



SIWEC INSIGHT

Sikh Welfare Council, Singapore

July-Sept 2013

Welcome to yet another issue of our SIWEC newsletter!

The primary goal of our newsletter is to Engage and Share with You SIWEC's recent & forthcoming events. We also look forward to hearing from you on how you may want to volunteer and get involved in our activities. Besides the Food on the Table program, other SIWEC activities include Prison Visits, Counselling, Bereavement and Financial Assistance. SIWEC was awarded IPC status by the Commissioner of Charities on 5th November 2009. In keeping with our IPC status, about 10% of our needy clients are non-Sikhs.

KHALSA LADIES WING DINNER



WELFARE DAY @KDS



Outreach to Sanggat



AGM



What We Do: The Sikh Welfare Council (SIWEC) is a charitable organisation with an IPC status ("Institutions of Public Character"), which formulates overall policies in respect of welfare services in Singapore.

A comprehensive detail of SIWEC's functions and activities can be found on our website at www.siwec.org.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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Sarjit Kaur Gill

KHALSA LADIES WING DINNER



SKA LADIES WING had its 4th Charity Dinner on Saturday, 20th July at the SKA premises. The event saw women come together in the spirit of 'giving'. Out of \$29,151 raised from the dinner, \$5,000 was donated to SIWEC. We are very grateful for this kind gesture and would like to thank the Ladies Wing once again.

Welfare Day @KDS

SIWEC, in conjunction with Khalsa Dharmak Sabha (KDS), celebrated Singapore's National Day with a health awareness event at KDS on 9 August. SIWEC, in collaboration with the Diabetic Society of Singapore, conducted health screening for about 93 individuals. The health screening included checks on blood pressure and blood sugar level.

Faecal occult blood test (FOBT) kits were also handed out to individuals who were 50 years and older. These kits are for the detection of colorectal cancer and were provided to us by the Cancer Society of Singapore. The Council for the Third Age also facilitated a talk on will writing for the elderly. Also, Professor Inderjit Singh - an orthopaedic surgeon from SGH - gave a short talk on arthritis. The event was well received by the Sanggat.



HIGHLIGHTS

Outreach to Sanggat



SIWEC has embarked on an awareness programme to update the Singapore Sanggat on its current and new programmes and challenges faced by the community. SIWEC has received generous contributions from well-wishers and positive feedback on its activities. We thank all the members of the community for donating generously to SIWEC.

Annual General Meeting 2013

HIGHLIGHTS



SIWEC Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on the 20th of July 2013, at the Central Sikh Temple. During the meeting, the members were briefed on SIWEC's 2012 annual report. The members were also updated on the challenges facing SIWEC, new programmes and outreach to the society. The members noted that the awareness of SIWEC and its activities has gradually increased. The outgoing Chairman thanked the Committee and Council members for their participation in the AGM. A new committee has been elected and endorsed by the Council.

YUVA Mentoring Programme

To be a youth mentor, you don't need special skills - just an ability to listen and to offer friendship, guidance and encouragement to a young person...and you'll be amazed by how much you'll get out of the experience.

One of the greatest ways to affect a child's life positively is by becoming a mentor. Studies show that mentoring someone can benefit both the mentee and the mentor. Mentoring is a shared opportunity for learning and growth.

If you have a sincere desire to help children, are an active listener and an empathetic person, who looks for solutions and opportunities in life, you have all the qualities a good mentor has. It will not take up much time as well. All it will take is a telephone communication with your mentee once a week and a face-to-face meeting once a month.

You can take steps to create a bond and positively influence a teen or a child by checking SIWEC's website for information on becoming a mentor.



One of the services provided by SIWEC is to visit patients in the hospitals. The purpose of the visit is to provide comfort and care, and assistance, if required.

Hospital Visits

SIWEC makes about 8 to 10 monthly visits to various hospitals in Singapore. Each visit lasts between 30 to 40 minutes. Currently, we have about 15 active healthcare ambassadors; they are registered nurses providing this service on behalf of SIWEC. We hope the Sikh Community would continue to inform SIWEC at <tel:62999234> if any loved one has been hospitalised and requires a visit.

SIWEC Programmes....

Thanks to your support and guidance SIWEC is now evolving from being a provider of food and finance to the needy to becoming an enabler, supporter and a motivator through holistic care. New programs are being introduced to supplement the traditional ones, which we will continue to administer more effectively and efficiently (support for the needy, handling bereavements, counselling, etc).

The programmes are

- Family support
- Education Support
- Youth Mentoring
- Hospital Visits
- Prisons Through Care
- Bereavement
- Fund raising
- Outreach
- Recruitment



Be a Befriender!

The Befriending Programme is a service undertaken by trained volunteers to give offenders the necessary support and guidance before and after their release. This service is meant to give additional emotional support to participating inmates and is open to those who lack positive peers and emotional support from family and friends.

The aim of this programme is to encourage greater involvement from members of the community, specifically the various ethnic groups. As the community realises the importance of their involvement in the reintegration of ex-offenders, programmes such as this can be an important platform to inspire, empower, educate and equip both the ex-offender and society at large. **To know more about the programme, call us at 6299-9234**

**If you are between 16
and 25 years of age,**

Join us!!!

Call 6299 9234

We Need You!

Be a Youth Mentor!!!



"We all need support and friendship, regardless of circumstances. But where do people turn when friends and family are simply no longer there, or can't help us through a difficult time, or need all our care and attention and can't give us any in return? Thank goodness for befriending projects, who help fill the empty spaces where care, support and a listening ear need to be." by Nicola Sturgeon

“Nursing the Community”



Volunteerism knows no age boundaries and by the time you get to the end of this feature story, there is a pretty high chance that you will agree with this mantra as well.

As the country gears towards bringing more youth into the volunteerism fold through the Youth Corps, recently announced in the National Day Rally, here is one volunteer from our own community who reminds us that it is not just the young that can contribute to the wider society.

Meet Madam Sarjit Kaur, a 71-year old retired nurse who is an inspiration to many for her tireless and courageous dedication to the community through her volunteer efforts with SIWEC. Madam Sarjit started off helping at SIWEC through multiple platforms, and continues to do so, but is now responsible for the welfare organization’s hospitalization and medical care programs.

This entails her volunteering her services to patients who are admitted in hospitals and nursing homes, where her role is to provide additional support. In addition, volunteering to help with the community’s healthcare needs also sees her provide counselling, medical screening for blood-sugar and high-blood pressure as well as help providing healthcare advice at SIWEC’s booths at community events.

Being a retired nurse helps of course, as it provides her with the required knowledge, aptitude and attitude to fulfil this rather sensitive role. “Nursing is in my veins, maybe that is the inspiration (I need)”, she expressed.

However Madam Sarjit, who is married to a retired senior police officer, goes beyond the basics. She even visits patients at home after they have been discharged to lend emotional support in helping them recover better and to ensure that they are not alone as she acknowledges that being an effective medical volunteer requires ‘heart’ as well.

On occasions, she has had to help mend broken ties within families so that patients get family support and care, while on other occasions Madam Sarjit has been called to provide medical support to elderly patients where their families do not do so.

With an ageing population though, the healthcare needs of the community are increasingly more rapidly and this makes Madam Sarjit’s role even more important. For instance, from 2009 – 2010, she was called upon to make 22 hospital visits – amounting to one visit every fortnight. This increased to one visit every 10 days the following year and to weekly visits between 2011-2012. However, from last July to June this year, Madam Sarjit has been visiting patients in hospitals once every four days, amounting to 92 visits over these 12 months and more than four times more than when she first started out in 2009.



Madam Sarjit acknowledges that this trend could lead to volunteer fatigue especially when it comes to caregiving for longer-term patients, which requires sustained visits over a period of time. She looks forward to some helping hands from the community as she notes that it has been challenging to get people to step forward.

“Volunteers are not forthcoming due to family commitments while most are also working – so they feel that there is no time left to volunteer,” she said in despair.

But she feels that there is a lot more that the community can do to help, especially when it comes to younger volunteers so there is a need to engage the youth and create a greater awareness among them of these needs and problems within the community.

Having said that though, she believes that anyone- young or otherwise – could be a volunteer and lend a helping hand to the community. Who better to highlight that than her? **Here is someone who walks the talk.**

Article by: Malminderjit Singh

How You Can Help....

DONATE NOW
easy, fast, secure



The Sikh Welfare Council is a Volunteer Welfare Organization (VWO) that depends on the community for volunteers as well as the funds necessary to carry out its various assistance programmes. We are presently assisting more than 20 deserving families on a regular basis so that they can tide over difficult times. Obviously, this requires a great deal of resources on the part of SIWEC. We would therefore like to appeal to the community at large to help us support the less fortunate. You can do this in various ways, including:

- Giving a one-off donation (e.g. on-line via PayPal, cheques, bank drafts, Give asia etc).
- Making a GIRO application to provide a monthly (recurring) donation. Please contact us for the GIRO Form.
- Making a Bequest (Will).
- Giving a Memorial Donation - a thoughtful way to remember a loved one while giving support to others.
- Volunteering your time and participating in other activities, such as ferrying elderly/disabled Sikhs to and from Gurdwaras.

To donate online please visit us at <http://www.siwec.org/donate/support-our-work/how-you-can-donate>.

What is the Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS)?

The **Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS)** is one of the Ministry of Health (MOH)'s programmes to help provide accessible and affordable primary care to Singaporeans.

Under CHAS, **patients receive subsidised outpatient medical treatments** for **acute** and **chronic conditions** as well as **basic dental services** at General Practitioners (GPs) and dental **clinics near their homes**. These patients will also enjoy subsidised referrals to specialist outpatient clinics when required.

From January 2012, the qualifying age for CHAS is 40 years old, lowered from the previous age of 65 years old. The qualifying income criterion is \$1,800 per capita monthly household income, raised from the previous \$800. For instance, a family of four with a monthly household income of \$4500 (resulting in a per capita monthly household income of \$1,125) will qualify for the CHAS.

**For more information, you can log on to the chas website at <http://www.chas.sg/indexpatients.aspx> or call their hotline number at 1800-ASK-CHAS (1800-275-2427). If you have any further queries, feel free to contact SIWEC at 62999234.*