

CELEBRATING



YEARS OF

CARE IN THE COMMUNITY



neighbours
for Active Living

“ 远亲不如近邻

CLOSE NEIGHBOURS
ARE BETTER THAN
DISTANT RELATIVES ”



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MESSAGE BY MAYOR SOUTH EAST DISTRICT



Happy 10th Anniversary to the Neighbours for Active Living programme (Neighbours)! You have reached a significant milestone of taking care of residents in the South East District.

Since its inception in 2013, South East Community Development Council (CDC) had partnered CGH to ensure that vulnerable residents in our communities are supported and cared for, with our converged networks and synergized resources.

Neighbours brings together full-time community care staff and volunteers to support patients/seniors after their discharge from CGH. The comprehensive training that volunteers receive equipped them with the necessary skills to help care for 'clients' in their own neighbourhoods, by building long-term relationships and helping them stay as healthy as possible where they live.

Many Neighbours clients are frequent hospital admittees or vulnerable elderly with complex medical and social care needs. Since its inception in Siglap and Bedok in mid-2013 with a staff of 4, Neighbours has grown to be a core staff of 50. The programme's unique blend of targeted healthcare and social expertise has served more than 7,000 residents in the South East district. More than 200 volunteers, ranging from students to retirees and professionals, make up the support network.

This special book commemorates and celebrates the inspirational 10-year journey of Neighbours, sharing heart-warming stories from staff, community partners, volunteers and clients. The dedication and passion of the Neighbours team shines through, having built strong partnerships over the decade, strengthening the community spirit so that we can help our vulnerable elderly live and age well in our modern kampongs.

I am delighted to witness CGH achieving this monumental milestone and grateful that South East CDC has been the privileged partner. I wish for everyone to continue the neighbourly work that tailors to our community's health and social needs. With passion and hard work, I am sure this programme will continue to surpass expectations.

This book is dedicated to the staff of CGH and South East CDC, our community partners and volunteers who have demonstrated the true spirit of "Gotong Royong" in serving your own fellow neighbours.

Warmest wishes,

Mohd Fahmi Aliman

Mayor of South East District
Adviser to Marine Parade GRC GROs

MESSAGE BY CEO CHANGI GENERAL HOSPITAL



The Neighbours programme was co-created by Changi General Hospital (CGH) and the South East Community Development Council (CDC), and over the past decade, has touched the lives of countless residents. This pioneering “Neighbours for Active Living” programme started with just three communities – Siglap, Bedok and Marine Parade – and was founded on partnership, collaboration and deep relationships between CGH and our community to bring about better health outcomes.

Today, through the dedication and hard work of the CGH Neighbours Community Care Team, they are in 18 communities, providing continued care for the many residents who have been discharged from the hospital and are back at home.

With the combination of health and social care expertise, our Neighbours Community Care Team members are practitioners of a holistic person-centred care approach, which has helped to build stronger relationships not just between the care teams and our residents, but also with the various community care providers. Working hand in hand with our community partners and passionate volunteers, we continue to forge strong bonds, finding new ways to connect and

deliver care even through the COVID-19 pandemic.

As CGH celebrates 88 years of trusted care in 2023, we are also proud of the CGH Neighbours Community Care Team for all their efforts and doing their utmost to serve the community over the last decade. We want to extend a big ‘Thank You’ to South East CDC for their trust and invaluable support, as well as every partner, volunteer and individual who has contributed to the success of this programme.

As an early champion of the population health approach with a strong foundation in healthcare delivery in the community, CGH is excited to be leading Healthier SG teams, with support from our partners and care providers, to empower residents to become healthier and improve their quality of life as part of preventive care.

The Caring General Hospital looks forward to providing many more decades of trusted care for our community in the East and for Singapore.

Professor Ng Wai Hoe
Chief Executive Officer
Changi General Hospital

MESSAGE BY DYGCEO (REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEMS) SINGHEALTH



This year, the Neighbours for Active Living programme celebrates 10 years of serving our Eastern community. As a community arm of Changi General Hospital (CGH), the Neighbours Community Care team has partnered with community organisations and worked alongside healthcare providers to empower residents to take charge of their own health.

We are grateful to the South East Community Development Council (CDC) for helping to kick-start the programme in 2013, and connecting us with partners to build a network for continual collaboration to support our residents.

The Neighbours model was ahead of its time with a unique health-social integration and person-centred approach. The Neighbours Community Care team and volunteers complement our community nurses' work by addressing the social care needs of patients. They also partner with Senior Activity Centres and Grassroots Organisations to engage residents through activities such as blood pressure monitoring, supporting residents

with poorly controlled chronic diseases, conducting Fall Risk Screening as well as organising health talks and health coaching to residents.

Over the past decade, the Neighbours Community Care team has cared for more than 12,000 patients who came through the doors of CGH. It really has been a village coming together to help our vulnerable residents adjust and live confidently in the community.

As we celebrate the Neighbours programme's accomplishments, we would like to thank South East CDC and our partners for their unwavering support. With our nation's focus on Healthier SG, we look forward to deepening our partnership in forging a strong network of care to help residents keep well, get well and live well in their communities.

Adjunct Professor Lee Chien Earn
Deputy Group CEO (Regional Health Systems), SingHealth

Our Journey

Khabar baik!

Auntie,
吃饱了吗?

Jiak ba liao!

Apa khabar?

Vanakam
thiru Mohan,
saukiyama?

Nan saukiyama
erukiren! Nandri!

NEIGHBOURS FOR ACTIVE LIVING PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



NEEDS OF VULNERABLE SENIORS

In 2013, CGH identified many vulnerable seniors who had multiple re-admissions to hospital. Due to a lack of social support and non-compliance in medication and appointments, many of these seniors required medical attention and were re-admitted to hospital.



NEIGHBOURS FOR ACTIVE LIVING (NEIGHBOURS)

The Neighbours for Active Living programme was set up in 2013 to ensure the vulnerable seniors continue to receive care and support in the community after discharge from hospital.



CGH NEIGHBOURS COMMUNITY CARE TEAM

The Neighbours Community Care team comprises care staff trained in healthcare or social work and are embedded in the community. They conduct home visits and help seniors to access health and social services in the community.



FRIEND-A-SENIOR @ SOUTH EAST

Friend-A-Senior @ South East was developed to engage and train residents to be active volunteers by helping them to acquire useful knowledge in caring for their fellow residents.



MATCHING OF VOLUNTEERS

Following the Friend-A-Senior training, each senior is matched with two to three volunteers.



ON-GOING SUPPORT

The volunteers receive continued support from the Neighbours Community Care team to care for and monitor vulnerable seniors.



COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Strong partnerships with healthcare and social purpose entities ensure the vulnerable seniors have access to a wide range of services for long-term support in the community.

NEEDS OF VULNERABLE SENIORS

Singapore is ageing at a fast pace. By 2030, the number of Singaporeans aged 65 and above is expected to reach more than 900,000. That means 1 in 4 Singaporeans will be age 65 and above. They are more likely to be hospitalised due to multiple chronic conditions.

In 2013, Eastern Health Alliance – then regional healthcare system of the eastern region identified many vulnerable residents with high healthcare and social needs. They often lacked of adequate support to care for themselves at home. Some lived alone, or their caregivers themselves suffered from multiple health and social conditions.

As a result of social isolation, default in medications and appointments, many had complications and relapses which led to frequent re-admissions.

There was a need to provide continual and holistic support for the seniors to stay well after their discharge from hospital and age well with support from the local communities.



By **2030**,
the number of
Singaporeans
**AGED 65
AND ABOVE**
is expected
to reach above
900,000.

NEIGHBOURS FOR ACTIVE LIVING (NEIGHBOURS)

Recognising the need for a holistic approach to address frequent admissions, a partnership was formed between South East Community Development Council and Changi General Hospital.

“Neighbours for Active Living”, a health and social integration programme was created. The Chinese adage – “远亲不如近邻”, which refers to neighbours as the nearest support when one needs help and immediate family members are away, reflected the philosophy of the programme.

远亲不如近邻

The programme aims to:

- ❖ Facilitate active living and ageing in place for vulnerable seniors in the community
- ❖ Understand and monitor the needs of vulnerable seniors through lifelong partnerships
- ❖ Build linkages between health and social and community partners to provide safety network through the spirit of “Gotong Royong”.

CGH NEIGHBOURS COMMUNITY CARE TEAM

The Neighbours Community Care Team comprise of full-time staff from Changi General Hospital. They have nursing, social work or healthcare backgrounds.

The care teams are embedded in the community.

- They visit patients at their homes and provide holistic assessment on their health and social care needs.
- Identify and coordinate services to ensure continuity of care
- Build partnerships with community partners to help support the seniors
- Train and support the volunteers in their volunteering journey



“

By understanding the needs of the seniors and what matters to them, we help them to make more informed decisions.

”

~ **Leong Mi Juan** ~
CGH Neighbours Community Care Team

“

Through care coordination, we linked them to the resources and services they need. Seeing them well helps us to feel happy and appreciated.

”

~ **Nurhanan Abdul Rahim** ~
CGH Neighbours Community Care Team

FRIEND-A-SENIOR @ SOUTH EAST

The Friend-A-Senior programme (FAS) engages, develops and support a pool of volunteers to befriend the vulnerable seniors in local grassroots divisions.

The training provides volunteers with an understanding of the philosophy of volunteerism and their role as a FAS volunteer.

It comprises critical modules such as understanding ageing issues, effective

communication with seniors, understanding chronic conditions, knowing your clients, observing seniors' behaviour and emotional management.

The training is customised and volunteers are equipped with the basics and knowledge to be more confident in engaging and supporting the seniors.



MATCHING OF VOLUNTEERS

After attending the Friend-A-Senior Training, a team of two to three volunteers will be matched to a senior by a volunteer coordinator and the Neighbours Community Care Team.

Factors such as language, locality, availability and interests would be considered before arranging the meet up between the volunteers and senior.

These factors play an important role in building and sustaining a long term relationship. For example, sharing the common language aids in rapport building and reduces the chances of miscommunication.



“

It is my greatest joy to witness the start of a new friendship whenever I see the volunteers and seniors having so much in common during their first few visits. Not all matched cases would turn out successful, but when they do, it is very fulfilling.

”

~ Ms Zenice Ng ~
Volunteer Coordinator

ONGOING SUPPORT

Volunteers' Development

Volunteers attend continuous learning and support sessions to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Through interaction and sharing of experiences, they get to learn tips from their fellow volunteers.

The support session also provides an opportunity for fellow volunteers to bond, inspire and encourage each other in volunteering.



COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Neighbours programme has a very strong focus on collaborating with the local community. It emphasises building strong partnerships and working closely with community and organisations in providing care to residents.

Besides working with healthcare partners (such as polyclinics and general practitioner clinics), public sector organisations (such as Agency for Integrated Care, Social Service Office), Neighbours also works closely with Grassroots Organisations, Community Care Organisations, Religious Organisations, Schools and Corporates.

Grassroots Organisations

Grassroots Organisations help to identify, engage and empower residents to step forward to befriend vulnerable seniors so as to enhance social cohesion in the local community.

Community Care Organisations

Many Community Care Organisations e.g. FILOs, Friends of 3rd Age, Montfort Care have volunteers whose capabilities can be enhanced through the Friend-A-Senior programme.

Religious Organisations

Religious Organisations reach out to needy residents under their community service arm. E.g. Moriah Bible Presbyterian Church and Charis Methodist Church have tapped on Friend-A-Senior programme to enhance their volunteers' capabilities in conducting home visits to vulnerable seniors.

Schools

The Friend-A-Senior programme partners schools to promote volunteerism under the Values In Action (VIA) programme in schools. For example, Bedok View Secondary School partnered with Siglap Lucky Valley Residents' Committee and organised centre-based activities to engage vulnerable seniors. Ping Yi Secondary School tapped on its Design & Technology modules where students are encouraged to embark on community projects with vulnerable seniors to improve their quality of life.



Corporate Organisations

Corporate Organisations e.g. Standard Chartered Bank believes that a strong giving culture results in a happier and healthier workplace for their employees. In addition to donations to support the Friend-A-Senior programme, employees also participated in the training and befriending activities with vulnerable seniors.

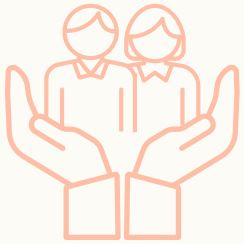


Our Milestones

10 YEARS OF CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

OUR IMPACT

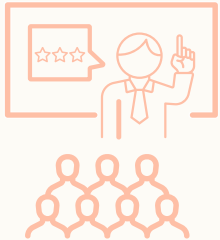
Enabling active living and ageing in place through strengthening partnerships and fostering the spirit of “Gotong Royong”.



7,847

Seniors

in the South East district benefitted from Neighbours for Active Living programme



900+

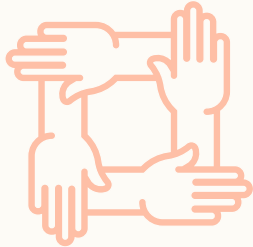
Neighbours Volunteers

trained



26,000+

Volunteering hours



70+

Community Partners

in South East district



100,000+

care calls and home visits

conducted by CGH Neighbours Community Care Team



OUR MILESTONES

The Neighbours for Active Living Programme started as a pilot and has scaled and grown significantly over the years.

It started in three divisions in 2013. In 2016, the Neighbours expanded to MacPherson and Braddell Heights.

In 2017, it expanded to the whole of South East District with the inclusion of Mountbatten division.



Pioneer batch of befrienders graduated from FAS training at Siglap Community Centre

First Volunteer Appreciation Day held at Bedok Amphitheatre @ Bedok South Road



Eastern Health Alliance and South East CDC receives Best Practice Award for Inter-agency Collaboration at the Excellence in Public Service Awards 2016



Received donation from Standard Chartered Bank in support of Friend-A-Senior @ South East programme



2013

2014

2015

2016

2017



Pilot of the Friend-A-Senior Training Programme in Siglap division



Launch of Neighbours for Active Living programme by Dr Gerard Ee, Chairman of Eastern Health Alliance and Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Mayor of South East District on 25 Jan 2014



Programme receives the Merit Award for Most Innovative Project/Policy at the Excellence in Public Service Awards 2015



Expansion of programme to MacPherson and Braddell Heights divisions in partnership with National Healthcare Group in 2016



Expansion of Neighbours for Active Living Programme to the whole of South East District with the inclusion of Mountbatten division

Expanding services to better serve the community

Neighbours for Active Living Programme continue to expand our services to cater to the needs of the community. This is being achieved through :

- 1) Increasing our outreach effort to more Community Care Organisations to promote community volunteering
- 2) Conducting more training sessions to equip volunteers with skills to support the seniors
- 3) Organising more bonding sessions to support the volunteers in their befriending journey



Friend-A-Senior training with Moriah Presbyterian Church



Friend-A-Senior training with Charis Methodist Church



Friend-A-Senior training with volunteers from Masjid Kampung Siglap Mosque



Support session for volunteers

Volunteering continues despite COVID-19 pandemic

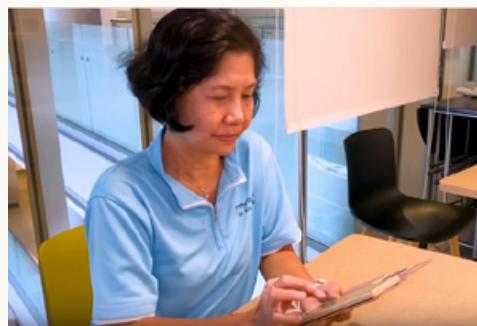
The COVID-19 pandemic affected the entire population especially the vulnerable groups like isolated seniors. All face to face activities such as volunteer training and home visits were put on hold to minimise physical contact. Along with risks to physical health, emotional wellness was impacted.

To ensure seniors continued to receive support from the Neighbours Community Care team and the volunteers, the team leveraged various means to deliver care and support for the volunteers.

Tele-care and Video calls

Tele-care support - Regular phone calls by volunteers to provide emotional support and assist with basic needs e.g. meals and groceries.

Frequent video calls and conferencing enable volunteers to engage the seniors face to face virtually in place of physical visits.



Message



Video Calls

Virtual training for volunteering

Neighbours Community Care team, South East CDC and community partners designed virtual training sessions for volunteers and equipped them with tele-befriending skills and self-care knowledge so that they could continue supporting the seniors.

12 sessions conducted in 2020/2021
487 volunteers attended



“

We have no doubt that COVID-19 is one of the biggest challenges that the nation and world has faced. It is heartening to know that our “Neighbours”, both the beneficiaries and volunteers, embrace technology and look for means to persevere on and ensure no one is left behind even as our community fight the pandemic together.

”

~ Mr Fahmi Aliman ~
Mayor of South East District

> > > > > > **2021** > > >

> > > **2022**

Virtual Celebration - Volunteer Appreciation Day

In recognition of the volunteers' contribution to the community and to thank them for their unwavering support to the seniors, the annual volunteer appreciation event was held virtually for two years amid the pandemic.

For some of the volunteers, it was also their first time attending a virtual celebration. Both events were attended by close to 200 participants, which once again demonstrated the spirit of "gotong royong".

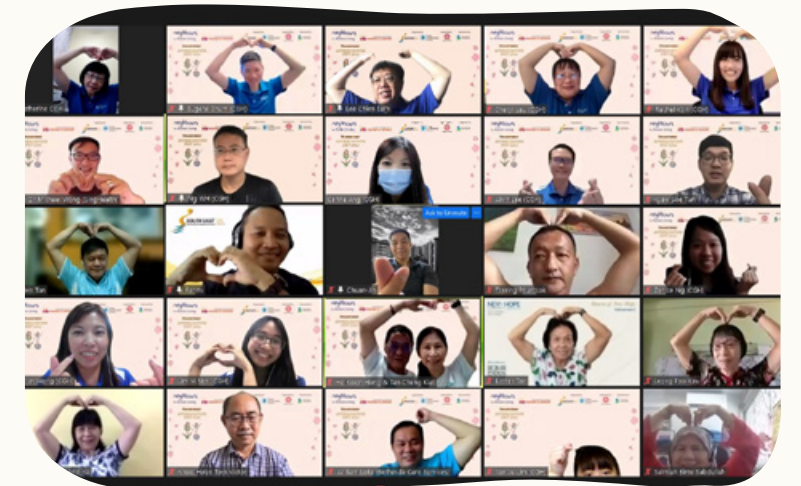


Neighbours Volunteer Appreciation Day 2021 with virtual tour to Singapore Zoo

Neighbours Volunteers' Appreciation Day 2022



Virtual celebration graced by Guest-of-Honour, Mr Tan Chuan Jin, Speaker of Parliament and Adviser to Marine Parade GRC GRO.



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Presentation of memento to community partners at Volunteer Appreciation Day 2015



Launch of commemorative book to celebrate the programme's five-year journey in 2018

Volunteer Appreciation Day 2017



Presentation of Paper Quilling memento hand-made by Neighbours Community Care team in 2019



Sharing the love

In times of medical emergencies, a well-stocked first aid kit can reduce adverse consequences of injuries.

On learning that some seniors do not have a first aid kit at home, volunteer Uriana and her Girl Scout's friends decided to provide the items.

She shared the idea with her mum, Katherine, whom is also our volunteer. The girls sold hand-made earrings and raised over \$400 to assemble 10 first aid kits for the seniors. Each kit consists of basic first aid items such as plasters and bandages. In addition, there were medicated oil and eye wash. The items were assembled and packed compactly in a transparent box.

Together with the Neighbours Community Care Team, Katherine, Uriana and one of her Girl Scout's friend delivered the kit to one of the seniors and guided him on how the items could be used in times of need.

The other 9 kits were delivered by our Neighbours Community Care Team.



Neighbours Community Care staff delivered a first aid kit to one of our senior during home visit



Volunteer Uriana explaining to the senior on usage of each item in the first aid kit



Uriana and her Girl Scout's friend with our Neighbours Community Care staff



Besides the essential first aid items, the kit also includes medicated oil and eye wash

Floral arrangement workshop

Volunteers and a group of seniors were excited to attend a floral arrangement workshop organised by the Neighbours Community Care team at Heartbeat@Bedok.

Participants were greeted with sweet-smelling roses that warmed the heart. They were also delighted to learn useful tips on how to arrange their favourite pieces and care for them.

“
This is my first floral arrangement. Thank you for arranging the gathering, it's been a while due to COVID-19. I enjoyed it very much.

”
~ Mdm Susan Lu ~
Neighbours Volunteer



“Now it's time to take photo and send it to my friends”, said one of the participants



Thumbs up to the beautiful flower arrangement



Lovely flowers, happy faces!

Our Stories



STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

GIVING THE EXTRA HELP



From Left to Right: Chew Siew Ngee, Richard Goh, Maggie Teng

Caring for a person with dementia can be challenging both physically and emotionally. Being the main caregiver, Mdm Eldora Teo had to witness her mother's (Mdm Ng Yoke Lan) personality and behaviour deteriorate over time. Despite Mdm Ng attending senior day care thrice a week which would give Mdm Eldora some respite, the Neighbours Community Care Team were still concerned over Mdm Eldora's wellbeing and suggested having volunteers to journey with them.

Enjoy every process!"

~ Mdm Chew Siew Ngee

Mdm Maggie Teng, Mdm Chew Siew Ngee and Mr Richard Goh were matched to Mdm Ng. The volunteers would bring Mdm Ng out as they saw that the outings made her happy. While the volunteers were spending time with Mdm Ng, Mdm Eldora could do her own chores and have some time to herself. Mdm Eldora also thought of ways to work together with the volunteers, such as getting Mdm Ng to paint art pieces and 'submit' the homework to them. "Interaction helps to slow down the dementia process. We should not be avoiding people

"Everyone is different and it helped me see a different perspective of life and be better aware of the situation so we can help appropriately."

~ Mr Richard Goh

with dementia, as they are able bodied", shared volunteers Siew Ngee and Richard.

The volunteers would also take note of what Mdm Eldora shared with them. When they sensed anything amiss, the volunteers would alert the Neighbours Community Care Team who would then check in with the caregiver. Mr Richard Goh added that Mdm Eldora's emotions should not be neglected as she played a crucial role in the care of Mdm Ng. If burnout happens, the care for the senior would be impacted. The regular visits by the volunteers increased the

respite time for Mdm Eldora. It gave her time for self-care which in turn helped her take better care of Mdm Ng.

"My contribution is small but I will continue and do what I can to help."

- Mdm Maggie Teng

Mdm Maggie Teng encouraged more people to be part of the Neighbours Friend-A-senior programme as it helped in building an inclusive society. "No effort is too little. If everyone plays a part, our community will change to be a better place", she added.

"I am grateful that the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior volunteers accepted my mother's condition and treat her normally."

~ Mdm Eldora Teo



From Left to Right:
Mdm Ng Yoke Lan, Eldora Teo

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

SERVING THE COMMUNITY



From Left to Right: Linda Lim, Sharon Low, Julie Sim
Bottom: Mdm Wong Sook Cheng

Three good friends, Mdm Sharon Low, Mdm Linda Lim and Mdm Julie Sim joined the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme in 2018. They were subsequently matched with Mdm Wong Sook Cheng, 93 who lived in Simei.

“Volunteering allowed me to appreciate my experiences and taught me to be patient when I encounter challenges.”

~ Mdm Sharon Low

Although Mdm Wong lived with and was cared for by her family, the Neighbours Community Care Team could see that she had limited social interaction beyond her family as she rarely went out due to her knee pain. Having interactions with people outside of the family and having more physical activity would benefit her. The Neighbours Community Care Team also enlisted the help of the volunteers to remind Mdm Wong on her fluid restrictions

“The Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme helped me gain social and relational skills with seniors.”

~ Mdm Linda Lim

and to monitor any lower limbs swelling.

“Just do it! Volunteering is purposeful and bring a sense of wellbeing to the seniors.”

~ Mdm Julie Sim

During the pandemic, the 3 volunteers took turns to connect with Mdm Wong through video calls. “Video calling is not as impactful as meeting her face-to-face. Having physical visits allows us to spend more time with her, check on her overall wellbeing and alert the Neighbours Community Care Team if anything is amiss. We tried our best to reach out to

her during that period”, shared Volunteers Julie and Linda.

The volunteers remembered fondly how Mdm Wong reminisced about her past occupation and how she had been very resilient. It triggered happy memories for her as she described in detail the hardship that she went through. Although her working life was challenging, she was proud and satisfied with what she had accomplished. Sharon shared, “Mdm Wong’s stories taught us to appreciate and be patient with whatever challenges we are going through.” Linda added, “Volunteering gives us a chance to be the extra pair of hands, eyes and ears to look out the senior’s needs, and provide them with assurance and encouragement.”

“They are very good to visit me. Thank you!”

~ Mdm Wong

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

STAYING POSITIVE



“Do it for your senior, you will find change and add value to yourself.”

~ Mdm Asifa

Asifa Zaman

Mdm Asifa, 34, learnt about the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior training programme when her employer, Standard Chartered Bank, encouraged their staff to participate in the programme. She was matched with late Mdm G with 2 other volunteers.

Mdm G lived alone and was at risk of social isolation. She had difficulties walking and faced challenges if she needed to go do her marketing. The Neighbours Community Care Team noted her limited psychosocial support and frailty. They assessed that she would benefit from having volunteer support.

Despite being in constant pain due to cancer, Mdm G was always positive and welcomed the volunteers when they visited her. They started by chit chatting with her to get to know her better and helping her with her grocery shopping. Subsequently, they took her out for short walks to the nearby market, hawker centre and shopping mall. Even though

she required many rest along the way, the volunteers found that these activities benefited her compared to staying at home all the time. The emotional support, companionship and outing with the volunteers helped lift Mdm G's spirits and gave her the motivation that she needed to stay healthy and live independently.

Partnering hand in hand, the volunteers would inform the Neighbours Community Care Team when Mdm G was feeling unwell. In Mdm G's final months, she was mostly warded in hospital. However, the volunteers continued to visit her and give her emotional support in the hospital and the hospice.

While Mdm G has passed on, Asifa still recalls how happy she looked doing various activities like trying out lipsticks. She added that supporting Mdm G taught her how to see things positively even when life gets tough.

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS MORE THAN FRIENDS



From Left to Right:
Mdm Zaiton, Mdm Mahhizon, Salmiah

Mdm Salmiah was inspired by the dedication of the Neighbours Community Care Team and the Friend-A-Senior volunteers in taking care of her late husband. Wanting to help others in need, she joined the Friend-A-Senior programme in 2016 and had since supported 6 seniors. Mdm Mahhizon and Mdm Zaiton were among the seniors that she helped.

“When I see the seniors are safe and happy, I feel happy too!”

~ Mdm Salmiah

Mdm Mahhizon was a frequent admitter to hospital and had multiple chronic medical conditions. She lived alone. The Neighbours Community Care Team linked her with the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior volunteers so that they could check in on her regularly, help to remind her on her medications, medical appointments and provide some emotional support and companionship. Mdm

Mahhizon recalled that she was initially wary and reluctant to meet with strangers. However, her anxiety quickly dissipated and they became very comfortable with each other.

“She is an angel that gives me encouragement and motivation when I am at my worst. I am very thankful for her in helping me stay well.”

~ Mdm Mahhizon

During COVID-19, Salmiah was not able to visit Mdm Mahhizon. Worrying about her wellbeing, Salmiah would call Mdm Mahhizon daily and they would talk for hours. Whenever Mdm Mahhizon was hospitalised, Salmiah would visit her, providing her with much-needed support and encouragement. She would also provide updates to the Neighbours Community Care Team on Mdm Mahhizon’s condition and whether she had any requests upon discharge.

Another senior that Salmiah befriended is Mdm Zaiton. Mdm Zaiton had multiple chronic medical conditions. She experienced occasional shortness of breath and chest tightness. As her daughter was out most of the time, she often expressed her loneliness to the Neighbours Community Care Team. Salmiah would constantly remind her to take her medications and inform the Neighbours Community Care Team should she require any care interventions. Mdm Zaiton appreciated the meaningful connection she had with Salmiah. From befriender to trusted friend and confidant who supported her care journey, this was indeed a story of “more than friends”.

“Salmiah is a very nice and helpful lady who is always there for me.”

~ Mdm Zaiton

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

LIFELONG LEARNERS



From Left to Right: Danny Goh, Lois Goh
Bottom: Mdm Tan Annie

Mr Danny Goh, 86 and Mdm Lois Goh 76, a husband-and-wife team joined as volunteers with the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme in 2018. They supported two seniors living in Joo Chiat.

After the passing of their first matched senior, they were matched to another senior – Mdm Tan Annie, 76. Mdm Annie was at risk of social isolation and she expressed that she found her loneliness unbearable at times. She lived alone and had chronic medical conditions such as hypertension and high cholesterol.

On their first visit, Mdm Annie and the volunteers found that they had a common interest in singing. Danny and Lois invited her to join the vocal lessons conducted by their daughter. During the pandemic, she continued attending the lessons online. Through the lessons, Mdm Annie made more friends, felt more joyful and started to enjoy

singing. Danny and Lois were pleasantly surprised that Mdm Annie was eager to learn and improve herself. Danny added that seeing Mdm Annie working hard and improving herself made the volunteering journey even more satisfying and rewarding.

“Danny and Lois gave me security and confidence. When I feel lonely or unwell, I can go to them and I feel better knowing that someone is there to listen.”

~ Mdm Annie

As Danny, Lois and Mdm Annie kept in contact regularly, they knew when she was not feeling well with conditions such as flu or gastritis. When such situations arise, they alerted the Neighbours Community Care Team to provide the necessary interventions. The Neighbours Community Care Team also coached Mdm Annie to understand her symptoms and when to seek medical attention.

Together, the volunteers and Neighbours Community Care Team worked hand in hand in caring for Mdm Annie.

“When we serve and help others, we are blessed even more by thinking more positive about ourselves.”

~ Mdm Lois

After the pandemic, the trio would meet up on top of their vocal lessons. Lois shared that setting aside dedicated time for visits was crucial in order to spend time meaningfully with Annie. Mdm Annie added that knowing the volunteers taught her how to love, enjoy life better and take care of herself.

“It is important to understand and try not to focus on their difficulties but find ways to help them feel relaxed and cared for.”

~ Mr Danny

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

PATIENCE IS KEY



From Left to Right: Jessie Wong, Mdm Chan, Jillian Neo

Mdm Jillian Neo and Mdm Jessie Wong were matched to Mdm Chan Woon Chun. Mdm Chan suffered from multiple chronic medical conditions. She had frequent swelling of her legs. The volunteers monitored her condition and activated the Neighbours Community Care Team whenever Mdm Chan needed help. The team would visit her, assess the situation and guide her on fluid restriction and elevating her legs when swollen.

“Having the heart to volunteer is important, otherwise there is no meaning to it.”

~ Mdm Jillian Neo

Almost every time when the volunteers visited Mdm Chan, she would be watching her favourite television drama. It was not an easy journey for the volunteers to break the ice with Mdm Chan. Mdm Chan eventually opened up and started to engage in small chats with the volunteers. “Getting into her world was not easy but

hearing that she would ask about me when I did not visit, I know I have succeeded in building a rapport with her” shared Jillian.

“Volunteering helps me to find joy.”

~ Mdm Jessie Wong

When Jillian’s husband retired, she encouraged him to join the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme. Mr Ng felt that the volunteering journey allowed him to understand and communicate with seniors better and also prepare for his own ageing process. Jessie added that when she visited Mdm Chan, it helped her to forget her problems. She felt more at peace and see her problems in a different perspective. This

showed that volunteering can be a mutually beneficial experience for the seniors and also the volunteers.

The volunteers built good relationships with Mdm Chan and her caregivers. Together with the support from the Neighbours Community Care Team, they enhanced Mdm Chan’s quality of life and allowed her to continue age well at home.

“With the ageing population, it is good to have more volunteers to join the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme to support more seniors and reduce loneliness.”

~ Mr Ng



From Left to Right:
Mr Ng, Mdm Chan, Jillian Neo

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

A LISTENING EAR



From Left to Right: Jade Tan, Mdm Kam

Mdm Kam Wei Chong, 79 lived alone and did not have family support. Her mobility was affected due to a previous stroke and she had high fall risks. This in turn increased the chance of her being disconnected from her friends and with the outside world.

“By volunteering, I feel that my retirement is a meaningful and purposeful one.”

~ Mdm Jade Tang

Mdm Jade Tang, 65 joined the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme in 2017 as she wanted to put her desire to help others into action. Since then, she has supported a few seniors before meeting Mdm Kam.

With her bubbly character, Mdm Kam would always welcome Jade with a wide smile during each visit. Jade would read and translate Mdm Kam’s letter to her. At the same time, she would remind Mdm Kam to take her medications. Should Mdm Kam require any help such as going for her medical appointments, Jade would inform the Neighbours

Community Care Team to assist her.

During the recent Chinese New Year, Jade brought flowers to decorate Mdm Kam’s home. Mdm Kam’s eyes sparkled with joy and this really touched Jade’s heart. Seeing Mdm Kam happy also made her feel happy. Jade did not expect that a small gesture like this would mean so much to Mdm Kam.

“I am very happy to have someone to talk to and help me to keep well.”

~ Mdm Kam

Despite supporting many seniors, Jade recognised that each senior’s needs may be unique. However, the one thing that she consistently did was to provide a listening ear and hear their personal issues and needs. She shared that being there and showing empathy can go a long way in making seniors feel heard and valued. “It is important to be realistic about our own expectations when supporting the seniors and not to assume what is good for them,” she added.

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT



From Left to Right: Adelynn Lee, Shuen En, Sam Ng

Mr Sam Ng and Mdm Adelynn Lee, both in their 50s, were looking for a volunteer opportunity with their daughter when they found out about the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior programme at an event.

In 2018, Sam and Adelynn were matched with Mdm M who lived alone across the street. Mdm M had multiple chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension that were not well-controlled and required regular monitoring. In addition, Mdm M frequently lamented that she felt lonely as her next-of-kin lived in Malaysia. Sam and Adelynn visited Mdm M regularly. This complemented the Neighbours Community Care Team in monitoring Mdm M's conditions and extending support to her whenever necessary.

“Spending time with seniors might seem like something small to us, but it creates a great impact on their lives.”

~ Mr Sam, Mdm Adelynn and Miss Shuen En

Mdm M was skeptical of the volunteers initially but soon opened up to them. Both Adelynn and Mdm M had common interest in craft work and would spend time painting where the latter taught her water colour painting. In addition, knowing that Adelynn would like to improve her English, Mdm M offered to tutor her as her background was in communications. This made Mdm M feel valued and useful as she was able to contribute back

to her volunteers. It also created the opportunity for Adelynn and Mdm M to see each other more often. This provided Mdm M with the much-needed sense of security.

Simple gestures such as spending time with a senior may not seem much to volunteers but it meant a lot to Mdm M. Sam and Adelynn did not realise that bringing Mdm M out for a Christmas lunch in the midst of COVID-19 would be something she held close to her heart. It was only after the passing of Mdm M when her best friend contacted Adelynn and shared how grateful Mdm M was that she learned that her efforts had made such a big impact.

STORIES OF NEIGHBOURS VOLUNTEERS

KITH & KIN



From Left to Right: Christina Tan, Mdm Chiang, Ivy Yee

Mdm Chiang Kam Kook was visually impaired and immobile due to a stroke. She needed assistance from her caregiver for her daily activities. Seeing the lack of social participation and caregiver stress, Neighbours Community Care Team linked the family with the Neighbours Friend-A-Senior volunteers.

“The volunteers are very good! If I can see, I would like to join them and be a Neighbours Friend-A-Senior volunteer too.”

~ Mdm Chiang

Mdm Christina Tan and Mdm Ivy Yee had been supporting Mdm Chiang for more than 5 years. Mdm Christina was matched to Mdm Chiang in February 2015. Upon hearing about Christina’s meaningful experiences, Ivy was motivated to be part of the programme and joined in soon after.

Although both volunteers held full time jobs, they would find time to visit Mdm Chiang bi-weekly, bringing her out for a breath of fresh air. Mdm Chiang’s caregiver was grateful that the volunteers could bring her out as it was difficult for him to do so due to his own medical conditions. When Mdm Chiang was admitted to hospital after a fall, the volunteers alerted the Neighbours Community Care Team who provided fall precaution education to her caregiver after discharge. Whenever Mdm Chiang’s caregiver raised concerns on hospital related matters, the Neighbours Community Care Team would assist and get them the right resources and support.

“Anything is possible if you put your heart into it. Technology is so advanced now. If you cannot visit you can always call.”

~ Mdm Christina

“Now that I can help, I will help. Through this journey, I did not lose anything yet and gained so much more.”

~ Mdm Ivy

Christina and Ivy both shared that the most memorable experience in their volunteering journey was seeing how much Mdm Chiang’s mood improved when they visited her. Both volunteers joined the programme wanting to help others. In doing so, they gained so much more in the process. They felt that volunteers could help seniors to reduce social isolation and depression, and for seniors to feel that someone cares for them. Christina and Ivy also learned to see things from the senior’s perspectives. They shared, by treating the senior as though she is your friend or family, it will be easier to communicate with them. You will care more for them.

ABOUT SOUTH EAST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



South East Community Development Council (CDC) was set up on 24 November 2001. Spanning the scenic eastern coast of Singapore, the South East District comprises the Marine Parade Group Representative Constituency (GRC), East Coast GRC, MacPherson Single Member Constituency (SMC) and Mountbatten SMC; it is home to more than 500,000 residents. The District includes some of the island's most vibrant, historical and beautiful neighbourhoods, such as Geylang Serai, Joo Chiat, Bedok and Marine Parade.

VISION

To build an active and vibrant South East District where residents and stakeholders feel a strong sense of belonging.

MISSION

- Aggregator of Needs and Resources
- Builder of Capability and Capacity in Partners and Networks
- Connector of Communities

STRATEGIC THRUSTS

Strengthening Social Infrastructure

Working with partners on the ground to identify and address different needs which vary from place to place.

Promoting Active Citizenry

Working with partners in the people, public and private sectors to create opportunities for residents and stakeholders to be engaged in the community.

Nurturing Volunteerism

Bonding new volunteers as a team, equip them with organizing and leadership skills, and empower them to develop projects to serve the community needs.

Your Social Broker

At the helm of South East CDC is Mayor Fahmi Aliman, who leads the team in fulfilling the CDC's mission– an Aggregator of Needs and Resources, Builder of Capability and Capacity in Partners and Networks and Connector of Communities. With these tenets in mind, we hope to build a community, with our residents and stakeholders, where everyone can feel a sense of belonging and pride. As your social broker, we work closely with our partners to support, facilitate and empower community-initiated projects. Our doors are always open to proposals from schools, non-profit organisations, corporate companies and individuals; we are happy to provide the platform for you to reach out to the community or assist a family in need. We believe that everyone can make a difference and we welcome the chance to help you achieve that difference!

ABOUT CHANGI GENERAL HOSPITAL



Delivering trusted care since 1935, Changi General Hospital (CGH) is an academic medical institution caring for more than 1 million people in Singapore. A tertiary referral centre with over 1,000 beds, CGH is committed to medical research and education, clinical innovation and care for patients through a comprehensive range of medical specialties and services. Helmed by a multi-disciplinary, dedicated team of healthcare professionals, CGH consistently delivers positive health outcomes for patients.

VISION

Your Trusted Care Partner, Innovating
Healthcare for Tomorrow

MISSION

To Deliver the Best Patient Care
with Passion and Empathy

A member of the SingHealth cluster of healthcare institutions, CGH is consistently ranked and recognised to be amongst Newsweek World's Best Hospitals (Singapore) (2019 – 2022), Newsweek World's Best Smart Hospitals (2021 and 2023), and Newsweek World's Best Specialized Hospitals (2022 and 2023).



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Agency for Integrated Care

Ain Society

Al-Ansar Mosque

All Saints Church

Bedok Citizens' Consultative Committee

Bedok Lutheran Church

Bedok Polyclinic

Bedok View Secondary School

Bethesda Care & Counselling Services Centre

Braddell Heights Citizens' Consultative Committee

Brahm Centre

Change Community Services

Changi Simei Citizens' Consultative Committee

Changi-Simei CCC Welfare Fund Committee

Charis Methodist Church

East Coast Town Council

Fengshan Citizens' Consultative Committee

Filos Community Services

Friends of the Third Age

Geylang Polyclinic

Geylang Serai Citizens' Consultative Committee

Home Nursing Foundation

House of Joy

Joo Chiat Citizens' Consultative Committee

Kampong Chai Chee Active Ageing Committee

Kampong Chai Chee Citizen's Consultative Committee

Kampung Siglap Mosque

Kassim Mosque

Kembangan-Chai Chee Citizens' Consultative Committee

Kembangan-Chai Chee Seniors Activity Centre

Kembangan-Chai Chee Social Team

Macpherson Active Ageing Committee

Macpherson Citizens' Consultative Committee

Marine Parade - Foo Hai Elderly Lodge

Marine Parade Citizens' Consultative Committee

Marine Parade Family Service Centre

Marine Parade Polyclinic

Marine Parade Town Council

Metta Welfare Association

Ministry of Health

Montfort Care Bedok

Montfort Care Marine Parade

Mountbatten Citizens' Consultative Committee

Moriah Bible-Presbyterian Church

Muhammadiyah Health and Day Care Centre

National Kidney Foundation

Neighbour Ring Community Services

New Hope Community Services

Persatuan Pemuda Islam Singapura (PPIS)

Ping Yi Secondary School

PPIS Family Service Centre (East)

SATA Commhealth Uttamram Bedok

Shan You Wellness Community

Siglap Citizens' Consultative Committee

Siglap South CC Women's Executive Committees

Singapore Buddhist Lodge

Singapore Management University iCity

Social Service Office @ Bedok

Social Service Office @ Geylang Serai

St. Hilda's Community Services

Sunlove Senior Activity Centre

Tembusu Elder Care Centre

Tembusu Active Ageing Centre

The Salvation Army Peacehaven Bedok Multi-Service Centre

Thye Hua Kwan Bedok Radiance Active Ageing Centre

Thye Hua Kwan Cluster Support@Bedok

Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities

Thye Hua Kwan Senior Activity Centre@ Cassia

Thye Hua Kwan Senior Activity Centre @ Fengshan

Trans Family Service Centre

Tung Ling Community Services

WeCare Community Services

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