

Anti-stigma and discrimination message to reach a wider Chinese audience

02/05/2008 03:47:00 PM

The Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand is delighted that from 3 May 2008, the New Zealand Chinese Herald will feature 10 articles on *Kai Xin Xing Dong*, a Like Minds, Like Mine project to counter stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness in Chinese communities.

The Mental Health Foundation has been taking the Like Minds, Like Mine message to the Auckland Chinese community since 2006. "It's important to reach all people in New Zealand and we're delighted to have made this connection with the Chinese community," says Judi Clements, Chief Executive of the Foundation. She says the connection is due largely to the efforts of Ivan Yeo, a Malaysian-born Chinese man who works at the Foundation.

Mr Yeo has himself benefited from the programme, saying "The Like Minds, Like Mine message helped me change my life." He used the slogan "Know me before you judge me" from the Like Minds, Like Mine television campaign to let his friends know that he is not defined by his illness.

Members of the Chinese community who experience mental illness are often misunderstood because of incorrect information or myths. "The biggest barrier for recovery is discrimination, so it is important to create a supportive environment," says Mr Yeo. He hopes that *Kai Xin Xing Dong* will help to achieve this.

Kai Xin Xing Dong uses the Chinese slogan 我同你一樣有愛心， 希望你有愛的我心 which translates as "I have a caring and loving heart towards you and I hope you have a caring and loving heart towards me." Mr Yeo says, "We hope by sharing our love and support, we too can create a supportive environment in the Chinese community toward people who experience mental illness."

For a copy of the Chinese Like Minds, Like Mine brochure, contact the Mental Health Foundation's Resource and Information Service on (09) 300 7030 or

resource@mentalhealth.org.nz

