



Ms Ang Ching Ching (left) of Tan Tock Seng Hospital and Ms Goh Meh Meh of Singapore General Hospital are among the six who received the President's Award for Nurses this year. The award, given out by President Halimah Yacob at the Istana yesterday, recognises outstanding individuals in the nursing field. ST PHOTOS: DESMOND FOO

# Lauded for their valuable contributions to nursing

TTSH palliative care veteran and SGH deputy director among 6 awarded top accolade

Jose Hong

Having spent 10 years as an infectious diseases nurse tending to patients with the human immunodeficiency virus, Ms Ang Ching Ching was used to tragedy. "I could have three patients dying in one shift," recalled Ms Ang, 41,

who started her nursing career at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) in 1997. "There would be at least one dying every other week."

Yet, she realised that her training did not prepare her to help those at the end of their lives.

"I did not know how to give them the comfort they needed," said Ms Ang, who decided to shift to pallia-

tive, or end-of-life, care.

In 2010, Ms Ang, who is single, became the hospital's first advanced practice nurse in palliative care.

Since then, she has played a pivotal role in setting up TTSH's palliative nursing care services and also in spearheading a home-hospice care service.

She was one of six nurses who received the President's Award for Nurses this year, bringing the total number of award recipients to 67 since it began in 2000.

The award, given out by Presi-

dent Halimah Yacob at the Istana yesterday, is considered the highest accolade for the nursing profession and recognises outstanding individuals in the field.

Though palliative care is emotionally draining – Ms Ang said she cries every few months – she finds it intensely rewarding to fulfil the patients' last wishes.

Another award recipient at the ceremony, which was also attended by Health Minister Gan Kim Yong, was Ms Goh Meh Meh, deputy director of nursing at Singa-

pore General Hospital.

When Ms Goh joined the hospital in 1984, it had around 20 operating theatres. This number increased to 35 a quarter-century later.

But the theatres were still using a manual system to track the thousands of sterile instruments needed for operations.

Ms Goh, whose entire 45-year career has been in nursing, was instrumental in digitising the hospital's procedures. The 61-year-old, who is married with three children, also speaks at local and overseas conferences, and does volunteer work in countries such as Myanmar and Indonesia to treat patients with cleft lips or palates.

"I'm still very passionate as an operating theatre nurse. It's where I feel I can be the most useful," said Ms Goh, who will leave on a volunteer trip to Cambodia soon.

"I'm very grateful, happy and privileged to receive this award."

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# Women's prison focuses on emotional support

Cheow Sue-Ann

She has been in prison for most of her young son's life.

Nora (not her real name) was convicted of drug use three years ago when her son was a year old.

The 32-year-old, whose son visits her in prison, said: "When he called me 'ibu' (Malay for mother), it was a very touching moment. But when I asked if he wanted to stay with me, jokingly, he said he wanted to go with 'nenek' (Nora's mother-in-law)."

"It was quite hurtful but I know that it is my fault, and I can understand that he does not feel a bond with me."

Nora, whose release date is slated for some time next year, said she will do all she can to rebuild those bonds when she is reunited with her son.

She and about 1,200 other women of varying ages are held at Changi Prison Complex's Institution A4, Singapore's only all-women institution.

At a visit to the facility yesterday,

President Halimah Yacob said: "I met many of the inmates and they told me that the support of their families is really something that keeps them going in the recovery process."

"We know that incarceration is necessary for those who have committed offences, but incarceration by itself is not sufficient to prevent recidivism and prevent reoffending; for that you will need very effective rehabilitation programmes."

"It has been shown that effective rehabilitation programmes reduce the rate of reoffending. For instance, among the women inmates, about 21 to 22 per cent reoffend within a period of two years."

She said it was partly due to a number of rehabilitation issues, such as inability to find employment or community support.

The women's prison has targeted gender-specific programmes designed to rehabilitate female inmates, with a larger focus on emotional well-being, community and family than those for their male counterparts.

Ms Charlotte Stephen, 46, senior



President Halimah Yacob and Second Minister for Home Affairs Josephine Teo looking at artwork made by some of the female inmates. With them are Superintendent of Institution A4 Lam Mong Teng and Commissioner of Prisons Desmond Chin. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

assistant director and correctional rehabilitation specialist, said: "Women tend to have more emotional needs. They are better able to support each other and require more community and group support."

Superintendent IA Angeline Chua, 41, second superintendent at Institution A4 who is also a mother, said: "For women, the closeness to their children and the mother's bond is very important and impossible to describe or replace."

Supt IA Chua said most of the women in the institution are there

for drug-related offences.

Ms Stephen said: "Often, they come from troubled backgrounds and in working with them, the officers and counsellors need to understand trauma and be sensitive to the needs of these women."

The institution is run by an all-female officer team. Special programmes include one that addresses criminal attitudes and behaviour, currently known as 4C.

Inmates are also offered vocational courses such as baking and hairdressing, along with the usual education courses such as a con-

ditioned N-level programme.

Nora said that while it will not be easy, she feels what she has learnt in prison will help her cope better with stress and not resort to drugs.

She added that a source of encouragement is her fellow inmates. "Some of the women have children around the same age as mine and we have plans to meet up when we are out, do healthy things like take our children to the park, look out for each other and keep each other from going back to drugs."

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东陵福 平价中的顶级滋味

按图不食

见晚报副刊

# Death of woman hit by hubby's car ruled a 'misadventure'

A 64-year-old woman was standing next to a car driven by her 67-year-old husband when it suddenly reversed. She was struck by the front left passenger door which was left ajar and run over.

An inquiry into the death of Madam Ng Siew Fong revealed that the front left tyre of the vehicle ran over her when she fell to the ground. She died from a head injury.

Yesterday, State Coroner Kamala Ponnampalam said Madam Ng's husband, retiree Quek Chin Leng, panicked when he heard his scream.

He wanted to step on the brake pedal but accidentally stepped on

the accelerator instead.

The car then reversed at a fast speed, struck two stationary motorcycles parked near Block 332, Ang Mo Kio Avenue 1 and came to a stop after hitting a pillar.

State Coroner Kamala said that there was no evidence of foul play.

She ruled Madam Ng's death to be "an unfortunate traffic misadventure". She said: "It points to a failure by Mr Quek to keep a diligent lookout before moving off from a stationary position. He had recklessly put the car in motion before determining that it was safe to do so and he appears to have stoutly ignored all the red flags – an open passenger door, his absent wife and possibly even the car's cabin light which may have come on due to the open passenger door."

Recounting that day's events, the State Coroner said that at around 7pm on April 25 last year, Madam Ng, a senior deputy director at the Ministry of Manpower's foreign manpower management division, had driven the car to Ang Mo Kio

with Mr Quek in the front passenger seat.

Madam Ng wanted to go to Block 332 to attend a meeting about a trip to China the following month.

However, the couple could not find the block and asked another motorist, Mr Chin Chiap Shing, for directions.

State Coroner Kamala said Mr Quek had even managed to persuade Mr Chin to show them the way. Mr Quek then took over from his wife to drive the car as he did not want to lose sight of Mr Chin.

When they reached a carpark near Block 332, Mr Quek got out of his car and walked towards Mr Chin to thank him. He also wanted to give Mr Chin some money as a token of appreciation.

Mr Quek then returned to his vehicle and the accident occurred.

An ambulance took Madam Ng to Tan Tock Seng Hospital, where she was pronounced dead later that evening.

Shaffiq Alkhatib

# Elderly man injured wife who said 'no' to sex

Shaffiq Alkhatib

An elderly man was so infuriated by his 67-year-old wife's refusal to have sex with him, he pushed and injured her.

Yesterday, Ang Boon Tiong, 76, was sentenced to a seven-day short detention order. Under the order, he will be behind bars for a short time but will not have a criminal record after his release.

As part of his sentence, Ang was also ordered to undergo day reporting for a year.

Offenders given such an order have to go to a day reporting centre for monitoring, counselling and rehabilitation.

The court heard that Ang's wife, Madam Gan Choon Har, had successfully applied for a personal protection order against him in 2010.

In May, Ang pleaded guilty to one count each of assault and breaching the personal protection order, which was granted on May 27, 2010, said Deputy Public Prosecutor Kenneth Kee.

The incident occurred after an argument Ang had with Madam Gan at around 3pm on Nov 10, 2015.

It was over the placement of some items he had gathered. Seeing that the items were blocking her way in their home, Madam Gan moved them.

DPP Kee said: "Unhappy with the victim's actions, the accused started arguing with her. The accused grabbed and twisted the victim's left wrist forcefully, causing her to feel pain."

About an hour later, Ang wanted to have sex with his wife but when she refused, he pushed her and she fell.

Madam Gan lodged a police report the next day. Two days after the incident, she went to Bedok Polyclinic, where she was found to have bruises on both arms.

The couple had another dispute on Feb 3 last year after Madam Gan threw away a toy that Ang had found at a void deck.

He pushed a chair at his wife, before pulling her away from a window when she started calling for help.

Madam Gan landed hard on her knees and fell backwards, hitting her back.

She went to Bedok Polyclinic three days later. Bruises were found on her lower back and left kneecap.

Ang, who is out on bail of \$15,000, has been ordered to surrender himself at the State Courts on Aug 8 to begin serving his sentence.

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Mr Quek Chin Leng accidentally stepped on the accelerator instead of the brake pedal when he heard his wife scream.