

CHALK
2023

Poster
#4

SENIORS CARING FOR SENIORS

PROMOTING SENIOR VOLUNTEERISM TO BUILD HAPPY, HEALTHIER & HELPFUL COMMUNITIES

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Project Synopsis

The Seniors Caring for Seniors (SCS) programme is part of TOUCH Community Services' community enablement approach to increase support and resources through a sustainable care network to support ageing in community.

SCS taps on the power of peer influence, and provides a platform for seniors aged 60 onwards, to move beyond being a recipient and contribute as a volunteer.

Trained befrienders played a critical role during the pandemic, offering timely assistance to vulnerable neighbours. Their support included running errands, laundry assistance, and grocery shopping. They even took the initiative to check on their neighbours.

As Singapore transitions toward an endemic phase, 26 befrienders have resumed their regular home visits to support some 35 homebound seniors. The SCS now includes fun activities for both befrienders and beneficiaries to bond further, and promote mental and physical wellness, aligning with Age Well SG.

Objectives of SCS

- Addressing the high care needs of Geylang Bahru, one of Singapore's oldest housing estates.
- Empowering seniors from TOUCHpoint@Geylang Bahru to contribute as volunteers, regardless of age, abilities, or life stage.
- Harnessing special friendships formed over decades among neighbours to make a positive impact.
- Inspiring seniors to care for themselves, their peers, and encourage health-seeking behaviours.

Project Details

26 BEFRIENDERS
More than half of our befrienders are above 70, with the oldest at 91 years old.



Befrienders are matched and deployed in pairs for **WEEKLY HOME VISITS.**

Each SCS session includes thematic health and wellness topics to refresh seniors' knowledge and serve as conversation starters.

Benefitting

35 BEFRENDEES



ENGAGE & EMPOWER

Stepped up efforts to engage both befrienders and befriendees, to empower seniors to take charge of their health and wellness. A wider range of health and wellness activities were curated as shown below.



From left to right: Home visits, interest groups, outings, Aqua Aerobics (in collaboration with ActiveSG) and Healthy Ageing Promotion Programme For You (HAPPY) exercise sessions.

Project Outcomes



SCALABILITY

In 2022, the programme expanded to TOUCH's Active Ageing Centres in Yishun and Wellington. A total of 31 seniors were successfully trained and opportunities were provided for the sharing of volunteering experiences.



CREATING NEW VOLUNTEER ROLES

SCS volunteers, serving as inspirational role models, have motivated other seniors to take on diverse roles, such as assisting with administrative and logistical support, leading exercise sessions, offering peer support during aqua sessions, and providing care to frail seniors on weekends.



CHANGING MINDSETS

Shifting from a passive recipient mindset to an empowering one, inspirational stories illustrate how cultivating supportive relationships can also pave the way for maintaining wellness and health.

Conclusion

LEARNINGS

- Recognising the influence of peer support in promoting health-seeking behaviours.
- Activating residents as resources for community ageing support.
- Adaptability to different neighbourhood needs.
- Importance of refreshing programmes and utilising community resources for stronger social bonds.

Moving forward, TOUCH will explore more opportunities to connect seniors with one another, to further increase the pool of seniors caring for seniors in the community.