

Helping a transnational grandmother regain health and hope

Through its dedicated programme for financially struggling transnational families, Mount Alvernia Hospital's Outreach Team provided vital support to a devoted grandmother, restored her mobility, and enabled her to continue caring for her grandchildren.

Mdm Rosmayanti Binti Yahya, a 67-year-old grandmother from Indonesia, found herself in a challenging situation. She was the sole caregiver and provider for her three Singaporean grandchildren, all of whom are still in school. The children's mother, also Indonesian, was deported and unable to care for them, while their Singaporean father remained estranged from the family.

Being a foreigner on a social visit pass, Mdm Rosma, as she is known, was not allowed to work in Singapore. Without a source of income, she tirelessly sought financial aid from various sources, including the Social Service Office and the Ministry of Education Financial Assistance Scheme, to support her grandchildren's education and living expenses. The family currently lives in a one-room HDB rental flat.

Injury and uncertainty

The family's precarious situation took a turn for the worse when Mdm Rosma slipped and fell in her bathroom, injuring her head and hip. Despite months of recuperation, her back pain worsened, leaving her unable to walk, sit, or even lie down for extended periods.

"My biggest fear was not being able to walk again. Then, who would care for my grandchildren?" she asked.

As a foreigner, Mdm Rosma is not entitled to Singapore government health subsidies, making it near-impossible for her to afford treatment for her worsening backache.

However, with assistance from the South Central Community Family Service Centre, her case was referred to Mount Alvernia Hospital's (MAH) Outreach Team, which has in place a support programme to help financially

struggling transnational families with health issues.

Overcoming adversity

Upon learning of Mdm Rosma's situation, the Outreach Team engaged an orthopaedic surgeon based in MAH to address her condition. She was diagnosed with a fractured T12 vertebra, for which the surgeon performed a vertebroplasty, a procedure involving the injection of a special cement into the vertebra to relieve spinal pain and restore mobility.

The surgeon and anaesthetist waived their procedure fees, while MAH covered hospitalisation and diagnostic expenses. Ms Yang Yuzi, Mdm Rosma's case manager from the Outreach Team, accompanied her to all appointments, ensuring a seamless process for her.

Today, Mdm Rosma is free from back pain and is once again able to care for her grandchildren. She expressed her relief, saying, "I feel thankful to have received help from the Mount Alvernia Outreach Team. I hope I can continue to look after the children until they complete school."

Said Ms Yang, "Mdm Rosma's dedication to her grandchildren, her positive outlook on life, and the smile she wears every day despite her family's difficult circumstances, is truly humbling. The Outreach Team is happy to have been able to support her through this ordeal." □

This article is contributed by the Mount Alvernia Outreach Team.

For more information, please contact outreach@mtalvernia.sg



A smiling Mdm Rosma (left) with Ms Yang Yuzi from the Outreach Team. Photo: The Mount Alvernia Outreach Team.



Serve all with Love

About Mount Alvernia Hospital

Founded on Catholic values by the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood in 1961, Mount Alvernia Hospital (MAH) is the only not-for-profit general acute tertiary care private hospital in Singapore. With close to 380 beds, it is supported

by over 300 on-campus specialist doctors and nearly 1,400 accredited doctors. Dedicated Clinical Pastoral Care forms part of its holistic care for patients and their families regardless of background or belief.

As a not-for-profit hospital,

MAH channels its surpluses towards improving hospital facilities, supporting the Assisi Hospice, and giving back to underserved communities through outreach programmes, guided by the motto 'Serve all with Love'.