

Press Release (2 pages)
For Immediate Release

The Psychological Support Hotline operated by
Hong Kong Red Cross and Hong Kong Psychological Society
received over 720 calls for psychological assistance for 5 days
Hotline service will terminate at 10pm tonight

(Hong Kong, 28 August 2010) The “Psychological Support Hotline Service” jointly operated by Hong Kong Red Cross (HKRC) and the Critical Incident Team under the Division of Clinical Psychology of the Hong Kong Psychological Society for the hostage incident in the Philippines will be closed at 10pm tonight. In these 5 days, over 720 calls have been received. The peak period was on the second day with 302 calls. The number of calls has dropped to 23 as of 5pm on the 5th day (28 August).

The majority of callers are adult; more than 65% are female. 70% are emotionally disturbed by watching incident related news; while nearly 4% of callers are friends or relatives of the victims.

The hostage incident in the Philippines has aroused different reactions among the Hong Kong people. Nearly 60% of the callers feel sorrow for the incident; nearly 30% suffer from sleep problems while others express anger or suffer from losing appetite.

Dr Kitty Wu, Advisor of Psychological Support Service of HKRC and Clinical Psychologist of Hong Kong Psychological Society mentioned, ‘The number of calls probably demonstrates that Hong Kong people are willing to make calls to hotlines for expressing their emotions and obtaining professional psychological assistance. Also, the decrease of calls in these 2 days indicates that people may have been more emotionally settled by now. For those who still have persistent emotional disturbance causing disruption to their family life, work or study, they shall consider seeking professional psychological service.’

The Psychological Support Hotline Service operated by HKRC and the Critical Incident Team under the Division of Clinical Psychology of the Hong Kong Psychological Society was established immediately on the next day (24 August) after the hostage incident happened in the Philippines, providing psychological support service for those emotionally distressed by the incident. A total of 195 Psychological Support Service volunteers and voluntary Clinical

Psychologists have been mobilized to work on shift. As the number of calls has significantly decreased, the hotline service would stop at 10 pm tonight (28 August) after 5 days of operations.

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