



singapore

MOH looking to expand palliative care and raise standards



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BY - 14 HOURS 52 MIN AGO

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Dover Park Hospice is one of nine organisations that offer in-patient and home palliative care in Singapore and has tied up with Tan Tock Seng Hospital to make hospital visits easier for their patients.

Hospice staff can arrange for patients to be treated by specialists as outpatients, to avoid long queues at the hospital.

Dr Wu Huei Yaw, medical director of Dover Park Hospice, said: "At some point in time, if the condition deteriorates further and the family cannot manage anymore, this home care team can also bring the patient into the in-patient hospice.

"So this three-way collaboration actually helps the patient and family navigate the healthcare system we have here. It does help reduce the level of stress and hopefully improve the quality of life of the patients."

Meanwhile, experts estimate that there are more than 2,000 children in Singapore who are born with life-threatening illnesses or cancer.

Only a very small number, 2 per cent, are receiving palliative care – which focuses on relieving and preventing the patient's suffering.

Twenty-five-year-old Adilah was born with a brain disorder and cerebral palsy, which have paralysed her body.

She is one of 80 children who joined a palliative care service for children called Star PALS, which was launched last year.

But care providers have said many parents have a negative perception of palliative care and are often apprehensive when it is recommended for their children.

For Adilah's parents, the home care service has eased their financial and emotional burden.

Ms Junaidah Sultani, Adilah's mother, said: "There are so many things I can talk to them (the home care providers) about, and Adilah also has some friends. Instead of doctors in the hospitals, there are doctors coming at home, always taking care of her."

Dr Chong Poh Heng, Star PALS' director at HCA Hospice Care, said: "I believe that with this programme, we will be able to put these children and these families in a very good place so that their quality of life can improve." CHANNEL NEWSASIA