

Qualified Caregivers With Quality Capabilities



By
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Graduation is the crossroad where we celebrate success and look forward to applying the knowledge and skills gained during the course of learning. That was the sentiment of 29 staff from NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Limited on 7 November 2009.

These employees from the Silver Circle Social Day Care and Care@home Service Programme, managed by NTUC Eldercare, were honoured as the first group of graduates of the "Certificate in Community Home Care Giving Skills" during a graduation ceremony and appreciation lunch. Developed together with TSAO Foundation, the 10-day structured formal training course aims to professionalise the care-giving industry and established nationally recognised skilled caregivers.

By strengthening the employees' capabilities with the Workforce Skills Qualifications certification programme, NTUC Eldercare sees this accreditation as a value-add to their careers in the field of care services. To date, a total of 49 staff has been sent to the course. The event also acknowledged long-serving volunteers from the day care and home care services who received plaques and certificates.

Under the Care@home Service, NTUC Eldercare is also starting a new initiative "Together We Care", slated to begin in January 2010. This three-day structured training course is targeted at caregivers such as family members and domestic helpers to equip them with basic practical cognitive knowledge and hands-on skills relevant to their roles as primary caregivers. This effort is in line with the government's call for more step-down care services.

NTUC Eldercare General Manager Lim Sia Hoe explained the decision to launch the programme: "When the elderly goes home from the Day Care Centre, that's when the family takes over. If the family is not able to handle care giving with adequate practical skills at home, the whole care plan that we set would collapse but such circumstance can be avoided and the elderly can have quality life at home. We want to engage the family members and that's where we get the idea to train them."

Skills And Sensitivity



"I have enjoyed working with the elderly since I was young. I've learned a lot of new things from the course which helps me to be more sensitive to their needs. Besides learning to communicate with them and care for them, I also advise on the type of food according to their needs and health conditions. As one of my patients has diabetes, I encourage him to eat low-sugar food and I help with the insulin injections so that it is easier for him. The course has prepared me with the proper skills for home care as well as day care duties."

Sennivason Sakuntalla, 51, Care@home iCare Officer

Beyond The Basics



"Before this, I had only the basic skills for elderly care. Now, I have learned the proper way to change diapers and transferring a patient. If transferring is not done properly, the patient may get a backache. Now I know what not to do. Some of the elderly I work with may prefer their way of doing things. So we have to help them to understand why it has to be done a certain way."

Fadilah Othman, 39, Care@home iCare Officer



Their Glory And Honour... Employees And Volunteers From NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Limited Enjoying Their Time In The Limelight With NTUC Eldercare Chairman Lim Boon Heng (centre, in pink shirt) and General Manager Lim Sia Hoe (third from left).

Understanding And Unleashing



"I learnt about safety measures that can be used at the workplace as well as at home. The course has built up my confidence and increased my understanding of the needs of the elderly and I am now more certain

of what I'm doing. Some of the patients go through a second childhood as they pass a certain age and they throw tantrums. I learned how to pacify them and ensure that they do not harm themselves. As caregivers, when we are able to understand the elderly, it helps to unleash their burden."

Tan Sai Mui, 58, Day Care Therapy Aide, Silver Circle (Taman Jurong) Day Care Centre

Training To Build Confidence



Investment in training is the key to help our Eldercare employees be better in their jobs. The caregiving industry is a lot different from others as it is very service-centred and personal based. If we don't bring up their capabilities and skills in this area, we will not be able to do a good job. It is also important to build up their confidence and to have recognition in their roles as care givers. It helps for the employees to feel good to be recognised as professional caregivers. By increasing the resources that we have and giving the aging community a more flexible structure with better capabilities NTUC Eldercare is also playing a role in being Cheaper Better Faster."

Lim Sia Hoe, NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Ltd General Manager

Enabling Process



We would like caregivers to enable their charges to do more for themselves, to make their choices of what they want to do. We hope our caregivers will be great enablers."

Lim Boon Heng, Minister in-charge of Ageing Issues and Chairman, NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Limited