



NEWS/BUSINESS/FINANCE/LIFESTYLE EDITORS For Immediate Release

Work-Life Balance Week 2017 Ensuring Employee Wellbeing

Hong Kong - 2 November 2017 – Work-Life Balance Week (WLBW), held 16-20 October 2017, provided a platform for organisations to demonstrate their commitment to and raise awareness of work-life balance as a strategic business issue across Asia. This year marked the 10th anniversary of WLBW, a key activity of leading not-for-profit organisation Community Business' focus on ensuring employee wellbeing.

During the Week, to promote employee wellbeing and work-life balance, participating organisations held various activities, launched new initiatives and formalised measures into standard policies. Their diverse activities ranged from health talks by nutritionists, family movie days, fitness and exercise programmes, healthy-eating cooking classes to more simple activities such as providing employees with fresh fruits and healthy breakfasts, designated break times for workplace exercise, massage or de-stress meditation routines, etc. Some examples include:

- HKR International Ltd., a participating company of WLBW since its inception, organised a diverse series of educational seminars and workshops, including one on “How to Be Happy at Work”, workshops on Green Office (planting), Zentangle (art and drawing) and leather crafting, a talk on healthy diets and labelling traps, as well as health checks and acupuncture for employees.
- Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, supporting WLBW since 2009, extended their participation into a series of programmes and activities throughout the month of October for the last 3 years. This year, they organised a kick-off ceremony attended by over a hundred employees pledging their support and engagement, shared e-tips on healthy lifestyle, organised workshops on physical and mental health covering topics such as stress relief and emotional management, and distributed over 18,000 travel kits and health-drink coupons to their employees to encourage vacation time-off and healthy eating habits respectively.

A number of ‘advocate companies’ provided unique offers to participating organisations including tailor-made workshops, programmes and discounted services. Community Business partnered with Bupa, a leading international health insurance specialist to help businesses and organisations create healthier workplaces for their employees. Until end November 2017, Bupa is offering access to free workplace health consultations and online health assessments, which allowed companies to assess the overall health and wellbeing of their workplace.

Bupa is also the proud sponsor of the Work-Life Balance Week 2017 Closing Ceremony which will take place on 8 November. To celebrate the success of the campaign as well as the achievements of participating companies, there will be a seminar on “Balance and Wellbeing in Work and Life” from Quality HealthCare, the provision arm of Bupa as well as a certificate presentation.

William Brocklehurst, Corporate Affairs Director of Bupa Hong Kong said, *“Bupa is committed to creating an environment for our people to succeed at work and outside in their lives. We are pleased to support Community Business’ Work-Life Balance Week in promoting work-life balance in Hong Kong and helping businesses and organisations to understand the value and benefits of workplace health and wellbeing.”*

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of WLBW and to ‘walk the talk’, Community Business launched several internal employee wellbeing initiatives, including expanding its focus to include mental health, the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), as well as launched **CB Empower**.

These initiatives have also resonated with the wider business community. There is overwhelming research that highlights that chronic exposure to stressful workplace conditions can lead to burnout or poor mental health. Staggering statistics show that 13.3%¹ of adults experience mental illness in Hong Kong, with only 26%¹ of suffers seeking medical advice in the past year. Poor mental health also reduces productivity and engagement by 30%², demonstrating that this is a critical business issue and



companies need to act now. On 10 October 2017, World Mental Health Day, Community Business held a webinar on 'Promoting Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace' as well as launched a [Mental Health Toolkit](#) which provides ideas and resources on what companies and individuals can do to support employee mental wellbeing.

Community Business is committed to the health and wellbeing of its staff, and even as a small NGO, has introduced an EAP to provide 24-hour multilingual confidential counselling and consultation services for its employees. Many large organisations provide EAP's as part of their employee benefits, however Community Business encourages companies of all sizes to consider this kind of highly accessible and responsive service that helps employees address issues that could negatively impact their health, mental and emotional well-being, and ultimately their job performance.

Community Business, in partnership with the award-winning Total Loyalty Company (TLC), launched **CB Empower**, which is available to both member companies and non-members. It is designed to empower companies to adopt sustainable strategies to ensure employee wellbeing through a comprehensive, practical and innovative work-life balance solution, helping companies of all sizes to cost-effectively develop customised year-round plans from concept to implementation.

Said **Sam Lau, Founder/CEO of TLC**, *"The design of CB Empower is based on the belief that work-life balance initiatives need to be strategic engagements rather than adhoc actions. Our simple subscription model offers companies of any size a solution that is easily implemented and provides innovative and engaging staff events, useful lifestyle discounts, and TLC's signature Office Marketplace where we bring the fun to the office with market sales and sampling."*

Fern Ngai, CEO of Community Business, said, *"We are delighted with the continued support of WLBW by businesses that are diverse in size, nature and industry. It shows us that leading companies value work-life balance and employee wellbeing and want to be proactive and strategic in their approach. We also appreciate the partnership and support of innovative and like-minded companies such as Bupa and TLC. CB Empower creates a win/win solution especially with smaller companies who do not have the internal resources to organise year-round activities for their employees. At Community Business, we believe in transforming workplaces to ensure employees are happy healthy and engaged."*

Community Business has been running WLBW since 2008. This year, close to a hundred companies joined WLBW 2017, with 44 Practicing Organisations, 22 Participating Organisations, 19 Advocate Companies, and 12 Supporting Organisations. Since the Week's inception, hundreds of companies and organisations across Asia have participated in holding work-life balance activities and initiatives during the Week, raising awareness and promoting employee wellbeing.

References:

- 1 Linda Chiu-Wa Lam et al., "Prevalence, Psychosocial Correlates and Service Utilisation of Depressive and Anxiety Disorders in Hong Kong: the Hong Kong Mental Morbidity Survey (HKMMS), 2015
- 2 Dr. Tiffany D. Sanders, Engage Employees and Increase Productivity with an Employee Wellness Program, 2014

Useful links:

Community Business: <http://www.communitybusiness.org/>
Mental Health Toolkit: http://www.communitybusiness.org/WLB/2017/Mental_Health_Toolkit/index.htm
CB Empower: <https://cbempower.myrewards.hk/CommunityBusiness/>
Total Loyalty Company: <http://www.totalloyalty.asia/>

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About Community Business

Community Business is a not-for-profit organisation (Hong Kong Charity Number 91/6560) whose mission is to lead, inspire and support businesses to have a positive impact on people and communities. A recognised leader in promoting responsible and inclusive business practices in Asia, Community Business conducts research, facilitates networks and events, leads campaigns and provides consultancy and training. Our focus on responsible business is aligned to 5 mission-led themes:

- Building responsible leadership
- Investing in local communities
- Tackling workplace inequality
- Ensuring employee wellbeing
- Promoting social inclusion

Founded in 2003 and based in Hong Kong with a presence in India and the United Kingdom, Community Business works with companies of all sizes and from diverse industries across Asia, harnessing the power of business to drive social change. For more information, please visit www.communitybusiness.org.