



Reflections from our team

“ I started work in PPCS in November 2000 on very shaky grounds. I had no mentor and literally have to find my own footing. If only the patients knew how scared I was. I poured through volumes of books on palliative care and called up every human being on earth for advice. Most of all, I look to God for guidance for without Him I could not have endured this. PPCS also sponsored me for many seminars for which I am very grateful.

Not long after I joined PPCS, I received a referral from Johor Bharu through a friend of mine. Alex was only 20 years old when he was first diagnosed with sarcoma. He had most of his treatments in Singapore, away from home. The tumor did not respond to the treatments. Alex comes from a broken family, parents separated, and mum worked in United States. Finance is not a problem but love was. Even in his condition, he was still the head of the family. He had to see to his sisters... There was nobody to cook and care for him. His sisters still attended school. It was indeed very sad.

Empathy really poured out of my heart. I suggested volunteers and this was what he said “I don’t want, aunty, they only want to cook and bring food for me. I want the youths so that I can hang out with them”

This was a tall order. Where can I find them? I connected him to the church, the aunties visited but he settled with e-mailing to one of the volunteer’s son. He spent his first and last Christmas at home. His condition was deteriorating fast. Being new to my job, symptom management was not optimal and counseling even worse. I had to arrange for hospitalization. Somehow his mother decided to come home, the reunion was very tearful but mum was strong. The volunteers opened their homes to her thus allowing her to catch up on lost time with Alex. Few days later he died in her arms. The volunteers helped to arrange the funeral. That night, during the wake, many people from far and near came forward to give their testimonies. My tears came in torrents and would have flooded the whole of Canning Garden if I did not take a grip of myself. It was most embarrassing.

I may have failed in his symptom control but his final chapter was enough reward for me. It is through empathy that you are able to feel for them otherwise you will fail to understand what I am singing about.

Behind every story, there is a message for me to learn. Having been exposed to all sorts of family life – makes me a better person. I don’t take life for granted but enjoy it to the fullest. I love and appreciate my family for what they are and I have plenty to thank the Almighty.

After all these years, I can say that I have a better understanding and tolerance to the various cultures

in our country. This knowledge gains a lot of respect from my clients and families.

I am very grateful to the dedicated team of nurses, centre coordinator, medical director and volunteers for without them we will not be what we are today. Empathy is what is holding us together. It has been a long road, there have been ups and downs but I have learned that through patience and tolerance which are indeed a virtue, I am able to sustain this challenge. Actions speak louder than words and I am blessed to be able to bear witness to my faith.

People often wonder, how do you do it? It must be really hard. I don’t think so. Once you commit yourself, you tear down your old structure of pride and self sufficiency. Adopt one of humility and simplicity and enriched it with empathy. The rest just flows from within. People cannot understand our work satisfaction, what is so great! The harvest is in abundance for us to reap. You have to be in it with true grit and faith. Hospice work is addictive, try it for yourself.

I am still toying with the idea that one day I will have some hands on experience in St. Christopher’s Hospice and one day a hospice will be born in Ipoh. The light is still flickering and it will not be put off until my body returns to the ground.”

SISTER NANCY KOH
Senior Palliative Care Nurse

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Notes of Appreciation

Dear Nancy,
 We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to you and your team for the kind, gentle and loving care given to the late Mr. Chin Chep Lee during his illness.
 May God bless you all for your great work.
 Yours sincerely,
 All members of the Chin family



To Wang and Miss Phan,
 Really appreciate what you have done for my wife. People like you really make a career for me.
 A big thank you.
 From
 Loi Wan Ching
 husband of Cheng Sui Yung



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Reflections *continued*

“Time really flies, no one will disagree with me. As the year 2008 begins, I will be stepping into the 7th year of work as Palliative Care Nurse.

Wow!! That sounds like I am a very experienced nurse, RIGHT? But let me confess that the longer you are here in this field of care, the more you realize that there is still a big ocean to swim before you claim to be an “EXPERT”.



PALLIATIVE CARE is not just physical care nursing which is so straight forward. It is an individualized nursing care which is delivered professionally as a whole in order to achieve maximum comfort physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially.

The physical problem faced by two clients may be the same but management may differ according to their acceptance, coping mechanism, social background and the competency of their carers.

Anyway, I think I should not be hiding the truth about myself. After all these years, I still have no experience dealing with children suffering from terminal cancer. The number of paediatric clients referred to us is minimal as these patients are normally treated actively in the hospital till the very end. So far we had about 8 to 10 paediatric cases but every time I see these referrals, I try to

avoid them as I still have no courage to deal with these clients and their families. Maybe it is because I have young children too but I should not use this as an excuse. I am now slowly trying my best to deal with the younger aged clients and I believe I will gain my confidence with more experience in the future.

Lastly, being a Palliative Care Nurse not only moulded me to be a better nurse but also a better HUMAN BEING! I realized that LIFE IS SO UNCERTAIN!! YOUR TOMORROW may be totally different from TODAY. I have learnt to treat everyday as my LAST DAY of life, appreciating the good life GOD has given me till TODAY and HOPEFULLY accept whatever mishaps in my life that may come in future.

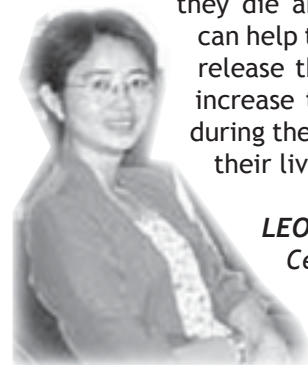
In conclusion, I would really like to thank PPCS for giving me an opportunity to be their nurse. I have no regrets spending my 6 years here as the values I learnt here can never be bought even by the richest man on EARTH! No matter where I go, the experience and values obtained here will always make me a better person and nurse. Thank you very much, PPCS.”

S/N SUMATHY A/P ARUMUGAM
 Palliative Care Nurse

“I came across the name Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS) when they were organising the “China Beijing Opera” in 2002. To me it was only just a cancer society and knew nothing about the scope of their work, until I joined PPCS in 2003 as a Centre Coordinator.

I do not really recall the first time when I followed the nurse for a home visit. To be honest it was my first encounter in my life to see patients with a life threatening disease. I was a bit frightened in seeing the wounds and the smell of blood.

Well as time goes by in PPCS, I learnt that age is not a barrier to this life threatening disease and how family members cope with caring for the patients and their grief. Each and everyone have to face DEATH once in their life and the only difference is how they die and how PPCS can help to relieve and release their pain and increase their comfort during the last phase of their lives.”



LEONG LAI PENG
 Centre
 Coordinator

felt thanks goes to Sister for the medical attention our mother during her illness so to Dr Boon who has given us which has greatly helped with the loss of our beloved. We are comforted by the fact she was not in pain she left us. That was what one of us have been praying


appreciate your help and have lost a small contribution for society.

and you.

Sinhaw

Thanks for your help

To: All staff of Perak Palliative Care Society

A note of thanks

 to tell you how much your kindness meant.

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank all of you for the message of condence that you all have so generously sent to my family on our recent bereavement. Your kindness & concern are deeply appreciated.

Thank you,
 Wong Poo Leng & family
 901, The D'Arcy Lane, Ipoh

To ALL AT PALLIATIVE CARE SOCIETY

JUST A NOTE OF THANKS FOR PROVIDING SUCH A BELLIGANT SERVICE.

SUMATHI WERE FANTASTIC IN PROVIDING THE HELP WITH MY SISTER RENU WE AS A FAMILY ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO SUMATHI FOR THE ENHANCING & CARE SHE SHOWED MY SISTER WE BELIEVE THAT SUMATHI PROVIDED A SERVICE BEYOND HER CALL OF DUTY & HOPE'S EVER THANKFUL FOR THAT.

THANK YOU AGAIN FROM ALL OF US & I'M SURE RENU WOULD LIKE TO SAY THE SAME.

LOVE,
 ME & MEE SUNARAM, VIO, DEVI, SUMI, SARAVANA & THE REST OF FAMILY.



I joined PPCS since June 2007. Before my attachment to Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS), I always wondered what is “Palliative Care”. In my mind, I thought “Palliative Care” is all about nursing care of cancer patients at home.

On my first day in PPCS, I was briefed regarding the society and general routine. Sister Nancy and Dr Boon brought me to visit a patient with lung cancer and liver metastases. From that very moment, I started to realize that what I previously thought about “Palliative Care” is wrong. We deal not only with the physical conditions of client but also the emotional, social and financial needs of both client and carers. It is different from a hospital setting because the family gives us an invaluable insight into their home conditions. I have seen patients who are still in denial of their disease, families with social problems and families with financial problems. It is also very disheartening to see patients with poor family support. The patients not only suffer from cancer but also from poor care and complications.

In PPCS with the guidance and training from the team, I am getting more confident gradually in providing wholesome care to our clients in ensuring that their quality of life and comfort is maintained at the best level possible”



S/N PHAN MUN YEE
 Palliative Care Nurse

CONGRATS & THANKS!



PPCS congratulates Mrs Daniel Jemima for receiving the Public Service Award for the year 2006/2007 from the Rotary Club of Kinta on 24 July 2007. Mrs Daniel has been a volunteer with PPCS since 1996, involving herself in the “Patchwork Gang”, a group of ladies who gather weekly to sew and create

handicraft items for sale during fund-raising events organized by PPCS. She also frequents the Palliative Care Unit at Ipoh General Hospital as a volunteer to visit the patients. Mrs Daniel stands proud as our oldest volunteer, a mother of four and grandmother of eleven, proving that age is not a limitation to volunteerism. We also thank Mrs Daniel for her generosity in donating her award prize of RM500.00 to PPCS. Indeed, her contributions in kind and in time towards palliative care work in PPCS is truly an encouragement to anyone to join or persevere in making palliative care available to the community in Ipoh.

JULY 2007

Names	RM
HUNG SIAK KAM IMO YIP NGAN	200.00
CHEONG PENG YAN IMO CHEONG KAI WONG	2,500.00
CHEW KEE SOON	100.00
MA KAM KWAN	100.00
LAU KOW KO	100.00
WONG TOONG HIN	100.00
DR T. KUMAR	500.00
PROMSERV ELECTRICAL (PERAK) S/B	500.00
IMO LOY WOI NEE	70.00
CHONG POH KHENG	100.00
ELYN LIEW EE LING	100.00
FOONG BENG LUM & FAMILY	100.00
LEE WAN CHENG	100.00
KINTA AMITABHA BUDDHIST SOCIETY, PERAK	250.00
MDM SOW SIAN	100.00
LAU TUCK CHENG IMO LAU YOOK LOON	2,000.00
MDM KHOO CHUN HIEA	200.00
LOH HOO LUM IMO CHONG CHIN KHIAN	300.00
Y.BHG. DATO DR YC LEE	200.00
MA WAI CHENG IMO MA FOO SHUN	200.00
CHEW MARY IMO CHEW KEAN HOE	2,000.00
WONG TOONG HOI IMO WONG YEW CHOON	200.00
LAW LEE ENG	100.00
DONORS	250.00

DONATIONS

received during July - September '07

AUGUST 2007

Names	RM
IMO THEN KIM THIAM	200.00
IPOH BUDDHIST DHAMMA ASSOCIATION	365.00
ZIHANZ KAMARULZAMAN	500.00
KINTA AMITABHA BUDDHIST SOCIETY, PERAK	250.00
LOW KWAI LENG	1,000.00
MRS JEMIMA DANIEL	500.00
STELLA CHOO	500.00
WONG TUCK LOOI IMO HO SAI MOOI	500.00
LIM CHO YAM	100.00
DONORS	200.00
MR S.F. LAU	1,000.00
BESTVIEW PRINTERS (M) S/B IMO LEONG SEE SEK	600.00
LOH SWEE LAM	100.00
ANNIE CHONG	100.00
DR TAN CHENG CHIN	300.00
SAW UROLOGY SDN BHD	1,000.00

SEPTEMBER 2007

Names	RM
LEE KING CHONG	100.00
CH'NG SIEW GIM	100.00
FAMILY OF LIM CHO YAM IMO MARGARET LIM	2,399.00
CHAN SIN HENG IMO CHAN XIAO TENG	500.00
WONG HA NOI IMO HOR FOOK CHEONG	200.00
TAN TEIK LAI	100.00
LIEW AH YONG	100.00
KINTA AMITABHA BUDDHIST SOCIETY, PERAK	250.00
TANG KHOON KWAI	300.00
HEW SIEW LIN	100.00
LAI EONG LIANG	120.00
LEE POH KHENG IMO NG THAI HOH	300.00
AHMAD JOHARI	100.00
LEE CHEE KIONG IMO LEE MING KONG	80.00
YEE CHUT YAU	100.00
WONG SIONG WAH IMO CHOW SHUIT YING	200.00
LUM YEW YUEN	1,000.00
LUM SEE MENG	500.00
LUM YEW CHOE	500.00
CHAN BOOI CHEE	500.00
CHAN CHUN WAI	300.00
JAMILLAH BHAUDIN	100.00

APOLOGIES

Ms Leong Jeng Yoon donated RM15,000.00 and not RM5,000.00 as reported in our Apr-June 2007 centrenews.

THANKS



Promoting the Spirit of Care

We thank all our donors for their generosity. As PPCS is a non-governmental agency, it relies substantially on the financial support of the general public. If as a reader of this newsletter, you wish to donate something to the Society, or you know of anyone who might be interested in doing so, please direct your personal donation or inform them to contact the Honorary Treasurer at:

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