

New nursing home can care for up to 290 seniors

St Andrew's Nursing Home in Taman Jurong offers dementia and psychiatric care

Melissa Heng

When 91-year-old Ang Swee Huay was diagnosed with dementia last year, her biggest worry was her two children who have mental health conditions.

Madam Ang is the sole caregiver for her 57-year-old daughter and 56-year-old son, who are unable to care for themselves independently.

Her daughter is recovering from depression and polio, while her son is recovering from schizophrenia. Today, Madam Ang no longer has to worry about her children's long-term care. Since July, the three of them have been living in the new St Andrew's Nursing Home (SANH) in Taman Jurong.

The residential care nursing home, which started operations in February, was officially opened yesterday.

It currently has 213 residents and can serve up to 290 seniors. The home provides long-term residential care and rehabilitation for people with a wide spectrum of needs. It offers dementia and psychiatric care, as well as general nursing care.

Madam Ang said: "I am relieved and assured that my children and I will be able to receive the nursing home care we require. Most importantly, we get to stay together as a family in the same home."

The nursing home is the latest addition to the suite of senior care services under Singapore Anglican Community Services (SACS) and St Andrew's Mission Hospital (SAMH).

SAMH operates three other St Andrew's Nursing Homes in Buangkok, Henderson and Queenstown. The home in Buangkok provides psychiatric care and dementia care, while the homes in Hender-



Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam is flanked by Right Reverend Rennis Ponniah, president of the Singapore Anglican Community Services and St Andrew's Mission Hospital, and Ms Namrata Sadarangani, assistant director of community therapy services at St Andrew's Community Hospital. ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG

son and Queenstown offer general nursing care and dementia care.

Dr Arthur Chern, group chief executive of SAMH and SACS, said that with the new facility and an upcoming one fronted by St John's-St Margaret's Church - scheduled to open next year - there will be a total of over 1,400 beds for residents.

"SAMH and SACS, bearing respective expertise and track record in senior care and psychiatric rehabilita-

tion, will continue to push frontiers in healthcare," he added.

Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who officiated at the event, said he was impressed that SANH in Taman Jurong caters for the elderly with dementia.

"That is clearly going to be an issue for us in Singapore in the future. We do need to have more focused care and services for those with dementia."

Mr Tharman, who is also Coordinating Minister for Social Policies, commended the Anglican church and its volunteers for their efforts in caring for the elderly.

"That's the type of society that we are trying to build and we build it not just through policies and incentives and schemes, we build it ourselves, through society itself. We have to develop a society where all of us become better," he added.

Mr Philip Wong, executive director of SANH in Taman Jurong, said that by 2030, one in four Singaporeans will be 65 years and above.

"In addition to meeting the long-term care needs of the population, SANH in Taman Jurong will play an important role in serving those facing a mix of social, health and community care needs," he said.

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Statues unveiled to honour UK naturalist and his Sarawak aide

Jacklin Kwan and Audrey Tan Environment Correspondent

Two hundred years ago, Singapore and the rest of South-east Asia were covered with large swathes of relatively unexplored jungles.

But two intrepid explorers - British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace and his field assistant, Ali - braved the wilderness.

As they explored the Malay archipelago, they collected specimens which today are still useful in helping scientists understand more about the natural heritage in Singapore and the region.

Yesterday, the two men's contributions were commemorated as

their statues were unveiled at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum. This coincides with Singapore commemorating its bicentennial year.

Dr John van Wyhe, a historian of science at NUS, said the systematic recording of wildlife in Singapore was relatively recent.

"If it weren't for Wallace's collections, we wouldn't be able to reconstruct the biodiversity in Singapore that was here 150 years ago," he told The Straits Times.

Wallace's eight-year expedition to collect specimens in the Malay archipelago spanned 1854 to 1862.

In 1855, he met Ali, a local in Sarawak, and hired him as a guide and cook. And as their relationship



Alfred Russel Wallace and his assistant, Ali, collected over 125,660 specimens of insects, birds, reptiles, mammals and shells from South-east Asia. ST PHOTO: JASON QUAH

Minister for National Security Teo Chee Hean, who was guest of honour at the event, commended the duo for their spirit of adventure, collaboration and environmentalism.

Wallace had raised concerns over the environmental impact of human activity - tales of caution which have become more relevant than ever, said Mr Teo.

Governmental efforts were not enough, he added.

Citing Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's National Day Rally speech, in which he sounded the clarion call for Singapore to take climate action, Mr Teo said: "We need all our citizens, organisations, scientists and research community to work together and contribute ideas, so we can better understand climate change, contribute to global efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt to climate change to safeguard our island for years to come."

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grew, so did Ali's involvement in Wallace's work.

He eventually became an assistant to Wallace in the field as well. Ali shot and skinned a large proportion of Wallace's bird specimens

and accompanied him throughout his journeys, including Singapore.

They collected over 125,660 specimens of insects, birds, reptiles, mammals and shells.

Said Dr van Wyhe: "These sam-

ples were sent back and sold to museums and private collectors, where they were studied, published and ended up being part of the body of scientific knowledge in that era." Senior Minister and Coordinating

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