

THE CHAS DECANTMENT PROJECT

Text by Terry Kam



With our rapidly ageing population and the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, our public healthcare system needs to integrate and work with other care providers to explore new models of chronic disease management and ensure that chronic diseases are well managed in the community. At the same time, we hope that patients are able to enjoy efficient, coordinated and accessible care.

National Healthcare Group (NHG) has partnered with Parkway Shenton Medical Group to offer residents an additional option for medical treatment through the decantment programme. This collaboration has also been extended to GP services where patients can have their follow-ups at designated GP clinics. This thus allows us to further contribute our healthcare management expertise to the wider community. This new model of care is part of the Ministry of Health's Healthcare 2020 Masterplan: to engage private GPs to help meet the growing demand for health services.

The programme aims to decant patients who are holders of blue Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) cards and who suffer from single or multiple chronic conditions

such as hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, diabetes mellitus and asthma. Doctors will identify suitable patients and introduce the decantment programme to them accordingly. If the patient is willing, he/she will be referred to CHAS coordinators like me for counselling and appointment scheduling. CHAS coordinators are stationed at the participating polyclinics to streamline the process and provide assistance.

Many patients are delighted to learn about the \$0 out-of-pocket cost for follow-up consultations and the reduced cash component for laboratory tests. In addition, they can continue to enjoy the same subsidised rates for medications, even during their follow-up visits to Parkway Shenton's team of GPs. And that's not all; patients are also able to get extras like priority queue service and consultations with fixed doctors. Hence, it is truly providing care that is value added, cost effective and patient-centric.

Parkway Shenton's team of GPs and coordinators are committed to provide person-centred care through a one-stop seamless service experience that is catered to each patient's healthcare needs. Part of our role includes sending appointment

reminders via text messages, facilitating appointment rescheduling when needed, addressing patient requests and making arrangements with the polyclinic.

Till today, more than 1,500 of our Woodlands Polyclinic patients are being decanted and the numbers are still growing. Many patients enjoy greater convenience as the GP clinic is located near the train station, has a shorter waiting time, and of course a lower cash outlay. This programme also allows the crowd in the polyclinic to be eased. Kudos to a win-win situation worthy of celebration! ◆

Ms Terry Kam has been a care coordinator (or care facilitator) with Parkway Shenton since July 2015. A Hong Kong-born Cantonese who loves meeting and communicating with people, she is also a licenced property agent, a tour leader with the National Association of Travel Agents Singapore, and an amateur local guide. She likes eating, watching movies, listening to music, travelling, reading and daydreaming.

