

Disabled's new drive to tackle apathy

Association's campaign aims to raise awareness of difficulties faced

By LIM YI HAN

FROM taking trains to getting into lifts, the disabled face plenty of obstacles getting around.

Now, the Disabled People's Association (DPA) wants the public to realise this and give way as it launches its biggest awareness campaign yet.

"Their greatest disability is our apathy" is the tagline for the six-week campaign, which starts next Monday.

Not only will posters be put up in trains, MRT stations and bus stops, the campaign will also feature a short video of Paralympic swimmer Yip Pin Xiu, which shows the 21-year-old going about her daily routine.

The clip, which will be shown on social media sites such as

YouTube and in cinemas, ends with her being obstructed at a barrier-free access ramp, because a car is parked there.

DPA president Nicholas Aw said yesterday that there is "still a lot to do to change mindsets".

"The real issue is whether people are aware of the difficulties faced by those with disabilities. If they knew that their actions may cause inconvenience to others, I'm very sure people will give way," he said.

Ms Yip, who was born with muscular dystrophy, said that one common problem for the disabled is crowded lifts.

The Singapore Management University undergraduate explained: "It will be nice if people can step out of crowded lifts to give way, or for someone to help



Part of the awareness campaign launched by the Disabled People's Association, these posters will be up in trains, MRT stations and bus stops. PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION



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MORE HELP NEEDED

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– Paralympic swimmer Yip Pin Xiu, 21, who was born with muscular dystrophy, on how it would be nice if people can step out of crowded lifts to give way, or for someone to lend a helping hand at places which are inaccessible to wheelchair users

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Another wheelchair user, Mr Norrizwan Rasip, an IT consultant, pointed to train travel as an issue.

The 33-year-old said: "Taking trains is a big issue for us, especially during peak periods. There is no way someone on a wheelchair can even enter the train."

He believes the new campaign

is a good step towards improving matters for the disabled.

"The first step is to educate people, but I hope it is not a one-off campaign because habits are hard to change, and people need constant reminders to give way."

The DPA is spending \$358,000 on advertising space, but much of the campaign has been sponsored.

Ad agency Goodfellas, for instance, came up with the concept for free, while production house Shooting Gallery Asia produced the video and posters.

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