

Yio Chu Kang CC reopens with dementia-friendly features for ageing community

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Yio Chu Kang residents now have access to a newly renovated community club with dementia-friendly infrastructure, as the town transforms to become more senior-friendly, with over 40 per cent of its residents aged 50 and above.

The refurbished Yio Chu Kang Community Club was officially reopened on Nov 16, about two years after the original 2023 deadline was delayed due to the pandemic.

Among the key new features are wayfinding cues to better support residents with dementia.

A mural on the first floor has clear visual cues such as directional arrows, amenity icons and fruit symbols representing specific zones in the neighbourhood.

Each level is marked by a distinct colour, reflected in its lift lobbies, as well as directional and facility signages.

These visual cues will help residents quickly identify different levels and locate facilities at a glance through colour coding.

This is part of town-wide efforts to incorporate dementia-friendly infrastructure in Yio Chu Kang by 2025, as part of a five-year estate masterplan that was announced in 2021.



Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong, who is adviser to Ang Mo Kio GRC grassroots organisations, looking on as MP for Yio Chu Kang Yip Hon Weng (third from left) unveils the new wayfinding mural at the upgraded Yio Chu Kang CC on Nov 16. The mural provides clear visual cues such as fruit symbols to represent specific zones in the neighbourhood. ST PHOTO: GIN TAY

Mr Yip Hon Weng, MP for Yio Chu Kang and adviser to the Yio Chu Kang grassroots organisations, said the CC is the last part of the town to be outfitted with dementia-friendly features.

Over the past few years, the town

has worked with various partners like the town council, Housing Board, Ministry of National Development, Centre for Liveable Cities and researchers from Singapore University of Technology and Design to roll out the features, he

said.

Each of the 10 zones in the neighbourhood has its own fruit icon and colour, which appear consistently on wayfinding murals and block facades across all HDB blocks in the town.

Former restaurant manager Ng Ah Lan, 72, who cares for her elderly mother with dementia, said the wayfinding cues have been helpful.

About five years ago, her mother got lost while trying to find her way home after attending a session at the nearby active ageing centre.

"Thankfully, she was able to remember the colour of our block and the fruit icon associated with it. A neighbour noticed her wandering around the void deck and took her to the correct lift lobby so she could go home," said Madam Ng.

Mr Yip hopes that such dementia-friendly features can also be rolled out in other neighbourhoods.

"We noted down residents' feedback on what they would like to have in their estates in terms of programmes and infrastructure. This has culminated into a dementia-friendly neighbourhood guide... We can scale this up to other HDB towns," he said.

Mr Yip added that the upgraded CC is 60 per cent bigger than before, with improvements made based on resident feedback.

For example, the previous open-air courtyard has been replaced by a sheltered community space so that activities can take place rain or shine. Other enhancements include a sheltered drop-off point at the back of the CC, barrier-free ac-

cess ramps and strategically placed handrails for seniors and those with mobility needs.

"The enhanced facilities empower residents to take the lead in organising ground-up activities, turning ideas into action and strengthening community bonds. Building a dementia-inclusive community also remains an ongoing effort, and Yio Chu Kang will continue working closely with partners to explore new initiatives based on the evolving needs of residents," said Mr Yip.

Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong, who is adviser to Ang Mo Kio GRC grassroots organisations, was also at the official opening of the upgraded CC.

Pointing out that Singapore will become a super-aged society by 2026, SM Lee said Yio Chu Kang has already reached that milestone. A super-aged society is defined as having more than one in five residents aged 65 and older.

He added that many parts of Ang Mo Kio are among the oldest in Singapore, reaching super-aged status first because their residents are older than those in other areas.

"We must make sure that we have the facilities for you and... that the environment is adapted so that you can remain active, you can keep on going about your daily routines."

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