

Connect ² Collab

DFSG e-Newsletter

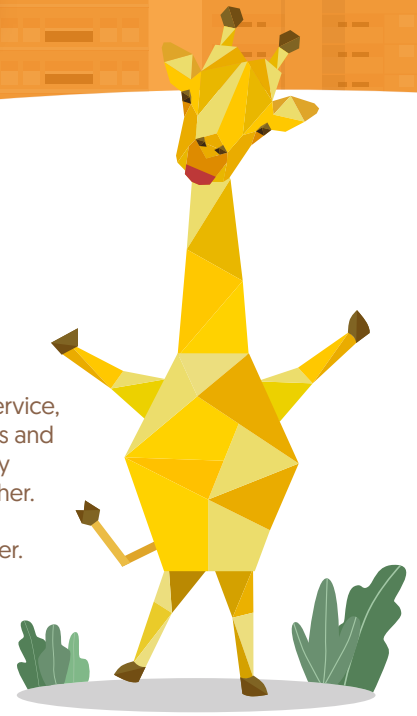
GIFFY'S NOTE

Warm greetings to you, Dementia Friends!

Welcome to the first issue of our e-newsletter for partners. This inaugural publication aims to bring service, community and corporate partners together to share best practices, feature dementia-friendly efforts and spotlight fellow advocates. We hope that you will be inspired by the ideas and opportunities in every issue, and explore collaborations in building a caring and Dementia-Friendly Singapore (DFSG) together.

In this issue, join our partners' networks in Ang Mo Kio on their collaborative journey, Walk2Remember. Take inspiration from three winning student projects in a Dementia Hackathon, whose proposed solutions cater to dementia needs. Lastly, hear from a dementia self-advocate who was diagnosed with young-onset dementia and learn about what has kept her going all these years.

We hope that you will enjoy this newsletter. Do connect with us for collaboration opportunities!



A Dementia-Friendly Singapore is one where people work together to build a caring and inclusive society to support persons living with dementia to age in place. With support from individuals, corporates and the larger community, persons living with dementia and their caregivers will feel respected, valued and confident to continue leading independent lives at home and in the community.

GOOD PRACTICES

Did you know that Walk2Remember was first initiated by four students from Nanyang Technological University? Their aim was to raise awareness of dementia and spread the message that something as simple as walking can reduce one's risk.

Comprising AMKFSC Community Services (AMKFSC), AWWA, Dementia Singapore, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) and TOUCH Community Services (TOUCH), the Ang Mo Kio (AMK) Partners' Network saw the value the event had in building Dementia-Friendly Communities and decided to support the students.

The three partners on the ground — AMKFSC, AWWA and TOUCH — started with weekly walking clubs in different parts of AMK. And once a year, these weekly walks culminate in the mass community walkathon organised in conjunction with Dementia Singapore: Walk2Remember.

Here's what a representative from AMK Partners' Network has to say about the Walk2Remember 2022 Community Walkathon held on 17 September at Bishan Park:

Walk2Remember is a great way to raise awareness for dementia, providing a platform for participants to show their support for those



Photo by AMK Partners' Network

“ Any single organisation can organise weekly walks or community walkathons. But the impact is far greater when we cross-share and collaborate. ”

impacted by dementia in Singapore. Bringing both young and old together also facilitates intergenerational bonding.

The event was a huge success because of the collaborative spirit and trust amongst the partners in AMK. Any single organisation can organise weekly walks or community walkathons. But the impact is far greater when we cross-share and collaborate, as in our case. In doing so, we put the community first, rather than the agendas of individual organisations.

If there are other community partners keen on starting walks in their communities, we will be more than happy to share our experience. In fact, Care Corner in Toa Payoh approached us a few months back and we have already invited them to our monthly AMK Partners' Network meetings, for us to share and learn from each other.





CASE STUDY

Dementia Hackathon 2022

It was term break for Republic Polytechnic [RP], but that didn't stop a passionate group of 71 students from returning to campus from 8 to 10 September to participate in **Hackathon 2022: Safe in the Woods**.

Organised by People's Association [PA], AWWA and RP, the inaugural Dementia Hackathon has worked as a platform to increase awareness and understanding of what it means to live with dementia, while also laying the groundwork for future programmes to better support members living with dementia within the community.

How the Dementia Hackathon came to be

Serendipitously, AWWA and RP had concurrently entertained the idea of organising a community hackathon in the Woodlands Dementia-Friendly Community. PA, realising the potential synergy, brought both partners together to make this vision come to life.

Each partner brought with them their area of expertise, which contributed to the success of the hackathon — PA secured sponsorships, collaborators and the perspectives of grassroots leaders who could identify real needs on-ground; AWWA brought in subject matter experts ranging from consultants to organisations who work with people living with dementia; and RP provided a platform



Partners of the inaugural Dementia Hackathon: (from left to right) Nicodemus Ching (AWWA), Cheryl Khoo [RP] and Eliza Lim [PA].

for experts to come together to offer a holistic, multidisciplinary lens through which students could approach the hackathon.

While the Dementia Hackathon kickstarted conversations on dementia, it's now up to communities and partners to ensure its continuation. There are many different ways we can make our communities a more dementia-friendly place to live, play and work in. Whether that's creating a dementia-friendly smart wearable, integrating persons living with dementia into the community or throwing our weight behind a worthy cause, we can all play our part.

1

Team Memory Lane



Among all the inspiring pitches, the one that judges favoured most was the idea of a pop-up cafe that will hire persons living with dementia.

Inspired by the Restaurant of Mistaken Orders in Japan, the idea is for this cafe to 'pop up' and open for business in different neighbourhoods in Singapore. Persons living with dementia will be the face of the cafe, as their role would be to take orders and serve food to customers.

2

The Dream Team



What do you get when you put together existing technology such as GPS, emotion tracker, live-view camera and audio feedback into an assisted living device?
The Dream Team's answer: DreamSpecs.

Using the DreamCares app, caregivers will be able to track and locate their loved ones wherever they are, and even ascertain their emotions. This technology will reduce the caregiving burden and allow people living with dementia to go about their day-to-day activities independently.

3

Dementia No More



Dementia No More pitched the idea of developing a smart ecosystem to provide support to the dementia community.

One part of the equation is a Virtual Reality Simulator, which will integrate and coordinate efforts to detect and delay cognitive function deterioration. They have also proposed wearables that can help people living with dementia overcome their daily challenges while helping caregivers deal with burnout and stress.

Alison Lim,
Co-founder of Dementia & Co

GET PERSONAL

I have dementia, but dementia doesn't have me

If we were to sum up Alison Lim — co-founder of Dementia & Co — in one word, the word would be 'warrior'. The 65-year-old dementia self-advocate has been fighting dementia for the last six years, and has never let her condition get to her head, much less her spirit.

Alison was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA) in 2016, a type of young-onset dementia that affects a person's ability to use language to communicate. The nature of her variant of PPA, Logopenic, meant that she found it increasingly difficult to express herself through words.

It was in Alison's nature to pursue answers and find solutions, which were not readily available at the time of her diagnosis. She was quick to tap on her network and reached out to neuroscientists from Singapore, Australia, the UK and the US for help.

As a result, Alison was involved in several research programmes, both as a participant and a contributor to the ongoing research on dementia. She co-created programmes with researchers and provided her experiences as a person living with dementia.

Wanting to share her newfound knowledge and resources with the dementia community, Alison co-founded Dementia & Co in 2021 with her daughter, Jamie. We speak to Alison to find out more about her organisation.

Can you share with us what motivated you to start Dementia & Co?

When I was diagnosed six years ago, I recognised that there was a lack of peer-to-peer support at the point of diagnosis. This was a gap I thought I could fill.

I began devoting my time to connect with newly-diagnosed persons living with dementia and their care partners, and hosting them at my home. Soon, these sessions expanded to include two or three families, then subsequently a whole community of people. This community later became Dementia & Co.

Tell us more about Dementia & Co and what inspired you to initiate the Tea Dance.

At the heart of it, Dementia & Co is an organisation that brings members within the community — be it persons living with



dementia, their care partners, seniors or even youth — together. We run a multitude of fun and engaging activities including a Tea Dance that I conduct weekly at Kebun Baru Community Centre.

I started the Tea Dance because I noticed that among the community, people were generally reserved, afraid to speak about dementia or isolated from society. And so I thought it was the perfect solution to bring people out of their shells.

The Tea Dance is not just about dancing. While it does give participants the chance to pick up the cha-cha and the waltz, Tea Dance is also an avenue for people to familiarise themselves with dementia, share stories and knowledge, do neuro-exercises together and engage in activities such as walking and even modelling!

How has the dementia community and the wider community responded to the Tea Dance?

The smiles, laughter and energy at each session are just heart-warming.

Through this Tea Dance, members of the dementia community and their care partners, as well as others in the group, are able to open up and ask for more information about dementia. I feel that emotions are the key culprit to all blockages in our systems, causing not only dementia but many other issues.

As members and their care partners talk about their frustrations, fears and anger, and then learn different communication methods, there is an outlet to release their unseen struggles and an opportunity to better understand their family members.

What is your hope for the Tea Dance?

In the long run, I hope to bring back that lovely kampong spirit and have members lead these sessions, plus create other activities and outings. I also hope that younger folks will drop by to appreciate the thoughts and energy of seniors, and through this process, learn more about dementia and ageing gracefully.

If you are keen to find out more and start Tea Dance sessions in your neighbourhood, feel free to contact Alison at dementianco@gmail.com.



HIGHLIGHTS



WhatsApp Stickers for World Alzheimer's Day

To commemorate World Alzheimer's Day (WAD) which falls on 21 September this year, AIC DFSG recently launched the 'DFSG WAD 2022' WhatsApp sticker pack featuring our beloved dementia-friendly mascot, Giffy! We hope that these stickers will encourage more people to spread love, care and kindness among friends, family, partners and clients through their everyday messages.



Scan the QR Code to download the stickers and share them with your friends!

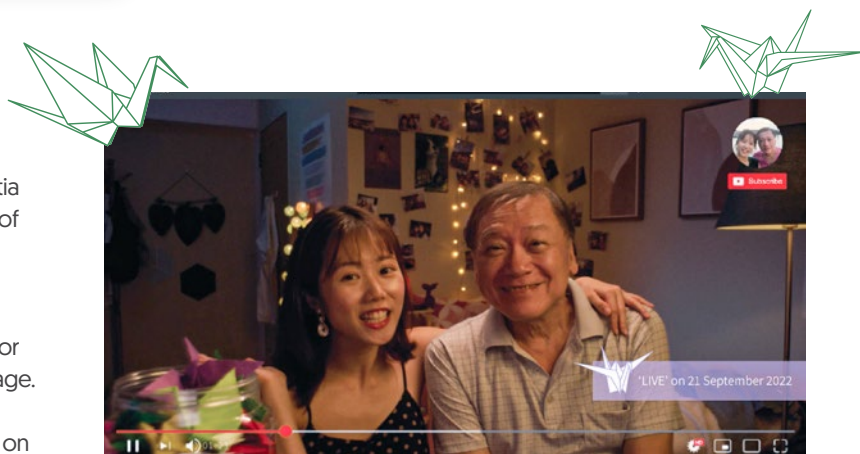


'1000 Cranes' Campaign

This World Alzheimer's Month, Dementia Singapore (DSG) brought the nation together for a conversation about dementia through the '1000 Cranes' campaign. The crane is the symbol of hope to inspire solidarity for the dementia community, and create hope for the future.

Members of the public were invited to pledge their support for the dementia community by submitting a Virtual Crane message. These messages went live on DSG's Wall of Hope and were featured during the '1000 Paper Cranes' Film Livestream Event on 21 September 2022.

'1000 Paper Cranes' is a short film that DSG embarked on with veteran executive producer, Daniel Yun, to spotlight dementia and the profound impact it can have on families. Exploring the themes of familial bonds, courage and hope, this film is our love letter to the dementia community, youth, millennials and anyone who has a person living with dementia in their lives.



Synopsis of film:

Ever since she was born, Hannah and her grandfather — "Gramps" as she affectionately calls him — have shared a beautiful bond. When he was diagnosed with dementia three years ago, their world was turned upside down. Refusing to let the condition define their love for each other, Hannah started a YouTube channel in the hopes of documenting the special moments in their new journey together.

Through all the doctor's appointments, shared meals, workouts, and origami crane folding activities, their beautiful bond has grown stronger than ever before.

Stay in Touch

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