

## **Dementia-Friendly Collective Session 1: Narratives of Care - A Dementia Human Library Series 10 September 2025 | CARITAS Agape Village**

### **Session Overview**

The inaugural session of the Dementia-Friendly Collective was held on 10 September 2025 at CARITAS Agape Village. Designed as a *Human Library*, the session brought together healthcare professionals, community partners, persons living with dementia, caregivers, advocates, and sector leaders to share lived experiences and professional perspectives on supporting persons affected by dementia.

The session sought to deepen mutual understanding across sectors, surface practical insights, and strengthen collaboration in advancing dementia-inclusive practices within the community.

### **Opening Remarks**

The session was opened by **Ms See Yen Theng, Chief (Caregiving and Community Mental Health), Agency for Integrated Care**, who emphasised the importance of cross-sector collaboration, community innovation, and shared ownership in strengthening dementia care and creating supportive environments for persons living with dementia and their caregivers.

### **Key Perspectives Shared**

#### **1. Lived Experience of Dementia and Caregiving**

Persons living with dementia and their caregivers shared candid accounts of their journeys, highlighting both challenges and moments of resilience. Key themes included:

- the emotional and physical toll of caregiving,
- the importance of caregiver self-care,
- and the critical role of family and community support.

These narratives reinforced the message that while the dementia journey can be complex, strong support systems can make it manageable and meaningful.

#### **2. Philanthropic Support for Dementia Initiatives**

**Mr David Hoe, Director of Philanthropy, Majurity Trust**, shared insights into philanthropic funding approaches that support dementia-related initiatives. Participants found value in understanding:

- Majurity Trust's concept-note-driven engagement model,
- its emphasis on measurable impact,
- and its role in journeying with grantees to strengthen programme design and sustainability.

This session highlighted philanthropy as a potential enabler of innovation and scaling for community-based dementia initiatives.

#### **3. Community Arts as a Tool for Engagement**

Artist volunteer **Didier** illustrated how community-driven arts initiatives can foster connection and engagement. By using familiar visuals and creating inclusive creative spaces, her work demonstrated how multi-agency collaborations can:

- deepen community understanding of dementia,
- create safe and expressive environments,
- and support meaningful engagement for persons living with dementia.

#### **4. Collaborative Care in Clinical and Community Settings**

A multidisciplinary team from **St. Luke's Hospital** shared their approach to collaborative dementia care. Key insights included:

- the importance of understanding individuals holistically, including life history, preferences, and the drivers of behavioural changes,
- the value of comprehensive care plans that address the needs of both persons living with dementia and their caregivers,
- and the need to balance pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions.

Participants also recognised the breadth of community resources available and the commitment of care teams who often go beyond traditional role boundaries to support patients and families.

### Key Learnings for Sector Partners

Across the perspectives shared, several cross-cutting insights emerged:

- Dementia support is most effective when care is **person-centred, family-inclusive, and community-anchored**.
- Sustainable dementia initiatives benefit from **cross-sector collaboration**, including healthcare, community organisations, philanthropy, and the arts.
- Lived experiences provide critical insights that can inform service design, funding approaches, and community engagement strategies.
- There is value in creating **safe platforms** for shared learning, reflection, and co-creation among diverse stakeholders.

### Closing Reflections

The session concluded with closing remarks by **Mr Jason Foo, Chief Executive Officer of Dementia Singapore**, who expressed appreciation for the core team's efforts in curating and delivering the platform. He emphasised the importance of collaborative forums such as the Dementia-Friendly Collective in empowering the dementia community, strengthening partnerships, and fostering continuous learning and innovation.

### Participant Reflections

Participants provided positive feedback, noting that the Human Library session offered meaningful opportunities to learn from lived experiences, explore innovative engagement approaches, and reflect on collaborative models of care. Many expressed renewed motivation to continue advocating for dementia-inclusive practices and to strengthen support for persons living with dementia and their caregivers within their respective sectors.





