

23 DEC 1987

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

Information Division, Ministry of Communications & Information, 36th Storey, PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 0511. Tel: 2799794/5.

S 7 - 142 - 13

Release No.: 11/DEC
08-1/87/12/06

**SPEECH BY DR RICHARD HU, MINISTER FOR FINANCE,
AT THE 77TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF
KWONG WAI SHIU HOSPITAL AT HOSPITAL HALL
ON SUNDAY, 6 DECEMBER 1987 AT 2.00 PM**

Since it was founded in 1910, the Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital has played an important role in the provision of hospital facilities for the community. From its humble beginnings as a community project for the Chinese clan association, it has over the years developed into a fairly large hospital with inpatient and outpatient facilities. This has been made possible through the generous support and contribution by members of the public and with some financial support from the government.

Recognising the need to play a wider community service role in our multi-racial society, the Hospital has since 1974 opened its doors to treat and admit all Singaporeans irrespective of their ethnic background.

In late 1982, in conjunction with the National Kidney Foundation, a kidney dialysis centre was established at the Hospital. The Hospital is unusual in that it provides both eastern and western medicine treatment. The Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital stands as a symbol of the tradition of "self-help" in Singapore.

The majority of inpatients continues to be the elderly and chronic sick from the lower income sector of the population. By accepting such patients discharged from the government acute hospitals, it has helped to release the

acute hospital beds for patients with more severe acute illness. The Hospital's 425 beds represent approximately 20 per cent of the total number of private hospital beds in Singapore. The Hospital has played an important role complementing that by the Ministry of Health in providing community-based extended care for the elderly and chronic sick of Singapore.

With the changing population profile in Singapore, the number of elderly citizens is increasing. Senior citizens of today are being encouraged to become more health conscious and to participate actively in physical and social activities. Healthy lifestyles are the mainstay of prevention of illness.

The provision of health care must be shared between the public and the private sector, each complementing the other. The government would like to encourage increased family responsibility and community involvement in the provision of hospital and health facilities for the care of the elderly and the chronic sick.

With the change of time and circumstances, every institution must recognise its changing role in the society. The Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital could well consider developing itself into a centre for community-based care for the elderly and the chronic sick, with upgraded facilities, professional expertise and modern management methods and with greater support not only from the clan association but also the multi-national organisations as their contribution to community service.

The hospital could consider providing day-care facilities for the semi-ambulant patients with strong family support and participation, rehabilitative care both on an inpatient and outpatient basis, and hospice type of care for

the terminally ill. Such services would augment the work of the Home Nursing Foundation at centres in the new towns. In addition, the participation of volunteer groups or community groups may be co-opted to help to provide these services.

On this auspicious occasion of the 77th Anniversary Celebration, may I wish the Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital a promising and meaningful future in fulfilling its role in the community.

oooooooooooooooooooo