



LIVE FROM THE SCENE
WARRIOR BRAVELY
COMBATS CANCER,
WITH PLAY AS HIS
COMPANION

**JUST FOR
THE RECORD**
SURPRISES IN,
TROUBLES OUT

WATCHING A SERVICE GROW TO MATURITY IN THE PAEDIATRIC NEPHROLOGY UNIT OF PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL

With big smiles on their faces, the three children in the photo are engrossed in play like ordinary children. But they are very different. They have spent some of their childhood taking medication or even undergoing surgeries. They have gone through painful and uneasy days of receiving treatment, worrying and boring days of being hospitalized and restless days of frequently visiting hospitals for checking. Fortunately, they have had play as their good companion. The experience of children with renal diseases having play to accompany and support them on their journey of combatting the illness is one of the best demonstrations of Playright's holistic hospital play service.



SPECIALTY DOCTORS ARE OUR EXPERT WITNESS

To review the past work and plan for the future, Playright invited three doctors from the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) for interviews. They are Dr Tse Kei Chi, Chief of Service & Consultant Paediatrician, Dr Lai Wai Ming, Consultant Paediatrician and Dr Alison Ma, Associate Consultant. We were very grateful that the extremely busy doctors accepted the invitation without hesitation.



Having served children with renal diseases for over 30 years, Dr Tse has witnessed the development of Playright's hospital play service from its inception 22 years ago to maturity today. Regarding holistic hospital play services, he totally agreed, "Taking care of child patients' different needs in a holistic approach, and being child-oriented, is exactly the nucleus of children's medical service." Dr Tse also pointed out that the support given to the

blood test campaign in response to the incident of lead in drinking water last year is another demonstration. From waiting to the blood taking procedure, Playright arranged suitable play for children throughout the whole process. In a relaxing atmosphere, children completed the procedure, often without noticing, and were even unwilling to leave afterwards. The magical power of play has amazed Dr Tse.

Over the years, Dr Tse has witnessed how Playright helps children with renal diseases. He recognised how Playright's work of broadcasting programmes through its Playright Channel, the provision of services at playrooms and the creation of child-friendly environments have had positive effects on hospitalized children.



PMH is specialized in treating children with renal disease. Dr Lai pointed out that apart from general renal diseases and chronic renal diseases, the services for all patients in need of dialysis treatment and kidney transplant are centralized at PMH and treated by a medical team. The team includes paediatricians and nephrologists, nurses, surgeons, urology doctors conducting transplants, psychologists and dietitians. When children are diagnosed with end stage renal failure, they need to receive a treatment cycle consisting of peritoneal dialysis, haemodialysis, and a kidney transplant. On average six children need a kidney transplant every year.

The treatment of renal diseases involves many complicated medical procedures which range from basic blood taking, checking by medical devices, peritoneal dialysis to kidney transplant. Dr Lai is of the view that the involvement of hospital play brings about multiple benefits. He said, "Through play, sick children understand more about medical procedures and their fear reduces. They cooperate more with medical staff, leading to reduction in the use of sedation and alleviating the associated side effects."

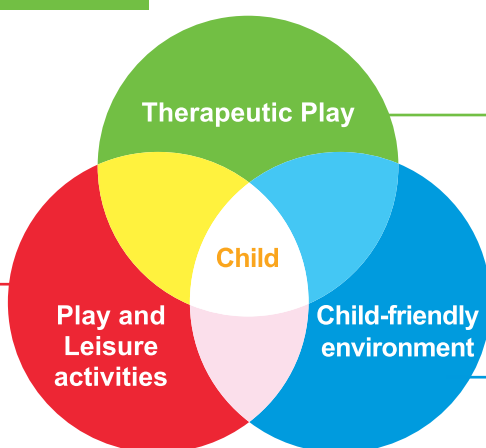


Dr Ma also believes in hospital play. When she arranges different kinds of treatment for sick children, she would immediately refer them to hospital play specialists for a follow-up. She thinks that hospital play specialists possess related medical knowledge, understand children's development, and connect with the psychological needs of sick children. Most important of all, they have the key to communicating effectively with child patients. They help to build up a bridge between sick children and the medical staff. Working in the ward every day, Dr Ma has first-hand experience of the importance of play in creating a harmonious and friendly environment.

In order to enhance the hospital play specialists' knowledge about renal diseases, Dr Ma was invited to arrange some training for them. Hospital play specialists learnt a lot from the information provided. This, in turn, helps them to explain the purpose of the necessary treatment to the child patients and create appropriate hospital play activities.

Holistic Hospital Play Services

Catering for a child's developmental stage, abilities and interests; includes arts and crafts, chess and poker, board games, building blocks, puzzles, etc. Outdoor activities include play on beaches, visiting theme parks, sports experiences, cooking classes, etc.



Based on the individual child's illness and treatment; includes preparation play, distraction play, expressive play, medical play and developmental play.

Creating a suitable environment for children and harmonious atmosphere around; includes playrooms and outdoor play space, decoration of wards, design of uniforms, etc.

Hospital Play at PMH in Figures



In **1994**, Playright started its hospital play services at PMH.

Over the past **22** years, children with renal diseases having benefited from hospital play services amount to **22,000**, accounting for **10%** of the total number of beneficiaries of PMH.

Every year, the total number of hours of serving child patients with renal diseases exceeds **3,520**.

Every month, about **183** disposable playpacks are given to all sick children at PMH.

Every week, we come into contact with over **60** medical staff specializing in treating children with renal diseases.

At present, **2** hospital play specialists are stationed at the ward of Paediatric Nephrology & Urology.

TREATMENT OF RENAL DISEASES AND HOSPITAL PLAY

Blood taking

Play: Blood taking doll



Renal biopsy

Play: Checking doll



Ultra sound checking

Play: Micro parts of ultra sound



Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) checking

Play: Micro parts of MRI



Helps sick children to understand in advance, and makes them more cooperative with medical staff.

Dr Lai

Sick children learn more about the procedure, which they then endure without struggling, thus reducing their need for sedation and the side effects associated with it.

Insertion of catheter for dialysis through operation

Play: Operation doll



Before peritoneal dialysis

Play: Blood cleaning baby or abdomen cleaning baby



Parents will also have more understanding and feel calmer.

Dr Ma

During peritoneal dialysis

Play: Distraction play



Before kidney transplant

Play: Kidney baby



Isolation after surgery

Play: Expressive play



Rehabilitation at home

Play: Various kinds of play



Sick children do not always have pain and tears, they can also enjoy play and grow happily.

Dr Ma

A MOTHER TELLS HER STORY

With regards to renal diseases, no one is more “qualified” to share experiences than Fung Yi. Fung Yi herself underwent the painful treatment of dialysis and kidney transplant as a child. Wing Yan, Fung Yi’s daughter, also suffered from renal disease at a young age. Wing Yan began dialysis when she was a primary student and received a kidney transplant at the age of 11. Having experienced the same, Fung Yi did not blame Wing Yan for being emotional due to her illness. She understood why her daughter felt bored and unhappy as she had to undergo dialysis alone continually for four hours each time; why her daughter got into bad moods following her body’s rejection of the new kidney after the transplant. The only thing that comforted Fung Yi during those dark days were the hospital play specialists who always accompanied her daughter, bringing her support, understanding, encouragement and comfort. At the same time, they empathised with Fung Yi’s worries.

The mother would describe the hospital play specialists as “light in the dark”, “little angels”. To sick children who do not have much control over being sick, the sisters in orange uniform are also named “security”, whose importance cannot be described in words. Wing Yan, who went in and out of hospital for a long time, is also a child, active and outgoing. The outdoor activities arranged by Playright not only suited her childhood needs but helped her to build up her self-image and come into contact with the world.



Fung Yi (right) has weathered the storm together with hospital play specialists and they have become friends.

Aged 14 this year, due to re-occurring renal failure, Wing Yan has returned to the familiar ward and welcomes the blood taking doll. As Playright’s Youth Ambassador and President of the Kid Friends’ Club, Fung Yi hopes that the upcoming Hong Kong Children’s Hospital will provide hospital play services, to give every child with a renal disease the opportunity to play with the “peritoneal dialysis” and other dolls in order to gain the happiness her daughter did despite facing a critical illness.



The rock climbing arranged by Playright is most suitable for outgoing and playful Wing Yan.

FROM PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL TO HONG KONG CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

As experience accumulated and cooperation with the hospital staff grew closer and closer, the 22-year development of Playright hospital play service in PMH is an achievement. The three doctors unanimously agree that the achievement is worth transplanting to the future Hong Kong Children’s Hospital to grow further and benefit the children.

In his role as Hong Kong Children’s Hospital Commissioning Service Co-ordinator in nephrology, Dr Tse said he would fight for the setting up of hospital play services in the Children’s Hospital. He said, “Let Playright provide services for Nephrology at the Hong Kong Children’s Hospital, and allow child patients to have friendly hospital play specialists and familiar play in a new environment.”

Dr Lai pointed out, “I expect Playright can participate in the early stages of setting up the unit in the new hospital to share their professional knowledge about child-friendly environments and hospital play services, to bring to life the play elements currently at work at the Nephrology children’s ward of PMH. They are to refine the elements to make play more fun.”

Dr Ma said, “For the sake of treatment and rehabilitation of children with renal diseases, we will continue to exchange and work with hospital play specialists. We also hope that hospital play specialists can become members of the Paediatric team and that there will be play in every Paediatric ward in every hospital.”

WARRIOR BRAVELY COMBATS CANCER, WITH PLAY AS HIS COMPANION

Despite advances in medicine, cancer still causes deep fear in many. Cancer affecting young ages is regarded as an even greater and sudden blow to their lives. Not only do they suffer from severe discomfort and pain that is indescribable, children are also hard hit psychologically. For example, the loss of hair during chemotherapy, the swollen face resulting from taking steroid, the drastic deterioration of mobility of the body, and strongly restricted menu etc., only add to make the sick children feel worried, frustrated and helpless.

INFORMATION CENTRE

What is cancer?

Our body is formed of cells. Different cells have different functions. Under normal circumstances, cells will grow and split in an orderly manner to replace old cells. When cells grow and breed excessively, they will occupy the space for normal cells and this leads to problems. This is called cancer.



Angus has an optimistic and cheerful personality, which is reflected in his Chinese name – Long Long. He faces cancer bravely.

Early this year, eight-year-old Angus was hospitalized due to respiratory problems. Angus was diagnosed Lymphoblastic Lymphoma, which grew inside his chest with a diameter measuring over 10cm. The trauma pressed against the trachea, causing difficulties in breathing. Angus also suffered from pleural effusion and acute renal failure and needed to drain the fluid out and undergo haemodialysis.

When Angus's condition had been stabilized, he was transferred from the ICU to the ordinary ward. He still felt ill and unfamiliar with the environment. In particular, he was still anxious, afraid of those "men in uniform" including doctors, nurses, other medical staff, and even the hospital play specialists in their orange outfits.



If you want to start a dialogue with Angus, all you need is to be familiar with his favourite board game – “the Monopoly”.

THE BEST PARTNER IN THE FIGHT: PLAY

Angus’s treatment included chemotherapy and in the early stage he had to receive this treatment in hospital for two months. The hospital play specialists kept Angus occupied by offering developmental play according to his age and interests. They also provided him with play which simulated medical treatment to meet his therapeutic needs.

Angus would wail every time before receiving an intravenous injection or blood taking. Hence, the hospital play specialists would use the “blood taking” doll and “intravenous injection” doll to assist Angus to cope with the situation. “Promoted” as a doctor, Angus conducted “blood taking” and “intravenous injections” on the dolls and expressed his feelings and worries about the medical procedures. The hospital play specialists seized this opportunity to explain the uses of different types of treatment and their ultimate purpose to defeat the cancer!

To break the ice, the hospital play specialists were the first to change the approach. Through Angus’s mother, they knew that Angus’s favourites were board games. Hence, they invited his mother and father to play “Monopoly” together with Angus. Angus’s sense of security started to increase through playing a familiar game. He began to open up to the hospital play specialists and interacted with them. Later, he even befriended them.



Through participating in therapeutic play, Angus fully understands every step of blood taking which is an inevitable procedure for hospitalized children.

With deeper understanding about the treatment, Angus became more cooperative with the doctors. He also found the catheter inserted in his chest through surgery more acceptable. After the surgery, Angus played the game of “central line” and excitedly shared how his mother cleaned his catheter, while carefully executing the cleaning procedure on a doll by himself. He demonstrated professionalism that was comparable to medical staff.

Angus’s therapy also included a bi-weekly intrathecal injection. Every time before undergoing the treatment, Angus was so anxious that he lost all interest in play. The hospital play specialists discovered that the anxiety was due because Angus was anaesthetized with his back toward the doctor and had no idea of what the doctor was doing. In view of this, hospital play specialists used a cloth puppet to demonstrate every step of this procedure to let Angus understand more about the doctor’s preparatory work so as to reduce anxiety. In addition, the hospital play specialists taught Angus how to relax and cope with his fear by taking a deep breath and imagining relaxing conditions with his eyes closed.



Angus is taking good care of his good friend – the “tube brat”.



INFORMATION CENTRE

What is a “Central line”?

A central venous catheter is a specially made plastic tube placed in the vena cava of a child’s neck. It is used to transfer drugs or blood products and to take blood. The tube significantly reduces the pain of piercing through the skin of patients. Patients need to take good care of the tube and clean it regularly to avoid any damage or infection.

What is intrathecal injection?

This is used to inject anti-cancer drugs into the spinal cord sheath. The drugs will circulate throughout the spine to destroy cancer cells within the meninges so as to protect the brain. When doing this injection, the patient needs to curl his body and be anaesthetized to ensure smooth injection. Upon completion, the patient needs to lie prone with his buttock elevated so that the drugs can take effect.

EXPECTING A FULL VICTORY AFTER WINNING A BATTLE

Having undergone treatment for months, Angus's condition became more stabilized and he began to take the chemotherapy drugs orally. The catheter had also been removed. Angus returned to facing his normal life as it used to be. Obsessed with funny ideas, he talked about when going back to school, how he would share with classmates the process of changing to a "bald head" and listed out the merits of being bald. His remarks continuously made his mother and the hospital play specialists laugh.

Before undergoing any specialized medical procedure, Angus was still a bit nervous. But he no longer shouted



Angus used to feel down due to loss of hair.....but it's all growing back now.

or wailed, as he learnt his way to communicate with medical staff to deal with pressure. His progress has won many praises from people around him.

Even though Angus could not endure the side-effects of the drugs and vomited severely; even though he wailed due to loss of hair; even though he became emotional at times as he had to bear a heavy burden, Angus still took steps forward on the long road of combatting cancer. Play not only made this journey more bearable but also taught Angus coping skills which will be useful to him lifelong. He definitely deserves the title of "brave warrior".



Angus's mother has witnessed and believes in the power of play.

Words from Angus's mother

Fa Fa, the hospital play specialist, has never stopped visiting Angus from his days at the ICU to his days at the ordinary ward. She has been accompanying Angus all the way with her love, patience, perseverance and respect. She is tolerant of Angus, bringing colourful days to him during his treatment in hospital. She is also persistent in the belief that children have the right to play. I am so grateful to her!

SURPRISES IN, TROUBLES OUT

As Doraemon has its “surprise” bag, hospital play specialists also have their “surprises” with them wherever they go. When children are shy, bored, afraid or terrified, hospital play specialists show a “surprise” to instantly change the atmosphere, break the silence, and reverse the condition. What are those “surprises”?



Cheerleading Cat

Chubby and lovable, the “cheerleading cat” will produce “la la” sounds and say “Hi” to a child when pressed. Hospital play specialists invite children to “translate” the sounds, thus opening a conversation with them. The cheerleading cat can also sing well, comforting children during treatment with its sweet voice.



Wonderful Torch

When you press its button, you will find many surprises, such as cartoon characters, smiling faces etc. Added with the hospital play specialists’ vivid narration, a vibrant and interesting micro movie is shown. Children are at times so engrossed in the “film” that they hold their breath with their eyes wide open, forgetting about all the pain.



Colourful Pipe Cleaners

Colourful pipe cleaners are unique in texture. Soft yet with iron wires inside, pipe cleaners are bendable to create any objects you wish for. For example, they can be used to make flowers to enlighten children and dolls to accompany children to go through treatment, puppets to tell a story, or even simulated treatment tools for hospital play. It is often when creating funny things with pipe cleaners with a hospital play specialist that sick children express their feelings and soothe their negative emotions.



Vibrant Pony

The switch at the bottom of the pony is used to control the movement of its head, body, limbs or even tail. The movement varies with the speed and pressure of pressing the switch, making the pony’s movements interesting and funny. With the hospital play specialists’ wonderful “dubbing”, the moving pony is able to attract especially young children and distract them from the tension of intravenous injection or other procedures.





Ice-cream Magical Mirror

The gadget's uniqueness closely resembles the "kaleidoscope" of insects' compound eyes. Through the mirror, the images of persons or things seen are duplicated, forming a galaxy of images. When children are busy counting the number of images, their attention is distracted. Whenever they see the images, they often exclaim, "Magical mirror, magical mirror, why are there so many hospital play specialists?"



Little Dinosaur

Under normal circumstances, the dinosaur looks dazed. However, when pressed, its eyes will be pushed out horizontally, showing a refreshing and funny look. During blood taking or intravenous injection, many children's negative emotions are soothed thanks to the little dinosaur.



Cellophane Sheets

Cellophane sheets are very special. They can be shaped as balls or pressed into thin sheets. A "sa sa" sound is produced by rubbing them. Its transparent nature is fascinating. When a cellophane sheet is placed on the table, it alters the colour of the table's surface. When it is placed in front of our eyes, the colour of the world will also change. When you pile up cellophane sheets of different colours, another surprise will be produced. This captivates children of any age during medical or boring moments.



Twisted Balloons

Balloons are children's favourites. The round ones can be patted, while the long ones can be twisted to create swords, crowns, doggies or even squeeze toy aliens. The created toys can "sing" with children. When children need to take medication, the hospital play specialists will arrange a "doggie" to take the same, taking the opportunity to explain to children their disease. The play also demonstrates a wonderful meaning: there is someone to share their joy and the pain of treatment as well.





Heartfelt thanks to our sponsors



The volunteer group of Hong Kong Disneyland Resort is dedicated to Playright's hospital play services.

Since 2012, Hong Kong Disneyland Resort has been walking alongside Playright. Apart from making a generous donation to support hospital play services for renal child patients, the company has also sent its love for other sick children. Through actively encouraging staff to receive training in playwork and hospital play, the company has equipped its staff as competent volunteers. The volunteers regularly visit children in the wards, organize birthday parties, and cooperate with the hospital play specialists to take sick children out of hospitals to participate in a variety of activities, such as rock climbing, cake baking, as well as Community Built Playground. They truly serve to bring happiness to hospitalized children.

In addition, Hong Kong Disneyland Resort also generously made a donation in 2012 to support a one-year clinical research regarding the effects of hospital play. The research aimed to further prove how hospital play can help sick children to relieve their anxiety and soothe negative emotions, thus bringing about positive effects to the treatment and recovery of sick children.



Volunteers happily play with children in the ward.



With sponsorship, research related to hospital play services was commenced and made known to the media.

- A generous donation of HK\$1,588,000 from philanthropists Mr and Mrs Lawrence Ho was received to fund Playright's hospital play services for patients in the Department of Paediatrics & Adolescent Medicine and the Developmental Disabilities Unit of the Caritas Medical Centre for two years until May 2018.
- Thanks to the generous donation of HK\$41,595 by staff of UBS in June 2016, hospital play specialists were funded to attend the annual conference of Child Life Council in the USA to enrich their professional knowledge. Another donation of HK\$6,700 was made by the same in July to support our hospital play services.
- The Ear, Nose and Throat Center of Hong Kong Limited, together with the Hearing and Speech Therapy Centre Limited donated a total of HK\$25,000 in August 2016 to support our hospital play services.
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