

PILOT SCHEME COULD BENEFIT 18,000 ELDERLY

Boosting home care for seniors in Whampoa

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SINGAPORE – Some 18,000 residents aged 60 and above living in Whampoa constituency could stand to benefit from a pilot programme aimed at preventing seniors from having to “step up” into care services only when they are very sick.

The programme by the Tsao Foundation — called Community for Successful Ageing (ComSA)@Whampoa — will mobilise the local community’s resources to provide a coordinated system of care services to encourage seniors to age in place.

The foundation has also embarked on an 18-month matched-savings programme — part of a study with the Singapore Management University — to see how much money lower-income women aged between 40 and 60 would save if the foundation matched the amount in contributions to their Central Provident Fund accounts.

The two initiatives were announced at the foundation’s 20th-anniversary celebration yesterday.

Through its groundwork and discussions with grassroots organisations facilitated by the Health Ministry, the Tsao Foundation saw that the elderly in Whampoa were “underserved”, said its Chairman Mary Ann Tsao.

The foundation will identify seniors who are in the high-, middle-, or low-risk groups that require help through a questionnaire and refer them to specific services in the community. It will also send its mobile clinic to the area to provide primary care where needed.

In the second phase, it hopes to engage the Housing and Development Board on whether flats could be built or retrofitted to house eight to 10 seniors who are healthy but require some help in daily activities, with a care worker assigned to assist them.

The pilot, expected to run for three to five years, is largely funded by the Singapore Totalisator Board and will cost between S\$3 million and S\$4 million.

The matched-savings programme, which will have S\$2 million, began this month and involves about 700 women whose incomes fall in the 20th to 40th percentile.

Dr Tsao noted that there are a growing number of women who do not have money for old age as they had saved for their spouses or children but ended up living longer than them.



Our strategy is to make women more aware of (the issue) and get them to save (for themselves).

Dr Mary Ann Tsao
CHAIRMAN,
TSAO FOUNDATION