

Kampung Senang Charity & Education Foundation

Elderly havens

Some residents in Woodlands have objected to a proposed elderly daycare centre at their void deck. But as Cheryl Faith Wee and Toh Wen Li found out, these centres are a second home for many seniors. The elderly enjoy a wide range of amenities from foot baths to dining on organic meals.



Madam Tan Siok Huay enjoying her weekly foot spa at Kampung Senang. ST PHOTOS: CHERYL FAITH WEE

KAMPUNG SENANG ELDERLY DAY CARE CENTRE

Where: Block 840 Tampines Street 82, 01-111, open: Mondays to Fridays, 8am to 6pm, closed on public holidays, tel: 6785-2568

Fees: \$400 a month for members of Kampung Senang Charity & Education Foundation, \$500 a month for non-members, additional \$100 to \$150 a month for two-way transport within Tampines, Pasir Ris and Simei

Info: Open to the elderly above 55 years old who can move independently with or without walking aids. They should not be bedridden or wheelchair bound. They should be mentally fit and capable of eating and drinking without medical or nursing supervision. All the elderly are assessed on a case-by-case basis

Charity organisation Kampung Senang schedules foot spas every Thursday for the elderly who go to its daycare centre.

As part of the 12-year-old centre's weekly activities, the senior citizens get a chance to soak their feet in a herbal bath for up to 30 minutes. The spa session is in-house and involves a homemade concoction brewed with herbs a day in advance.

Kampung Senang, which is Malay for "village of inner peace", was set up in 1999 and aims to care for people and the environment.

Madam Tan Siok Huay, 89, who has been attending the centre for close to a decade, says the foot spa helps improve her blood circulation.

She is one of the 15 elderly at the daycare centre. The great-grandmother lives with her son and his family in a four-room HDB flat in Tampines. She has five other children.

A van picks her up at around 9.30am on weekdays and takes her home at around 5.30pm.

Her son felt it was not safe for her to be alone at home while the rest of the family is at work or school. "They are afraid that I will cook something and leave the gas on by accident. What if something explodes?" she says in Mandarin.

She is kept busy with activities such as bingo and arts and crafts at the centre.

Besides foot spas, there are also a slew of other measures to keep the elderly here healthy.

All meals are vegetarian and prepared with produce from Kampung Senang's mini organic farm located just beside the daycare centre.

Vegetables such as xiao bai cai and kangkong from the farm are often served with brown rice during lunch. The centre's two cooks use only organic salt and sauces to prepare food. Occasionally, they also make jams and bake breads.

General manager Oh Chong Fah, 44, says: "Even if they are not vegetarian, it is a good diet to have and helps to detox the body."

And the elderly at the centre are not complaining. Madam Bette Heng, 87, who joined last April, feels that the cooks here are "quite imaginative".

They are part of the six or so full-time and part-time staff who run the place.

Madam Heng is a retired principal who lives with her widowed daughter-in-law. She considers the centre her second home.

She says: "We are a very tight-knit kind of place and everybody finds his own happiness here. I am living the last days of my life and it is good for people of my age to find a pleasant place like this."

Cheryl Faith Wee

Elderly Day Care Centre providing not just health vegetarian meals but various healthy natural therapies to the elderly.