

Singapore

IN FOCUS: 'When I die, who's going to look after you?' – the pains of caring for adults with disabilities

CNA meets four senior caregivers trying to push their children with disabilities to learn to live a life without them.



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Ernest Wong loves touching his mother, Mdm Lim's hair to show his affection and love for her. (Photo: CNA/Mak Jia Kee)

Summary of news coverage

'When I die, who's going to look after you?' – the pains of caring for adults with disabilities

The CNA article featured senior caregivers who try to teach their children with disabilities to learn to live a life without them. Data from the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) showed that one in four such caregivers were above 65 years old, with a median age of 57. Almost 70 per cent of them were female.

A slew of initiatives is available to help PWDs negotiate eventual independence, spanning government employment, financial and infrastructural support; social and community services; and living arrangements operated by non-profits or private sector organisations. But gaps remain, including in areas of medical costs, lifelong learning and public awareness, according to caregivers, social service agencies, advocates and experts interviewed by CNA.

For PWDs with up to high support needs, an adult disability home may be a better fit. The **THK** Home for Disabled @ Sembawang, run by Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities, is the residence of about 160 PWDs with either ageing caregivers or unfavourable living environments in their own households. An adult disability home is not a nursing

home, however, and residents are not solely confined to four walls either. Though they still get some assistance in daily living, they are also brought out for various activities such as walks, picnics and trips to the zoo; and also trained to be independent, said Ms Chloe Lee, Superintendent at **THK** Home for Disabled @ Sembawang. She shared, "It's like a community where the residents find strength in one another and the staff are like parents."