

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

Bringing palliative care home to more patients

Dover Park Hospice to offer service in collaboration with Tan Tock Seng Hospital

SINGAPORE – With demand for palliative care at home expected to double by 2020 to more than 10,000 patients a year, the Health Ministry is looking to expand the service and raise standards of care.

Dover Park Hospice, one of nine organisations that offer in-patient and home palliative care, has tied up with Tan Tock Seng Hospital to make hospital visits easier for patients. Hospice staff can arrange for patients to be treated by specialists as outpatients, avoiding long hospital queues.

Dr Wu Huei Yaw, Medical Director of Dover Park Hospice, said: “At some point in time, if the condition deteriorates further and the family cannot manage anymore, this home care team can also bring the patient into the in-patient hospice.

“So this three-way collaboration helps the patient and family navigate the healthcare system. It helps reduce the level of stress and hopefully improves the patient’s quality of life.”

Meanwhile, experts estimate that there are more than 2,000 children in Singapore born with life-threatening illnesses or cancer and only a very small number — 2 per cent — are receiving palliative care, whether in a hospice or at home.

Ms Adilah, 25, who was born with a brain disorder and cerebral palsy, is one of 80 who joined a palliative care service for children called Star PALS, which was launched last year.

“There are so many things I can talk to (the home care providers) about, and Adilah also has some friends.”

Madam Junaidah Sultani
WHOSE DAUGHTER, ADILAH, IS IN A PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

Palliative care focuses on relieving and preventing the patient’s suffering, but many parents have a negative perception of it and are often apprehensive when it is recommended for their children, say care providers.

But Adilah’s mother, Madam Ju-

naidah Sultani, said the service has eased the family’s financial and emotional burden: “There are so many things I can talk to (the home care providers) about, and Adilah also has some friends.”

Dr Chong Poh Heng, Medical Di-

rector of HCA Hospice Care and Programme Director for Star PALS, said: “I believe that with this programme, we will be able to put these children and these families in a very good place so that their quality of life can improve.” **CHANNEL NEWSASIA**

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Life in Modern Times

That modern lifestyle . . . The alarm clock blares just after dawn, a cup of hot coffee gets you moving out the door. A meeting with the client during lunch hour means take-out from the fast food place again. It’s 7:30 pm and you’re still finishing up at the office, tiding yourself over until the end of work with chips from the vending machine and more coffee. Take the MRT home; unwind with a glass of wine to finally get your mind off work. The next thing you know, the alarm is buzzing again . . .

We don’t need a sociologist to tell us that Singaporeans are busier than they’ve ever been. But this modern lifestyle may be slowly eroding the columns and pillars inside our bodies: our bones.

A balanced diet?

To maintain the health of our bones, the most important thing we need is calcium. Our bones are more or less made out of calcium, and if we do not get enough calcium in our everyday diet, our bones begin to lose their structure and become spongy. You’ve probably heard that a balanced diet promotes bone health. But what exactly is a balanced diet that provides sufficient calcium? A healthy balanced diet includes plenty of fruits and vegetables, plenty of rice or other grains, some milk and dairy foods, and some meat, fish or eggs. But in the fast-paced modern lifestyle, ensuring that our diet contains enough calcium can be a challenge.

Lifestyle and bone health

Even if our diet is well-balanced enough to contain 100% of our daily calcium needs, the modern lifestyle may be hindering the body’s ability to absorb even the calcium we should get in our regular food. Our ‘time scarce’ and ‘couch potato’ lifestyle means that we are not getting enough regular weight-bearing exercises (such as climbing stairs, brisk walking or jogging) that are needed to build strong bones. What’s worse, some of the things we do eat may actually interfere with the body’s ability to absorb calcium. Caffeine, found in coffee, tea, and most soft drinks, decreases calcium absorption. Likewise, alcohol slows down our bodies’ absorption of calcium. Among other activities, taking too much salty foods can also cause our body to lose calcium. All these can contribute to “bone loss.”

“Two glasses a day keeps bone loss at bay”

Because our modern lifestyle might be hindering our bodies’ consumption of calcium, we should try our best to limit our intake of caffeine, alcohol, and foods high in sodium. But most of us aren’t likely to do so. Instead, the surest way to keep our bones healthy is to regularly consume foods higher in calcium and do weight-bearing exercises.

Milk is one of the best sources of calcium: eight glasses a day provide the daily requirement of calcium, a far better ratio than green leafy vegetables or soy. Or better yet, try Anlene Milk or Anlene Concentrate: Just two servings per day provide 100% of your body’s daily needs. Enjoy one serving of Anlene milk for breakfast and one after work. For the rest of the day, busy or not, you can rest assured that your bone health is covered!

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Timing: 12pm – 8pm			
27-29 Sept	4-6 Oct	8-13 Oct	16-20 Oct
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Event Plaza, Basement 2	Event area, Blk 212, Bedok North St 1	Atrium, Level 1	Event Plaza, Basement 2



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SLA partners WDA to boost service excellence

SINGAPORE – Singapore Airlines has signed a new partnership with the Singapore Workforce Development Agency to boost service excellence.

This will see some 800 new cabin crew members each year receiving a nationally-recognised certification for service excellence when they graduate from a 15-week Cabin Crew Readiness Programme.

Recently, the first batch of 20 cabin crew members received their Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) certifications. They underwent classroom and on-the-job training, including modules on social etiquette, customer-handling skills and meal service procedures, as well as safety and security.

Stewardess Erma Dzalín said: “The training has been very thorough. I have learned how to become more of a service professional. I learned how to anticipate customers’ needs and how to overcome difficult situations with our customers.” **CHANNEL NEWSASIA**