UK

Int'l Member of National Academy of Medicine, USA; and Honorary Fellow of Faculty of Public  
Health, UK

## Outline of Discussion

Why advancement of medicine would NOT fully improve health and well being?

Sustainability and Livability

Quality Healthy City and health

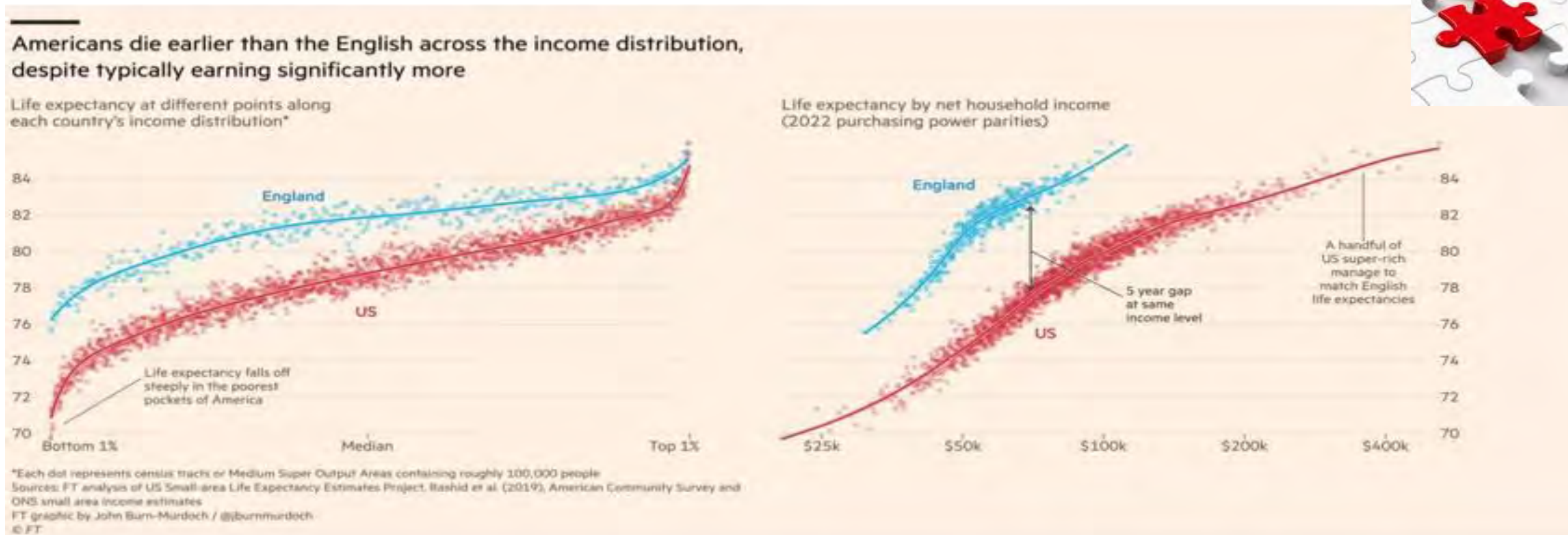
Can we improve our local dwelling?

Are we solving health needs or just the demands?

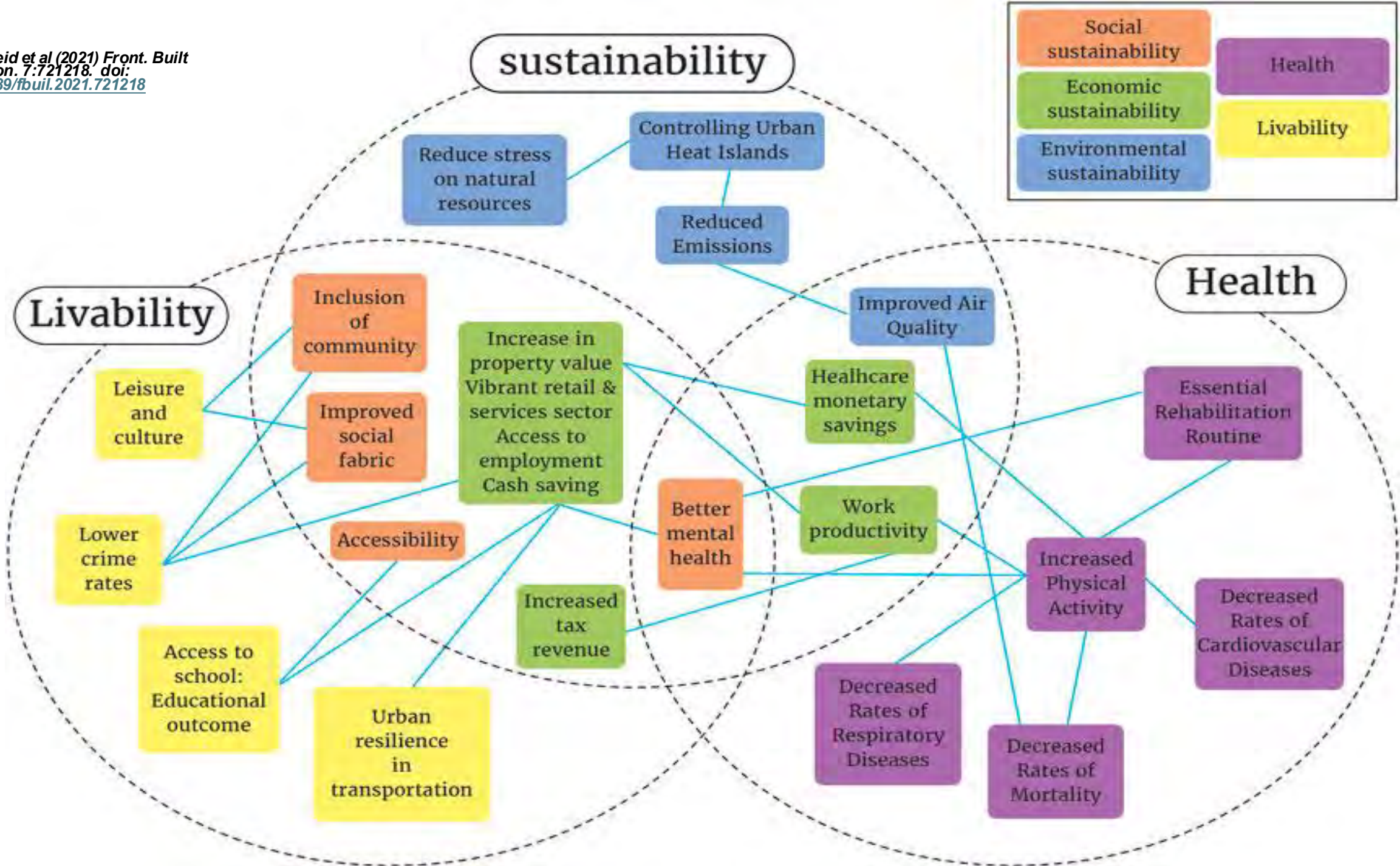
Are you measuring health from wider angle?

What is health equity?

# Americans died earlier than English across income distribution



*"What good does it do to treat people and send them back to the conditions that made them sick?"* Professor Sir Michael Marmot



# Healthy Neighbourhood and Healthy Cities

Good health and well-being (SDG 3) cannot materialize without making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11)

Behavioural, environmental and occupational, and metabolic risks can explain half of global mortality and more than one-third of global DALYs providing many opportunities for prevention.

The attributable burden of high BMI has increased in the past 23 years and **physical inactivity and unhealthy eating** are the underlying cause.



# Quality Healthy Cities

Lee A. SPIRIT Framework and City Health Profile: Concept and case studies. In Lee A (ed). *Healthy Setting Approach in Hong Kong: Sustainable Development in Population Health*. City University of Hong Kong Press, 2021

Healthy city can create higher level of health literacy within communities are likely to lead to a collective deeper understanding of social, environmental, organizational and political factors that impact on health.



The review also explores a few popular walkability evaluation indices and frameworks employing subjective, objective, and/or distinctive methods within variant environmental, cultural, and national context.



There is no unified universal standardised walkability theory notwithstanding the need for rigorous evaluation tools for policy makers and developers.



There is also lack of emphasis on air quality and thermal stress while approaching walkability although they are important elements in the walking experience.



There should be more research in the field of walkability to leverage location tracking from smart devices and identify the interaction patterns of pedestrians with other transportation modes, especially for those with fundamental movement challenges such as wheelchair users.



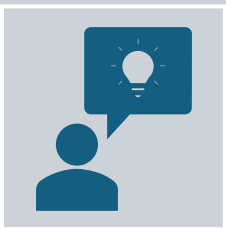
This review advocates that long-term health benefits from walking and physical activity are the premier incentive to repurpose our cities to be more sustainable and more walking friendly, and spark behavioural change into reducing car dependency for all daily transportations.



Review of 23 articles has shown that neighbourhoods characterised as more walkable, either leisure-oriented or destination-driven, are associated with increased physical activity, increased social capital, lower overweight, lower reports of depression, and less reported alcohol abuse (Renald et al., 2010).



Built environment such as land mix and walkability would increase social cohesion with increased familiarity with neighbours.



Perceptions of higher social capital were found to correlate with mental health (Lee, 2011), and also prevention of common mental diseases (Ehsan & De Silva, 2015).

# Together We Build a Healthy Yau Mong District Healthy City Taskforce of The Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP) and Health In Action (HIA)

English version: [https://www.hkip.org.hk/s/HCPDR\\_e.pdf](https://www.hkip.org.hk/s/HCPDR_e.pdf) 中 文 版 [https://www.hkip.org.hk/s/HCPDR\\_c.pdf](https://www.hkip.org.hk/s/HCPDR_c.pdf)

<https://www.hkip.org.hk/announcements/2024/7/20T>

- The Healthy City Taskforce of The HKIP has been set up since 2020 recommending planning solutions for building a healthy HK, amid the then Covid pandemic.
- In 2022, HIA with their expertise in health issues joined in, thus together taking forward this initiative in Yau Mong District (YM District).
- YM District is a very compact and old district (over a century), dominated with old building stocks, small living spaces, sub-divided flats and a high population density especially elderly and ethnic minorities often with larger household or extended family.
- Professor Albert Lee, Professor Emeritus of CUHK Public Health and Primary Care is the advisor giving invaluable advice and steer to the project.
- On engagement at the community level, NGOs in particular The Salvation Army, Hong Kong Christian Service, the Hong Kong Health Education and Health Promotion Foundation are supporting organizations of this project.

Existing open spaces are limited, scattered, small, not user-friendly and surrounded by heavy traffic.



Residents have less than 1/4 of the public open space per person in compare with government standards (i.e. less than 0.5 sq.m. of public open space per person, whilst the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines stipulates 2 sq.m. per person minimum.)

There is a severe shortage of leisure and recreation, as well as, sport and exercise spaces for children, teenagers and elderly.

Such deficit has prolonged and profound adverse impacts upon residents with inadequate housing noticeably ethnic minorities living in Yau Mong District.



- Pedestrian Space - many narrow (less than 2 meters in width) and obstructed pavements dominated the District.
- The walking conditions are further worsened by truck traffic and on-street parking of different types of vehicles, even to the extent that pedestrian safety often under threat.
- The District has the highest number of traffic accidents among all the districts.
- Concern on personal safety is deterring residents especially less mobile elderly from going out.
- These sub-standard and unsafe spaces are not conducive to a healthy and safe built environment, thus detrimental to the physical and mental health of the community as well as undermining community wellness and cohesion.



# Recommendations



- Promote awareness of the importance of walking, pedestrian mobility, accessible public spaces, community support for maintaining physical, mental and community wellness of resident
- Advocate measures to improve walkability and safety of pedestrian walkways
- Reduce on-street parking to improve pedestrian and living environment, and share use of on-street parking space including time specific pedestrianizing streets / full pedestrianisation of some local side streets in the longer term

- Identify and promote healthy walking trails and partnership with District Community Services and Care Team and NGOs to provide health and community services for community building
- Multiple uses of open spaces and streets to deliver health and community services
- Speed up improvement of numerous of small and scattered public open spaces to provide a comprehensive open space network for exercise, social gathering, games and sitting out and implementation of large planned open spaces, including part of the Yau Ma Tei Fruit Market and Man Cheong Street Public Open Space to increase social capital for social connectedness as well as better health.



# Half-filled Glass

Ideal  
status  
- Whole  
glass



Needs  
- what is lacking

Assets  
- what is already  
there

# What is needed to understand the health of our target population?



Information of their current health status (what it is at present time) and ideal health status (what should be under more ideal circumstances) will be needed



The difference between current status and ideal status is conceptualized as needs.



Difference between needs and demands??



What kind of data are needed to reflect the needs?



Why do we need to conduct needs assessment?

# What dimensions of health should we measure?

- Physical health- free from infectious and chronic diseases, injuries and disabilities, and bodily dysfunction
- Emotional/mental health- absence of mood or behaviours disturbance impairing usual daily activities
- Social health- absence of social disturbance, e.g., crime, poverty, social isolation/discrimination, illiterate, social and family disharmony
- Environmental health- absence of adverse external conditions which would affect healthy growth and development
- Spiritual health- good purpose of life, sense of connectedness and belongings

- Social prescribing complements other approaches in a local area such as active signposting, where existing staff in local agencies provide information to signpost people to services, using local knowledge and resource directories.



If one considers  
Health and Equity,  
every citizen should  
be access to health  
care

- Then the question is what type of health care and where they should seek help?
- Patients and health problems have their roots in community and we need to solve the roots of problems in community.

Albert Lee

Email: [alee@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:alee@cuhk.edu.hk)

# Contact Us

**Professor Albert Lee**

Email: [alee@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:alee@cuhk.edu.hk) Fax: (852) 26940004

<https://www.cityu.edu.hk/upress/the-healthy-settings-approach-in-hong-kong>



Phone : 852-2693 3708

Fax : 852-2694 0004

Address : 4/F.,  
Lek Yuen Health Centre,  
Shatin, New Territories,  
Hong Kong



Email: [chep@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:chep@cuhk.edu.hk)

Website : <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/med/hep>

