

Step Down Care in Singapore

Four priority issues have been identified by the Ministry of Health in the area of step down care for the elderly in Singapore. They are:

- κ Development of home care services
- κ Professional management and delivery of step down care
- κ Financial plans to assist the elderly
- κ Informing the public about the availability of services

Three important milestones had been accomplished so far.

- κ Formation of the Integrated Care Services – a central referral and placement service jointly formed by the 2 public health care clusters
- κ Launch of the Eldershield and the Interim Disability Assistance Programme (IDAPE)
- κ Implementation of means testing in subsidized step down care facilities

The private sector is urged to be more active in providing nursing home beds. Voluntary Welfare Organisations are

focused on providing services to the lower income groups and the private sector should consider providing services to the more affluent elderly. The MOH is working with the URA to set aside sites for the development of private nursing homes. The Government will act as a purchaser of medical services for the lower and middle income Singaporeans. The Government is also prepared to contract the private sector to provide such services if they can provide the same or better quality of service for the same cost. Similarly, VWOs are encouraged to collaborate with the private sector. VWOs may contract private sector operators to provide specific management or care services. The prospect of forming partnerships and joint ventures with private sector operators may even be considered.

(Source : Opening Address at the Seminar and Dialogue with Providers of Step Down Care Services 12th November 2002 held at the Ministry of Health)