

ANNOUNCEMENT

COMMUNITY MEDICAL SERVICE FOR THE ELDERLY IN BUKIT MERAH

The Bukit Merah Old Folks' Club is a pioneer project set up by the community service volunteers (CSV) of the Singapore Council of Social Services and the Bukit Merah Citizen's Consultative Committee. The Club House is situated at Block 14, Unit 41-43, Redhill Close. Many activities based on community self-help concept are being organised by the volunteers together with the elderly residing in Redhill Area.

A medical unit has been established to provide medical attention to the elderly and in assisting their family (if any) with therapeutic support and services. Presently, the medical committee members consist of 6 voluntary doctors and 12 volunteers, of whom 7 are nurses attached to different government or private hospitals. The rest of the 5 volunteers are in clerical and allied profession.

During our course of the volunteer service, it has been noticed that most of the elderly under our care suffer from common illnesses as result of ageing, such as anaemia, poor visions of eye sight, malnutrition, rheumatism, heart problems and diabetes mellitus.

In view of the growing need for medical attention for the elderly, a medical clinic service was started and it now functions on every Friday from 7 pm — 9 pm. A voluntary doctor and two volunteers from the medical service group station themselves at the clinic to attend to all the elderly requiring medical attention. As the stock of medicine at the clinic is limited, the elderly after seeing doctor, are recommended to collect their prescribed medicine from the Alexandra Polyclinic.

CANCER RESEARCH GRANT

The Singapore Cancer Society will consider applications for cancer research grant from those engaged in Cancer research. Preference will be given to work on common cancers in Singapore. Please apply giving details of the project and personal particulars to the Administrative Officer, Singapore Cancer Society, 334 Peace Centre, 1 Sophia Road, Singapore 0922. Government officers will have to get prior written approval from the Ministry of Health.

Besides providing services to those ambulant elderly who are able to come down to the clinic to seek medical consultation, we are also providing extended services to those ailing non-ambulant elderly who are not able to come to the clinic. After the clinic session, the doctor accompanied by the volunteers-on-duty will pay home-visits to those non-ambulant elderly and give them the necessary medical attention and treatment.

To summarize, the objectives of the community medical service are to provide the necessary medical attention for the elderly and to keep the elderly in their best of health. We are indeed fortunate to be able to mobilise voluntary doctors and volunteers who have given many selfless hours of their time to care for the elderly in Bukit Merah. Without the response from these doctors and volunteers, the work that we have planned cannot be implemented. We look forward to more doctors and volunteers who live around the Bukit Merah Area to join the community medical service project which is a concept in bringing medical care to the elderly who have difficulties in utilising the medical services that are available in the community.

Our volunteers of the medical unit have many other varied volunteer services besides assisting in the clinic. They are involved in such area as:—

- 1) Bringing the elderly to the respective hospital units for review and follow-up.
- 2) Visiting the elderly who are hospitalised.
- 3) Collecting medications from out-patient clinics for those non-ambulant elderly.
- 4) Contacting and arranging for ambulance to fetch the elderly to hospital in case of emergency.

ERRATUM

In the Editorial on "Vocational Training for the Health Care Professional" Singapore Medical Journal 20: 310, 1979:—

- integraduate course should read undergraduate course. (para 2 line 8).
- the graduate who opts for the four year scheme spending one year . . . should read the graduate who opts for the four year scheme spends one year (para 5 line 10).