

GOING BEYOND



Thumbs Up for our Healthcare Front-liners

Presentation of the thumb-print art to TTSH CEO, Dr Eugene Fidelis Soh (centre)

The first COVID-19 case in Singapore was confirmed on 23 January 2020 and this time, Singapore is much better prepared for such a situation given our SARS experience back in 2003. Healthcare workers sprang into action working day and night to screen, identify and treat the infected, with the aim of preventing further spread of the outbreak in the community.

To encourage our own Ren Ci care workers as well as show support for our nation's healthcare teams, Ren Ci's patients, nursing home residents and staff created pieces of thumb-print art for the various hospitals. Each thumb print represents a "thumbs up" from the Ren Ci family, in admiration for the good work and commitment demonstrated by the healthcare workers in the fight against COVID-19.

On learning about the art initiative, Ren Ci's Board of Directors contributed generously towards the purchase of vitamin C supplements for our nation's front-line healthcare staff too, as a gesture of appreciation for their efforts in safeguarding the health of Singapore's population. Over 5,000 bottles of vitamin C supplements were distributed in early February to eight public hospitals with emergency departments as well as the team in National Centre for Infectious Diseases.

Said Mr Lim Chai Boon, Vice Chairman, Ren Ci's Board of Directors: "We hope Ren Ci's small gesture of appreciation can encourage the brave front-line workers to continue in the fight against COVID-19 as well as remind other members of public to appreciate our healthcare workers." Read on to find out how Ren Ci responded to the outbreak on page 6.

Volunteering Virtually

As a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of patients, residents and clients under our care through safe distancing during this period of COVID-19 outbreak, volunteering groups have been advised to postpone all activities. However, that did not stop our staff and Cloverhearts volunteer Mr Alan Wong. Together, they discussed and came up with the concept of using web conferencing to connect with the seniors. The virtual interaction comprised a simple upper limb exercise and also a tour of his home. Our residents from Chronic Sick Unit were appreciative of the bonding time, done virtually. More volunteering groups are planning to roll out virtual volunteering activities.

Virtual interface was swiftly adopted to enable our seniors to e-meet their family when physical visits were restricted due to measures like designated visitors or next-of-kin serving quarantine order or stay-home notice. Ren Ci's staff from Business office also leveraged on e-conferencing to minimise face-to-face meeting during financial counselling with patients'



Helping the Community Keep Fit

Four years on, our first nursing home in the community, Ren Ci @ Bukit Batok St. 52 has firmly established itself as an important partner in bringing aged care services closer to the community. The home has made many good friends with our neighbours in Bukit Gombak community through our outreach efforts and sharing of facilities. For instance, the Keep Fit Centre (KFC) located within the Senior Care centre of the nursing home has been a popular workout ground for the residents nearby. Armed with 16 gym equipment, over 200 users visit the KFC monthly to keep fit. About 96% of users are Bukit Gombak residents who enjoy free usage of the facility after office hours on weekdays and from 5pm to 9pm on weekends. Of these, 30% are above 50 years old.

"With more of my residents getting on in years, it's heartening to know that they have a place to stay active and keep fit in the community, thanks to Ren Ci's well-equipped gym," said Mayor Ms Low Yen Ling. Ren Ci is committed to stay integrated with the community at large and help seniors lead a healthier lifestyle.

(To minimise the risk of COVID-19 infection, the Keep Fit Centre was closed when MOH raise the DORSCON level to Orange)



Mayor Low Yen Ling (centre) trying out the exercise bike

Fun in the Soil-less Garden

How fascinating it is to grow plants without soil in our very own nursing home garden!

The idea of using hydroponics as a form of garden therapy was hatched by the Senior Care Centre (SCC) team at Ren Ci Bukit Batok St. 52, led by Ms Priscilla Chng, Senior Occupational Therapist. While gardening has been an ongoing activity in the day centre where the seniors cultivate their green fingers planting herbs and spices, the introduction of hydroponics expanded the array of plants that can be grown and harvested to support cooking activities at the centre.

"We wanted to revamp the garden in our SCC to facilitate rehabilitation through active gardening sessions and also offer a relaxing place of greenery for our day care clients," said Ms Teo Lay Hong, Executive Director of Ren Ci @ Bukit Batok St. 52 Nursing Home.



The rehab project first started on a small scale with a variety of easy-to-maintain vegetables such as radish, Chinese lettuce and Cai Xin already pre-planted for 2 weeks when the hydroponic system was first set up at our garden. This helped to shorten the time to grow the vegetables and hasten the harvest. A group of day care seniors helped to take care of the first batch of crops for another 2 weeks before harvest. The response from the seniors in-charge of the hydroponics was encouraging. They were fascinated to grow vegetables without soil and enjoyed their fruits of the labour when they savoured their harvest! With the initial success, hydroponics gardening will now become a routine activity in the centre and will be expanded to allow more seniors to participate.

A New Hobby In Time For CNY



Lunar New Year was in January this year and to prepare for the celebrations, a number of our nursing home residents took up Chinese calligraphy in the weeks leading up to the festival.

A talent was quickly spotted in the midst of the group! Mr Lim Chin Seng, a resident from Ren Ci @ Ang Mo Kio, caught on the art of calligraphy and was quickly proficient in writing delicate lines and curves of Chinese characters. He gladly accepted our invitation to pen a series of Chinese New Year greetings. The colour "Red" from Spring Festival Couplets or 春联 (chūn lián) dominated Ren Ci Linkway during the festive season as we ushered in the Year of the Rat. The couplets by Mr Lim elevated the spring ambiance, bringing forth well wishes and happiness for the coming year.

For Mr Lim, Chinese calligraphy is his newfound way of experiencing serenity and focus. Ren Ci is glad to have provided him an opportunity to learn a new hobby and a platform to showcase his hidden talent.

Lending More Than Just Her Helping Hands

In her journey as a social worker, Bridget Monica Das, now Head of Psychosocial Services at Ren Ci Hospital, has provided guidance, encouragement and support to many in need and embraced her life motto of 'Comforted to Comfort'. Working in the healthcare sector provides her with opportunity to better the lives of seniors and their families and in return, she is inspired by their spirit of resilience and courage.

Having won the Superstar Award - ILTC Allied Health for her passion to help seniors through creative programmes such as "Colour Me Happy" & "OASIS" at this year's SingHealth Quality Service Award, we caught up with her to share with us what drives her passion to lend more than just a helping hand.

What motivates you in leading the Psychosocial Services department at Ren Ci Hospital?

The fact that my team is a group of driven people who are committed to help those in need and ensure that they receive the support from the community keeps me (and my team) moving.



You developed the OASIS (Older Adults Supporting in Sharing) with your team of social workers at Ren Ci Hospital. Why did you see a need to develop such a programme?

OASIS was created to deal with the notion of Hopelessness – that tomorrow holds little meaning and hope amongst our nursing home residents. We hope to inject positivity and coming to terms with their very own purposeful life through recollection of memories by means of reminiscence therapy, reconciliatory techniques and reintegration approach. The outcome has been rewarding. I have seen residents found purpose in life and started meaningful actions from penning poems to becoming a champion for stroke patients and giving talks to students who are on attachment in the hospital.

You co-founded the “Colour Me Happy” project, which encourages self-care habits among nurses at Ren Ci. Can you share more?

We believe that self-care is important for care staff. The project provides a safe and supportive environment to help our care staff through their journey of rediscovering their passion for caring and empowering them to make choices about how to care for others as well as themselves. It uses a special deck of cards with therapy questions to facilitate conversations about negative emotions nurses may have during a difficult day. We found that their mood improved significantly which translates to increased productivity and better teamwork.



What do you find rewarding about the work you do?

It is like a double-edged sword – it has helped me develop and mature as a person. Keeping me humbled as I witness many who overcome or brave through life's storms with much courage and resilience.

I like the quote by Cicely Saunders – “You matter because you are you, and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.” I am simply happy to see the seniors re-experience life or find support in their difficulties so as to steer their lives in a direction that would be meaningful and positive.

What inspires you to go the extra mile in addition to your work scope?

The wellbeing of our seniors for them to receive the best possible psycho-social care motivates me to do more for them.

Bridget Monica Das
Head of Psychosocial Services

Any insight on what you would hope to see in the near future in your area of social work?

I hope to see social workers play a significant role in integrating social and health. For social workers, we are privy to information provided by our clients such as their struggles and resources. We are in the position to draw on the health or social resources in the community, and it would be our role to find ways to marry both sides and bring them to a position of co-creation.



Message from Our CEO

Dear Friends of Ren Ci Family,

It has been more than 2 months since Singapore saw its first imported COVID-19 case on 23 January 2020. Having gone through SARS and H1N1 outbreak during my hospital's rotations, the immediate concern during the early phase was to rally the whole organisation together, to safeguard our patients, residents, clients and staff's safety. A Command Centre was set up, comprising all the relevant Head of Departments (HODs) to ensure timely and co-ordinated decision making, planning and execution of plans. We put in place measures, in tandem with MOH's advisory and sometimes even slightly ahead of national's advisory as we have deemed it necessary for our patients' safety. Measures such as visitor limitation and masking up policy are understandably not well-received by some next-of-kins but we are heartened that the majority of our patients' families appreciate the precautions that we have to take in such extraordinary times. The many deaths of elderly in overseas nursing homes and long-term care setting were our precautionary tales and Ren Ci Care Team understand our responsibility and duty of care to those under our charge.

I am thankful and proud of all our unsung heroes and heroines who have stepped forth to serve with heart and hope during these trying times. For example, administrative and backroom staff are rostered to perform triage duties, managing visitors' health declaration and implementing temperature screening, while the care staff doubled up to fill the voids once served by the volunteers such as hair-cutting and to connect the patients with their families via video-conferencing.

As we continue our fight against COVID-19, I am also thankful that Ren Ci is never short of outpouring of love and gifts from our donors, volunteers and well-wishers. I wish all the readers good health and safety during this period. Together, we will overcome this pandemic.

Stay Safe, Stay Strong,

Joe Hau

Ren Ci joins other healthcare organisations in the intermediate and long-term care sector to ensure that we protect the vulnerable seniors with additional precautionary measures in place during this unprecedented time.

We are thankful for the community support we have received thus far and we continue to appeal for your support to help us in the provision of quality care for our needy elderly. Let us stay united in the face of this challenge. Together, we will overcome!

[DONATE NOW](#)





Triage counter at Ren Ci Community Hospital



Registration counter



Care staff in the ward



Therapists in the Senior Care Centre



Nurses in the ward



Segregation of admin staff



Temperature taking

169 Awards for Singhealth Quality Service Award 2020

SingHealth Quality Service Award (SHQSA) is a nationwide award to recognise and celebrate the efforts of healthcare professionals in improving patient experience. On 14 January 2020, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Mr Heng Swee Keat graced the ceremony as Guest-of-Honour to present awards to the winners from 43 public and private healthcare institutions. Ren Ci's exemplary efforts in delivering quality care and improving patient experience saw us taking a total of 169 awards.

Two special mentions go out to Ms Bridget Monica Das, Head of Psychosocial Services at Ren Ci, who was one of the Superstar award winners. (See page 4 and 5 for interview with Ms Bridget)

The other was our 1FA Team which took the Best Team Award (Patient Experience Improvement Category). The 1FA team comprises staff from Finance and Psychosocial Services departments and Business Office working together to fine-tune and enhance the financial assistance process for the benefit of our patients. At Ren Ci Hospital, 80% of long-term care patients require financial assistance to defray their medical bills. After the implementation, Ren Ci Hospital reduced financial application workflow by 36% and the number of forms used by 37%. The number of beneficiaries also increased by 12%.

"We had a clearer picture of patients' financial information and needs, which led to shorter wait times where half of the applications are approved within a month," shared Ms Jean Quek, Finance Director. "Social workers also have clear and consistent guidelines for financial assistance assessment. In doing so, we are able to ensure that more patients receive assistance in a more timely manner, saving time for both residents and staff."



仁慈之心，助人为乐

在仁慈社会心理服务部主管碧琪的社工生涯里，她给了许多需要的人指导、鼓励及支持。处身在医疗环境下，她有更好的机会改善年长者和他们的家人的生活。这让她获得更强大的毅力、精神与勇气。在本期的《人物放大镜》中，荣获今年新加坡保健优质服务奖获得“超级巨星奖”的碧琪与我们畅谈她在仁慈的工作经验。

是什么动力让你继续带领仁慈社会心理服务部？

是我的社工团队给我动力。他们拥有一颗尽责和乐于助人的心。他们的热情是一股无形的推动力量。

你和你的社会社工团体创建了“Older Adults Supporting in Sharing(Oasis)”计划。为什么你会要创建这一项计划？

Oasis计划是为了让那些对生活感到无助和绝望的院友而设的一个计划。我们希望能够为他们灌输正能量，让他们对自己的生活设立一个积极目标。我们让院友通过回忆疗法，调和技术和整合方式，让他们回想过去，从中领悟到生活的意义。此计划的结果令我们感到鼓舞，许多院友在生活中找到了目标。有一位院友还在参与Oasis计划后开始找回他写诗歌的兴趣，甚至还经常激励来到疗养院探访的学生。

你共同创立了“Colour Me Happy”计划，鼓励护士养成好习惯。你能和我们分享多一些吗？

我们一直深信自我管理对护理人员非常重要。这计划为护理人员提供一个安全的环境，让他们重拾关怀病人的热情和授权他们做出对的选择去关怀他人和自己。这计划使用特殊的治疗问题卡来提问护理人员，让他们回答可能会面对有关负面情绪的对话。通过此计划，我们发现护理人员的心情开朗了许多，且工作效率也提高了。

这份工作让你受益最大的是什么？

它就像是一把双刃剑，让我成长的同时也让我在看到许多勇于克服生活上困难重重的人而令我保持谦虚。我特别喜欢Cicely Saunder的名言 - “你之所以重要，是因为你就是你，并且对你生命的尽头至关重要。我们将竭尽所能不只是帮助你平静地过世，还确保你能精彩地活到你过世。”我很高兴看到年长者能重新体验到他们的生活和在他们的困难中寻求支持，从而将他们的生活引导到有意义和乐观的方向。

是什么促使你在工作范围之外付出更多的努力呢？

年长者的健康和能让他们能获得最好的心理社会护理促使我为他们付出更多。

你希望在不久的将来在社工领域中看到怎样的改变？

我希望看到社工在整合社会与健康方面发挥举足轻重的角色。身为社工我们可以尽最大的能力利用社区资源去帮助有需要的人。

碧琪
社会心理服务部主管



水耕种植系统走进仁慈疗养院

在自家疗养院里种菜是件很平凡的事情，但可以做到在没有土壤的情况下还可以种植蔬菜，那就很特别了。

在高级职业治疗师Priscilla的带领下，仁慈武吉巴督街52街的乐龄护理中心团队提出引进水耕种植系统的想法。虽然护理中心一直都有从事园艺活动，但年长者在都是在种植草药和香料。引进水耕种植系统可以扩大种植范围，包括种植蔬菜并在收割后可以烹饪。

“我们希望把我们的乐龄护理中心的花园改造成一个可以通过园艺活动来促进复健，并为年长者提供一个可以放松的地方。”张丽芳，仁慈武吉巴督52街疗养院总监说道。

当复健部开始引用水耕种植的时候，是从小规模和容易栽种的蔬菜如萝卜、中国生菜和菜心等开始。大家已经在水耕种植系统到达的两周前开始栽种小幼苗，这有助于缩短种植时间和加快收获。一组10名具有行动能力且较独立的年长者负责照料这些蔬菜。他们很享受种植的过程。最令人鼓舞的是他们可以亲手栽种和收割他们所种下的蔬菜。随着最初的成功，水耕种植将成为乐龄护理中心的其中一项日常活动，并扩大至让使用轮椅的年长者和其他院友参与。



新加坡保健优质服务奖2020

仁慈医院于1月14日在由新保集团杜克—国大学术医学中心举办的第十届新加坡保健优质服务奖颁奖礼上横扫169个奖项。活动主宾副总理兼财政部长王瑞杰颁发了4295个奖项给43个公共和私人医疗机构的医疗人员。

新加坡保健优质服务奖专为本地保健医疗业设立，为那些在工作上展现卓越服务的人员提供一个备受肯定的平台。仁慈的社会心理服务主管，碧琪和她的社工团队在2011年研发了“Older Adults Supporting in Sharing (Oasis)”计划而凭此获得“超级巨星奖”。这项计划使用回忆疗法再加上重新融合的方式，来帮助病友去适应长期设施里的环境。

由财政管理，社会关怀及辅助和业务处的同事组成的1FA团队也夺得最佳团队奖（改善患者体验级别）。该项目调整并改善财务援助流程，简化程序让病患受益。在仁慈医院有多达百分之八十的长期病友需要通过财务援助来抵消医疗费。经过实行后，财务援助流程减短百分之三十六而表格使用率者减少了百分之三十七。此外，受益人也增加了百分之十二。

“我们按审核标准去了解病友的需求与资料，缩短病友的等待时间，让一半的递交申请在一个月内获批，”财务总监郭人芬说道。社工们也有明确的指南与病友和家属进行财务援助评估。这意味着，更多的病患可以在及时的情况下获得援助，同时也提高工作效率。

虚拟义工活动

仁慈医院在这新冠肺炎疫情时期采取安全社交距离措施，暂时停止所有义工活动。目前所有病人、院友和年长者的活动都是在看护人员的指导下进行。来自仁慈义工团队Cloverhearts的Alan提出应用网络和线上服务来与年长者们互动。在测试此方案时，Alan在虚拟互动中为年长者示范简单的上肢锻炼，及拍摄他家的环境给病患们有机会目睹他的家。慢性疾病病患对此活动感到开心及表示赞赏。



疫情期间，仁慈医院也为院友安排视频通话，让他们与亲属保持联系。此外，仁慈业务处的员工也通过视频方式与病人家属进行财务咨询，这在很大的程度下减少了面对面会面的时间，病毒传播风险也随之降低。

帮助社区里的居民保持健康

仁慈在四年前开设在社区里的第一家疗养院。这家融入社区的疗养院在武吉甘柏与当地的许多合作伙伴，携手为当地的居民服务，为他们带来许多方便。仁慈武吉巴督52街疗养院具有开放给当地居民使用的设施。设在疗养院里的健身中心已经成为当地居民热门的健身场所。百分之九十六的健身中心用户是来自武吉甘柏的居民。他们在工作日的工作时间后和周末的下午5点至晚上9点免费使用该设施。这当中有百分之三十的用户的年龄超过50岁。

“随着这边的居民人数不断地增加，我很高兴这个社区拥有一个像仁慈一样的疗养院，提供共用设备给这个地区的居民。仁慈疗养院的健身房为附近的居民提供多一个运动的选项。”西南区市长刘燕玲说道。

仁慈致力融入整个社区并帮助老年人过上更有意义和健康的生活。

(作为预防措施，健身中心暂时关闭，直到另行通知。)



西南区市长刘燕玲（左）与仁慈医院执行总监侯自成（右）

新年新嗜好

所谓活到老，学到老。在农历新年喜庆开始之前，许多仁慈疗养院院友都开始学习中国书法。

仁慈宏茂桥疗养院院友林进成先生在学习到新的嗜好后，经常静静地专注于学习及书写精致的汉字线条和掌握曲线的力度。他配合农历新年写了一系列的贺年对联给仁慈。林先生将仁慈医院与陈笃生医院之间的走道挂满红彤彤的春联，充满农历新年欢乐的气氛。

对于林先生来说，学习书法让他心境安宁，精神集中，生活愉悦。仁慈对此亦感到很欣慰。



超越无限



仁慈慢性疾病单位病患与护理人员一同创造多幅“拇指画”

为前线医护人员打气

我国新冠肺炎疫情在农历新年期间突然爆发，自2003年SARS冠状病毒以来我国已经为这种情况做足准备。疫情来势汹汹，医护人员投入防疫前线，不停地筛查，鉴定和治疗感染者，以防止疫情进一步蔓延到社区。

为表达对医护人员的谢意，仁慈的院友、病人和工作人员一同创造多幅“拇指画”，除了给自家医院，也献给其他医院的紧急部门。“拇指画”集合了大众的拇指印，每个印记代表人们对每一位尽忠职守的前线医护人员的赞许。

此外，仁慈医院董事会为答谢在前线辛苦对抗新冠肺炎的医护人员，自掏腰包购买维生素C送给包括国家传染病中心在内的九家政府医疗机构的前线员工，每家医疗机构获得500瓶维生素及一幅“拇指画”。仁慈医院执行总监侯自成受访时指出：“在这关键时期，我们更应该团结一致，为这些全心全意在前线照顾病患的医护人员加油打气。其实公众根本不必害怕，我国的医护人员都有做好足够的预防措施。”

仁慈医院副主席林财旻解释：“送出维生素主要是让医护人员知道他们并不是孤军作战，而背后有很多人的支持，大家也看到了他们的辛苦。维生素C能增强免疫力，希望也会为每天都须与疫情奋斗的前线医护人员提供一些精神及实质上的照顾。”