

4th Year Running

SINGAPORE
PATIENT  **2018**
Action Awards[®]

CEREMONY

Friday, 19 October 2018

Theatrette, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

11.20am – 12.00pm

Visit the Singapore Patient Action Awards Exhibition at the TTSH Atrium, Level 1 from 19 to 26 October.

Visit the Singapore Patient Action Awards 2018 Video via Tan Tock Seng Hospital's YouTube Channel and Facebook.

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TOGETHER FOR PATIENTS

Jointly organised by Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Institute of Mental Health, National Healthcare Group (NHG), National Healthcare Group Polyclinics, Yishun Health, Agency for Integrated Care, AWWA and Ren Ci Hospital the Singapore Patient Action Awards (SPAA) is created to acknowledge individuals and groups who have made significant and notable contributions in enhancing the healing journey of our patients - from partnering in their care journeys to giving them hope and encouragement to overcome their illnesses and getting a new lease of life.

In the 4th edition of the awards ceremony, we continue to acknowledge the unsung heroes who have made a positive difference to the community and demonstrated exemplary qualities of care, courage, empathy, resilience, generosity of spirit, emotional and mental strength.

This year, there are 15 extraordinary individuals and groups who will be acknowledged across the 4 award categories:

- Singapore Patient Advocate Award
- Singapore Patient Caregiver Award
- Singapore Patient Engagement Initiative Award
- Singapore Patient Support Group / Volunteer Group Award

AWARD CATEGORIES



SINGAPORE PATIENT CAREGIVER AWARD 2018

This award honours the caregiver who has demonstrated strength, resilience and unwavering dedication in caring for their loved ones, amidst healthcare challenges. The caregiver takes on the roles as an active care partner with the healthcare team, to overcome these healthcare hurdles with a positive attitude.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD 2018

This award honours an individual who is very passionate about advocating for meaningful healthcare causes and has contributed significantly to improving care delivery in partnership with the healthcare team/ institution. Being personally involved in the healthcare journey as a patient, a volunteer and/or a caregiver, this individual uses his/her personal experiences to provide valuable learning for doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and other healthcare workers.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE AWARD 2018

This award recognises an outstanding patient engagement project or initiative that is a collaboration with the healthcare team, contributing to the improvement of care and overall health well-being for public, patients and caregivers. caregivers.



SINGAPORE PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP / VOLUNTEER GROUP AWARD 2018

This award honours an outstanding Patient Support Group or Patient Volunteer Group that has led the way in helping others in need and has contributed significantly to improving care delivery and services.

DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF JUDGES

MS TEOH ZSIN WOON

Chairperson, SPAA Judging Panel
Deputy Secretary (Transformation), Public Service Division



Ms Teoh Zsin Woon is currently Deputy Secretary (Transformation) in the Public Service Division. Ms Teoh was the Deputy Secretary (Development) in the Ministry of Health, overseeing the Ageing Planning Office, the Manpower Planning & Strategy Division, and the Infrastructure Planning & Policy Division. She graduated from University of Oxford in the United Kingdom in 1995, and started her career in the Civil Service as Senior Assistant Director (Personnel Department), Ministry of Environment.

Ms Teoh subsequently held leadership positions in Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Manpower, Workforce Development Authority and the Ministry of National Development, before her appointment as Group Director, Ageing Planning Office, Ministry of Health, in 2011. The Ageing Planning Office provides secretariat support for the Ministerial Committee on Ageing (MCA) and drive the City for All Ages (CFAA) project.

DR WONG LOONG MUN

Principal Consultant and Chief, Care Transition Division,
Agency for Integrated Care



Dr Wong Loong Mun holds a Doctorate in Social Psychology from The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is currently the Principal Consultant and Chief of Care Transition Division of the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC). Under his portfolio, he oversees the referral management team.

He is also the Principal Consultant to CEO where he supports and advises the divisions within AIC on aged care matters, represent and be a standing member for internal AIC committees, advises the CEO on all relevant professional matters pertaining to AIC's programmes and initiatives, with a focus on fostering cross-functional collaborations among the Divisions. He also assists MOH on the Community Network of Seniors. Within his 18-year experience in the aged care field, Dr Wong has set up a national referral management programme in 2001, previously known as Integrated Care Services (ICS).

DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF JUDGES

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IAN LEONG

Deputy Divisional Chairman, Division of
Integrative & Community Care
Clinical Director, Division for Central Health, Tan Tock Seng Hospital
Senior Consultant, Integrative & Community Care



Assoc Prof Ian Leong is a Senior Consultant in Integrative & Community Care. His interests are in the areas of Palliative Care, Pain in the Elderly and Community Geriatrics. He is currently the Clinical Director of the Division for Central Health, and is also the Deputy Divisional Chairman of the Division of Integrative and Community Care. He is currently working on developing better systems of care in the community.

Assoc Prof Leong also teaches at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine in the areas of psychosocial determinants of health and illness beliefs, and teaches nurses in pain management at the Nanyang Polytechnic. Apart from this, he has published a number of papers, mostly in the areas of palliative medicine and pain in elderly.

MS PEH KIM CHOO

Chief Executive Officer, Tsao Foundation



Ms Peh Kim Choo has more than twenty years of experience in the aged care sector. Trained as a social worker, counselling therapist and clinical supervisor, she has worked in team-managed primary care, home-based health and psychosocial care, as well as care management for elders living in the community.

As the Chief Executive Officer of Tsao Foundation, Ms Peh oversees the overall strategy and management of the Foundation and its four initiatives towards advancement of the ageing experience through positive mindset and systematic change. She is also the project leader for the Community for Successful Ageing (ComSA) at Whampoa, coordinating the efforts for the Foundation's latest groundbreaking project: a community-wide approach to forge an integrated system of comprehensive programmes and services with the aim to promote health and well-being over the life course and to enable ageing in place.

DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF JUDGES

DR PAULINE TAN



Dr Pauline Tan was the Chief Executive Officer of Yishun Community Hospital. She served on national, academic and international communities as Chairman or Member to advance the development, regulation and empowerment of the nursing profession. She also chaired the National Nursing Taskforce which recommended key strategies to transform nursing nationally through the CARE framework.

Dr Pauline has a Bachelor of Nursing, MSc (Asia-Pacific Human Resource Management) and a Master of Public Administration. She has received several awards and distinctions for her unstinting leadership in nursing. In 2011, La Trobe University Australia conferred her Doctor of Nursing (honoris causa) in recognition for her outstanding contributions to the profession. She was inducted into the America Academy of Nursing in 2011. In 2012, she received the National Day Public Administration Medal (Silver).

Congratulations to all
**AWARD
RECIPIENTS**



At the Singapore Patient Action Awards, we recognize exceptional individuals, teams and community initiatives that have inspired resilience, hope and compassion in the community.



SINGAPORE PATIENT CAREGIVER AWARD 2018

MS CRISTINA F. TALASTAS

A caregiver and cheerleader for a special girl

Having worked for the Lim family over the past 26 years, Ms Cristina F. Talastas has developed a special bond with their 19-year-old daughter, Ms Nadine Lim, who was born with Down syndrome. Cristina fondly refers Nadine as her special girl.



57-year-old Cristina often goes beyond the call of duty in caring for Nadine and her dedication for the Lim family has been evident since Nadine's birth. When Nadine was born in 1999, Cristina rushed back from the Philippines as Nadine was due for major heart surgery even though she was attending to family matters after her husband passed away.

On her own accord, she took up a nursing aide course, spending every Sunday over a period of nine months to pick up relevant nursing skills so that she could better care for Nadine. Over the years, she has also chosen to spend many of her rest days helping the Lims with Nadine's care.

While describing her journey, Cristina recalled a tough period of time when Nadine had to undergo several major surgeries as a baby. The Lim family overcame the difficult times together with the support of Cristina and witnessed the growth of Nadine into a happy and healthy teenager.

Cristina truly embodies a strong sense of commitment as a caregiver. She believes in Nadine's potential and replicates what she has learnt in school at home. With her constant coaching, Nadine is now able to perform daily tasks and simple activities on her own, such as preparing snacks and folding the laundry.

Witnessing these small achievements of Nadine's learning journey have been the greatest rewards for Cristina and the Lim family. They hope that Nadine will one day be able to make friends and fit into an adult education program.



SINGAPORE PATIENT CAREGIVER AWARD 2018

MDM DALIAH BINTE BUANG

Husband's unwavering support is her source of strength

Free-spirited 52-year-old Mdm Daliah Binte Buang used to be an avid traveller in her younger days, choosing to stay overseas for months at a time.

However, all this changed in 2005, when her husband encouraged her to reconnect with her mother during the Hari Raya festive season. Daliah found out that her mother had been diagnosed with multiple medical conditions and was abandoned by her siblings.



From then on, she resolved to be a full-time caregiver to Mdm Niah Binte Ahmad, who is now 91-year-old and suffers from heart failure and cognitive issues. Daliah also took on the role of caregiver to her grand-niece and grand-nephew, both of whom are staying with her and her husband.

As a caregiver to many of her family members, she has faced numerous challenges in navigating her journey. During an especially rough period of time, her mother was in and out of hospital frequently. Despite the fear and worry she faced on a daily basis, Daliah bravely shouldered the responsibility of taking care of her mum alone, without the help of her siblings. Even though Mdm Niah is now bedbound, Daliah remains determined to ensure that her mother still has a voice.

She credits the care and advice from her husband, whom she has been married to for the past 13 years, in helping her get through the challenges in her caregiving journey. Using the phrase "What's past is past", Mr Elias Bin Ahmad constantly reminds her to focus on what she can do for her mother now. Throughout her caregiving journey, his encouragement and support have been an immense source of strength and comfort.



SINGAPORE PATIENT CAREGIVER AWARD 2018

MR DANIEL LIM

A filial caregiver and passionate dementia advocate

As an only child, 38-year-old Mr Daniel Lim takes on the role as the primary caregiver to his elderly parents. Recounting his family's journey over the past 10 years, he admits that it has not been easy being the sole caregiver.



His father was diagnosed with dementia and his mother with breast cancer within a few weeks of each other in 2009. In the first few years, Daniel struggled to find educational resources to help him care for his parents, as information on topics such as dementia and advance care planning were not readily available back then. He also worked several part-time jobs in order to get his family's finances back on track.

Despite these challenges, Daniel unfailingly supported his parents through their treatments, helping his mother cope with the side effects of chemotherapy and ensuring his father's condition is well-managed.

Daniel now balances a full-time job with his caregiving duties. As a firm believer of self-care, he describes the system in his family as "nucleus caregiving", where all three of them play significant roles in one another's care journey. Daniel strives to empower his father by letting him perform simple daily tasks such as preparing his own breakfast. This builds the elder Mr Lim's confidence by enabling him to make his own decisions and do what he likes, but also helps to lift some caregiving responsibilities off Daniel's shoulders, allowing him to carve out some time for himself.

Hoping to inspire and empower other caregivers, Daniel actively speaks about his caregiving story which has been shared at many platforms. An advocate for dementia awareness, he is spearheading a campaign and a movement to enable dementia patients to lead their lives with quality and dignity. Daniel hopes to be a role model for other caregivers who wish to contribute towards improving the lives of those around them.



SINGAPORE PATIENT CAREGIVER AWARD 2018

MS NUR HIDAYAH BINTE ABIDIN

Young caregiver lends her voice for mental health

At the young age of 23, Ms Nur Hidayah Binte Abidin has been the primary caregiver to her older brother Mr Mohd Khairullah Bin Abidin, who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and depression.

Her journey began when she attended a caregiving course by the Caregivers Alliance Limited (CAL), on behalf of her mother who had difficulties in understanding English. Wanting to share her personal story and experience, Hidayah also started volunteering with CAL as a trainer by providing social support to other caregivers.

Hidayah was the pillar of support to her mother and brother when the family went through a tough period in 2017. Despite being the youngest member in the family, Hidayah's mother often confides in her.

Over the years, she supports her mother in decision making process and cares for her brother. Witnessing the struggles of her mother, Hidayah readily stepped up to accompany her brother for his appointments. Khairullah's condition has since shown great improvements and he works in a fast food restaurant. With a keen interest in the Japanese culture, Khairullah takes Japanese classes on his off day.

Inspired by her personal journey as a caregiver, the Electrical Electronic Engineering alumni from Singapore Polytechnic decided to pursue a part-time Degree in Sociology, minoring in Communications. Her caregiving journey has lent many insights to her volunteering work with CAL. Hidayah hopes to be an advocate for mental health and to be a pillar of support for other caregivers.



SINGAPORE PATIENT CAREGIVER AWARD 2018

MS SUSAN KUM

Beyond friendship to kinship – a caregiver who stood by her friend till the very end

Ms Susan Kum took on the role of a caregiver without hesitation when the late Mdm Chan Mee Ying, an ex-colleague turned good friend, was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease. It is an incurable condition that causes progressive degeneration of the nerves which control movements. This eventually leads to inability to control her hands and legs, to communicate and to swallow.

As good friends, Susan and Mee Ying would often go on food hunts during their rest days and their friendship continued beyond a decade. Mee Ying was distraught when she found out about her condition in 2015. 61-year-old Susan bravely stood by her good friend, not knowing that the disease was incurable.

Susan took care of Mee Ying's daily needs, prepared her meals and accompanied her for medical appointments. Due to her swallowing difficulty, Mee Ying's food needs to be modified and thickener added to her drinks. Susan would always convince her to take the special meals. When Mee Ying's condition worsened, it was hard to figure out her speech. Susan was able to understand Mee Ying and became the interpreter between the Doctors and other healthcare professionals.

The eye gaze communication device was introduced to Mee Ying as she started losing control of her limbs and speech. The device would detect her eye movements and allow her to type messages on the screen. Susan, who was not savvy with technological devices, overcame her fear towards IT systems and was motivated to learn how to set up the device and provide trouble shooting support.

The 3 years of caregiving journey have been challenging and filled with many uncertainties. Susan was never deterred by the challenges she faced as a caregiver. What kept Susan going was the hope that Mee Ying would be happy even as she was at the last leg of her journey.





SINGAPORE PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD 2018

MR ELLIL MATHIYAN S/O LAKSHMANAN

Inspiring stoma patients to live life to the fullest

When he was diagnosed with rectal cancer in 2011, 59-year-old Mr Ellil Mathiyan s/o Lakshmanan was devastated, not only to learn of the cancer but also the implications of the type of cancer he had, which meant that he had to wear a stoma bag for life.

As an active person whose hobbies include contact sports such as boxing, fencing and running marathons, Ellil was worried that he could no longer continue his active lifestyle.

Gradually, Ellil decided to face his diagnosis head-on and make the most out of life despite his condition. Channelling his initial fears and apprehension in a positive way, he co-founded the Ostomy Association of Singapore (OAS) in 2014, which aims to help patients with ostomies feel empowered to manage their medical condition and overcome challenges. As an independent organisation, OAS lends a helping hand for those living with ostomies, in the form of patient education, practical advice and emotional support.

Together with other OAS members, Ellil also volunteers as a patient ambassador at Changi General Hospital (CGH) and Singapore General Hospital (SGH), where he speaks to patients at stoma clinics to share his experiences and tips with them. As a double cancer survivor, Ellil believes that his journey has allowed him to connect with other cancer patients and develop a close bond with them, so that he is better able to help them cope with their conditions.

Today, Ellil maintains an active lifestyle, regularly participating in physical activities like kayaking and dragon boating. He also recently completed Singapore Cancer Society's fundraising challenge in the Gobi Desert, trekking a combined total of 1,000 km under extreme weather conditions, together with 18 other individuals.

Through his extensive advocacy work, Ellil hopes to convey the message that as long as they remain positive, patients who have been diagnosed with cancer or who live with a stoma bag can live life to the fullest.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD 2018

DR GOH SIEW HOR

Passionate young Dentist makes a positive impact on the oral health of nursing home residents

At a young age of 16, Dr Goh Siew Hor was looking for volunteer opportunities. While flipping The Yellow Pages, he chanced upon the then Methodist Home for the Aged Sick (now known as Methodist Welfare Services (MWS) Bethany Nursing Home - Choa Chu Kang). Dr Goh's first volunteering experience was to clean a fish tank which he broke while cleaning.

From a befriender to a volunteer dentist, Dr Goh has volunteered for 18 years in MWS Bethany Nursing Home - Choa Chu Kang. The dental service was co-started by 35-year-old Dr Goh and his lecturer in Dentistry School, Dr Hilary Thean, to meet the dental needs in the nursing home. The dental clinic was a basic setup with two sets of forceps and a dental chair in the early days. Focusing on the available resources, Dr Goh and Dr Hilary performed tooth extraction and promoted basic oral care to the residents.

To scale up the dental service, Dr Goh recognises the need to have a trained dental assistant to assist volunteer dentists. Dr Goh appealed for Mr Nay, the first Nursing Aide, to go through a NITEC dental course. Being a Nursing Aide, Mr Nay is familiar with the residents and could help in behavioural management of the residents during dental procedures.

From a simple dental set up to a comprehensive and structured framework, Dr Goh advocates that volunteer dental services can just be as good and professional as paid ones. Just like Dr Goh, the volunteers in the nursing home believe in the continuous pursuit of innovation and change to improve the care experience of the residents.

Till today, Dr Goh remains very passionate about his cause and continues to work with the Management of MWS Bethany Nursing Home - Choa Chu Kang to introduce dental initiatives that benefit residents. He remains committed to volunteer at MWS Bethany Nursing Home - Choa Chu Kang while managing his full-time day job in NTUC Health.

With a strong conviction to help others with his medical skills, Dr Goh is constantly reminded of why he embarked on the volunteering journey.





SINGAPORE PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD 2018

MS SERENE LEE

A transplant recipient with a heart of gold

In July 2015, 35-year-old Ms Serene Lee received the precious gift of life in the form of a new heart. Since her transplant, her gratitude towards her organ donor has spurred her to make a difference to the lives of other heart transplant patients.

Serene's journey of patient advocacy started when she first learnt how to cope with living with a mechanical heart pump while she was on the heart transplant waiting list. In order to accommodate the battery-operated pump, she had to adapt and learn to navigate many changes in her life. Today, Serene is a living example of how heart patients can lead a regular active lifestyle.



As a young advocate, Serene shares her experiences with patients with advanced heart failure who are living with a mechanical heart pump, so that they are able to lead life to the fullest. She visits the wards at the Singapore General Hospital every week to speak to patients and shares tips with them. As the Chairperson of the Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) Patient Support Group at the National Heart Centre Singapore, she also helps to coordinate the provision and delivery of the necessary medical supplies for the patients.

As patients with severe heart failure, like those who are living with a LVAD and awaiting a donor heart, undergo high-risk procedures, Serene from time to time bids sudden and painful goodbyes to those she has come to befriend.

Despite having to cope with such grief, she considers all that she does to be worthwhile, especially when patients remember and thank her at the end of their lives' journey.

What keeps Serene going strong and determined is the will to continue the legacy of her heart donor, whose heart has given Serene a new lease of life.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD 2018

MS SUMITERA BINTE MOHD LETAK

Veteran volunteer is the pillar of support for Cancer patients

A veteran volunteer of the KK Women's Cancer Support Group in the KK Women's and Children's Hospital, 76-year-old Ms Sumitera Binte Mohd Letak is no stranger to the doctors, nurses and patients. Not wanting to be defined by her age, she keeps herself active and healthy so that she can help more people.



For more than 20 years, Sumitera befriends cancer patients, provides advice and encourages them. Due to her extensive experience as a midwife, Sumitera could always connect with patients and their caregivers instantly and allay their fears and anxiety.

Sumitera is often described as humble, forthcoming, compassionate and who treats patients like her family. The friendship between her and the patients would continue even after they are discharged. Concerned about their health, she often visits them, keeps them company and in the process, build long-lasting friendships with them. Once a patient's condition took a turn for the worse, she requested to see Sumitera who lost no time in visiting her in Johor and eventually attending her funeral.

Her volunteerism spirit is so infectious that it rubs onto others as patients she befriended have also turned into volunteers to support others. With a positive outlook in life, she also supported her sister, a colon and breast cancer survivor. Grateful for Sumitera's unwavering support, her sister readily shares her recovery journey with other cancer patients.

Her big-heartedness and positive outlook in life make her an excellent role model for senior volunteers.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ADVOCATE AWARD 2018

MR WONG SIEW CHEONG

No journey is too far for kidney patients

71-year-old retiree, Mr Wong Siew Cheong joined National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) Grains of Hope volunteer programme in 2011 together with his daughter.

During a volunteering stint to deliver meals and provisions to patients, he received news that one of the patients had passed away. The reality of the patients' frail conditions hit him hard.

He began looking for more ways he could contribute as a NKF volunteer and learnt that Patient Escorts were sorely needed to bring patients with mobility or health issues to and from their dialysis sessions.

Rain or shine for the past two years, Mr Wong would escort kidney patient, Mdm Noriah Binte Jonit, home from the National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) Dialysis Centre in Ghim Moh three times a week. Mdm Noriah, fell and broke her pelvic bone in 2013 and has mobility issues.

Mr Wong never fails to go the extra mile for patients, always placing their interests above his. On days when he is overseas and unable to provide escort service for Mdm Noriah, he proactively makes arrangements for a replacement to do so and even taking the time to orientate the volunteer and ensuring that Mdm Noriah is comfortable with his replacement.

The big-hearted retiree has a strong passion to serve the less privileged in the community. He shares that he continually feels inspired and humbled by the resilience and positivity of the patients and this pushes him to always strive to do more for them.

His dedication and strong sense of responsibility make him an excellent role model for senior volunteers like him.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE AWARD 2018

HOPE KEE (福记)

MWS BETHANY NURSING HOME – CHOA CHU KANG

Building the kampung spirit in a nursing home

During the crippling haze that occurred in 2015, the idea of an in-house programme to actively engage its residents was mooted at Methodist Welfare Services (MWS) Bethany Nursing Home – Choa Chu Kang as the inclement weather made it challenging to bring residents outdoor. Hope Kee (福记) was started at the multi-purpose hall for residents to participate in holistic and purposeful activities with the twin aims of re-normalisation and re-enablement.



Hope Kee has now grown to become a full-fledged structured programme, designed for over 150 residents. With three key objectives of optimising function, promoting socialisation and enhancing engagement, the programme aims to increase levels of independence, instil a sense of belonging and develop an active lifestyle amongst the residents.

As a holistic programme that integrates both rehabilitative and recreational needs, Hope Kee has given residents renewed sense of autonomy. Through the concept of micro jobs, residents take ownership of various tasks such as cleaning of utensils, preparation of meals and attendance taking, of which completion earns them 'Bethany money'.

As an extension of the regular Hope Kee sessions, the staff holds a bi-monthly bazaar, which allows residents to spend their 'Bethany money' they have earned to purchase things that they like. This not only gives the residents a sense of purpose but also livens up the environment with interesting activities to look forward to.

The Hope Kee team, helmed by rehab staff and supported by healthcare attendants as well as volunteers, is motivated by the changes that they have seen in the residents, who now have a strong sense of community spirit and autonomy. By striving to provide residents with a greater degree of empowerment in their day-to-day activities, the team hopes to continue making a positive impact in the lives of their residents.



SINGAPORE PATIENT ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE AWARD 2018

THE YARN WONDERS

KK WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Doing wonders and spreading joy with yarn

Upon discharge following a surgery, patients with breast cancer would usually carry a drainage bottle for seven to 10 days. Many patients find it inconvenient to move around with the drainage bottles and find it hard to do household chores.



In 2015, KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) formed a volunteer group, the The Yarn Wonders, to help these patients. The group gathered like-minded volunteers who would knit sling bags to hold the drainage bottles of patients with breast cancer so that they can move around with ease.

Patients with breast cancer were satisfied and heartened by the hand-made gifts they received from the The Yarn Wonders. Almost all the beneficiaries found the bag useful and would recommend it to others.

To date, the volunteers at The Yarn Wonders have knitted 545 bags. Every sling bag requires 14,668 stitches, 262 metres of yarn, knitting time of at least 22 hours and each bag has a unique design. The team of 40 knitters would look for donors to sponsor the yarn while they knit.

Once the bags are knitted, members of the KK Alpine Blossoms Breast Cancer Support Group, KKH, who are mainly breast cancer survivors, will then work together and find suitable opportunities to raise funds for other patients in need and promote early detection of breast cancer. For example, a well-wisher can donate \$20 for a sling bag and write their wishes for the breast cancer patient. Proceeds from the bag will be donated to the KKH Health Fund for patients who need help.

The biggest rewards for the The Yarn Wonders come in the form of thank you cards from the patients and knowing that they have made a difference to them. They hope to continue touching the lives of more patients through the wonders of yarn as every bag carries the message of hope, love and faith.



SINGAPORE PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP / VOLUNTEER GROUP AWARD 2018

JAPANESE ASSOCIATION SINGAPORE VOLUNTEER GROUP

ASSISI HOSPICE

Doing good in a foreign land

Hoping to do good and contribute to the local community, the Japanese Association Singapore (JAS) Volunteer Group in Assisi Hospice was founded in 1995. JAS Volunteer Group members are wives of Japanese expatriates or Japanese who have relocated to Singapore. Many volunteers have stayed on in Singapore and volunteered beyond five years.



Caring for patients of Assisi Hospice for 23 years, the JAS Volunteer Group is one of the longest serving volunteer groups in the hospice. The group supports Assisi Hospice's therapeutic programmes for patients by independently running two sessions per week - music and movement sessions on Tuesdays and massage therapy sessions on Thursdays.

Volunteers would lead in music and movement sessions every Tuesday to uplift the patients' spirits and motivate them to get active through coordinated dance moves. The group makes a special effort to customise the activities to appeal to patients, such as incorporating their favourite evergreen melodies even though many of the volunteers do not speak the same language. In addition to their weekly engagement, the group also arranges for special performances for patients on festive occasions such as Chinese New Year and Christmas. The laughter and joy at the end of every music and movement session is a strong testimony that volunteers have truly made a difference.

On Thursday mornings, patients at the Day Care Centre will always wait in anticipation for their massage sessions. These volunteers would provide 15-minute foot and shoulder massages to relieve the pain and discomfort of many end-of-life patients. Through touch therapy, patients know that they are being cared for by the community and this helps to break the communication barriers between the Japanese ladies and the patients.

The group hopes to continue creating wonderful memories with patients as they approach the last leg of their journey in life.



SINGAPORE PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP / VOLUNTEER GROUP AWARD 2018

THE LADIES IN THE POWER OF SERVICE (THE LIPS)

INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Spreading love, joy and laughter for mental health patients

Every week without fail for the past six years, a group of foreign domestic helpers willingly trade their rest days to put smiles on patients' faces. They will visit long-stay wards in the Institute of Mental Health, planning social and recreational activities such as arts and crafts, mahjong, birthday celebrations and singing and dancing with the patients.



The Ladies in the Power of Service (The LIPS) was started in November 2012 by 6 foreign domestic helpers who wanted to spend their rest days in a more meaningful ways. Through word of mouth, the group has quickly expanded to a diverse group of 51 volunteers, represented by different nationalities.

Cheerful and enthusiastic, the volunteers show true dedication to their cause. Many of the members picked up basic Mandarin on their own so that they could converse with the patients more easily and build rapport with them. Patients look forward to annual outdoor activities organised by LIPS as they are given the opportunity to experience nature and to reconnect with the real world.

Besides volunteering their time, the group also hopes that they can help dispel the social stigma surrounding mental health patients. Despite initial nervousness and uncertainty during their first interactions, the group gradually discovered that the patients are warm, friendly and welcoming, and bonds gradually formed amongst them. Today, the volunteers and patients treat one another like family.

The group shares that they are grateful to their employers, who have been very supportive and proud of them on this journey of selflessness. To the members, spending their free time to share their love and happiness with others is a priceless way of de-stressing and relaxation. They hope to carry on their volunteer work for as long as they are in Singapore and to continue bringing joy to mental health patients.



SINGAPORE PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP / VOLUNTEER GROUP AWARD 2018

PATIENT CARE CENTRE (PCC) TAN TOCK SENG HOSPITAL

Planting the seeds of hope for HIV /AIDS' patients

For the past 21 years, volunteers at Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Patient Care Centre (PCC) join hands for a meaningful cause by helping the marginalised community of People Living with HIV to rebuild their self-confidence and reintegrate back into society.



Programmes at PCC target at rebuilding the self-esteem of patients and equipping them with the skills needed to support their reintegration into the community. Patients are engaged through diversional therapy, participating in activities such as making handicrafts, cooking and simple administration tasks, which not only empower them but also promote peer support amongst them.

Due to the inaccessibility of the Communicable Disease Centre wards and the social stigma surrounding HIV, patients tend not to get many visitors or have access to food or other items that they wish to buy. PCC volunteers also aim to fill this gap through befriending, fulfilling their food requests, providing a simple haircut or offering nail trimming services. Volunteers also provide massage for patients as a form of touch therapy. The touch therapy conveys the important message of love and acceptance to our patients as well as providing a form of spiritual healing for patients who are rejected by family and friends due to HIV/AIDS.

PCC volunteers, many of whom have been with the centre for years, are fully dedicated to their cause. The longest serving volunteer has been with PCC for more than 15 years. Many of them have built long-lasting friendships with the patients.

By offering a safe haven and unconditional support to the patients in the wards, the volunteers wish to provide hope for patients and let them know that they are not alone. This familial bond keeps the volunteers going and they hope to continue to inspire others to embark on fulfilling volunteering journeys.