

## We are 50!

As we arrive at this milestone, we are grateful for the many patients and families we have journeyed with over the years, and grateful for the many hands and hearts that have laboured in this mission. For the Assisi Team serving in palliative care, being life-giving in all that we do means everything. To be life-giving means ensuring access to all who need the comfort and dignity of good palliative care; it means improving our clinical expertise and service to make every moment count for our patients and loved ones. Broadening our ministry to be life-giving to the community around us, has guided us towards equipping others in Singapore and other countries, to care for anyone who has a life-limiting condition in the way he or she should be cared for.

2017 was a year of growth as we more than doubled our capacity with a 85-bedded facility in a new six-storey building. 2018 was a year of vibrancy as we evolved our care and outreach, and as a team made new discoveries on the joyful nature of our work, and sought to take care of ever more patients and families by growing our Home Care team. 2019, our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, is a year of gratitude and thanksgiving, more than ever, because Assisi is where we are because God is faithful, and He loves the young, the poor and the sick and vulnerable.

With the following pages, we share the impact of our work in 2018 made possible by the generous hearts of our donors, corporate supporters and volunteers.

We are reminded by this quote from St Martin de Porres, "Everything, even sweeping, scraping vegetables, weeding garden and waiting on the sick could be a prayer, if it were offered to God". For the next 50 years, may our work continue to be a prayer to God. Thank you for journeying with us.

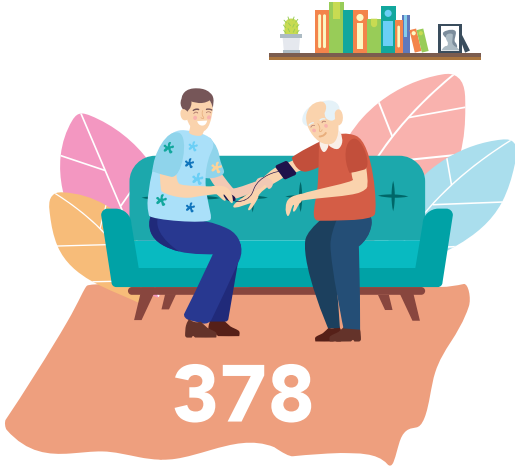


We began our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations with a Thanksgiving Mass held in our Chapel

# Impact of community support in 2018

With strong support from donors, volunteers and corporate organisations, Assisi Hospice is able to continue our journey of love in serving our community of patients and families with compassion. This is a summary of our efforts in reaching out to and making an impact on the lives of our patients, families and the community in 2018.

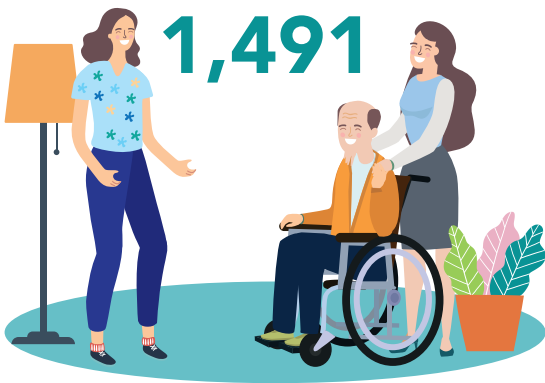
## Supporting the wish to be cared for at home



Average number of home care patients managed at any one time by the Home Care team



New home care admissions in 2018



Number of direct caregivers supported



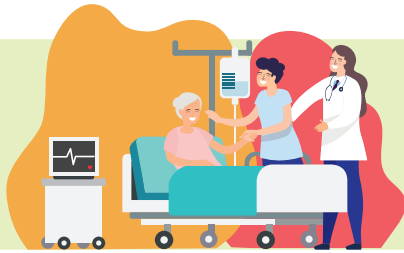
Total number of visits by doctors/nurses/social workers



**90%** of patients passed on at their preferred place of death



## Inpatient care



Total no. of new admissions:

**710**

No. of dementia palliative patients:

**97**



Average length of stay was

**20 days**

## Daycare



No. of daycare attendances:

**6,957 days**



New admissions:

**107**



Average number of patients managed at any one time:

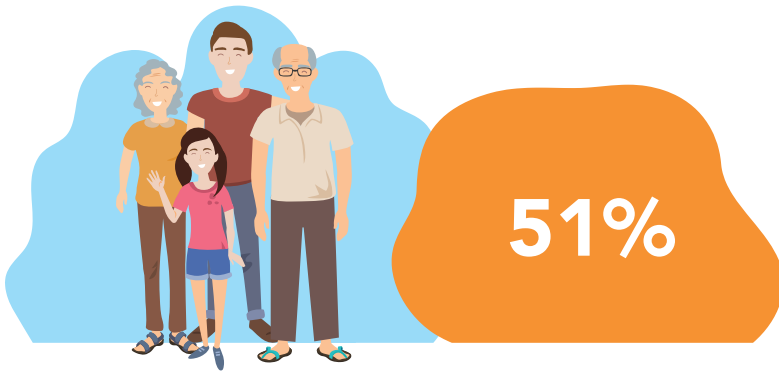
**63**



Average daily attendance:

**28**

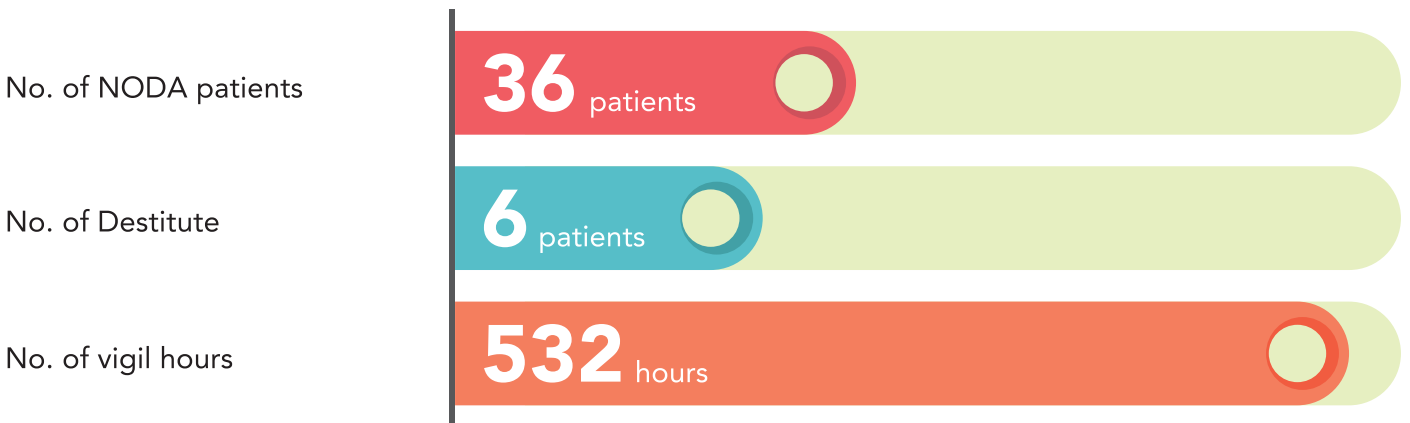
# Helping the poor and lonely



of our patients are poorest of the poor and means tested to the lowest income level.

## “No One Dies Alone” (NODA) Program


Our volunteers provide companionship to dying patients who have neither family nor close friends to accompany them in their final hours. They spend extended periods of time with each patient, getting to know him better and staying with him right till his last breath, taking turns to sit in vigil over the last 48 hours.



No. of pro bono funerals (inpatient)  
**15**




We provided **93** patients with financial support in areas like ambulance transfers, transport, supermarket vouchers




We provided **42** patients with cash in hand for daily living while waiting for formal financial assistance from other agencies.

# Clinical expertise shared



Sector visits and management training provided to **265** participants

over **27** sessions



We provided expertise in palliative care clinical training for doctors/nurses/allied health professionals for **198** participants

over **14** local sessions



We provided expertise in palliative care clinical training for doctors/nurses/allied health professionals for **266** participants

over **17** overseas sessions

We provided training for **97** student nurses


over **65** days

We provided training for **268** medical students

over **71** days

We provided training for **49** Allied Health students

over **215** days

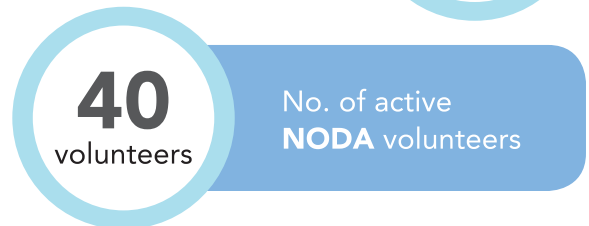
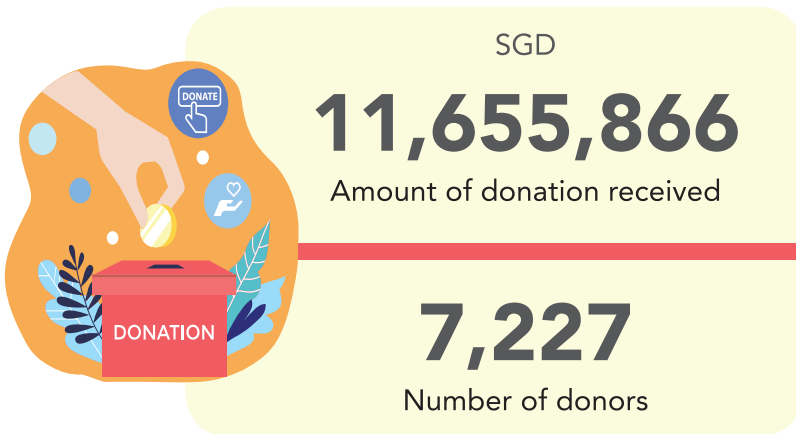
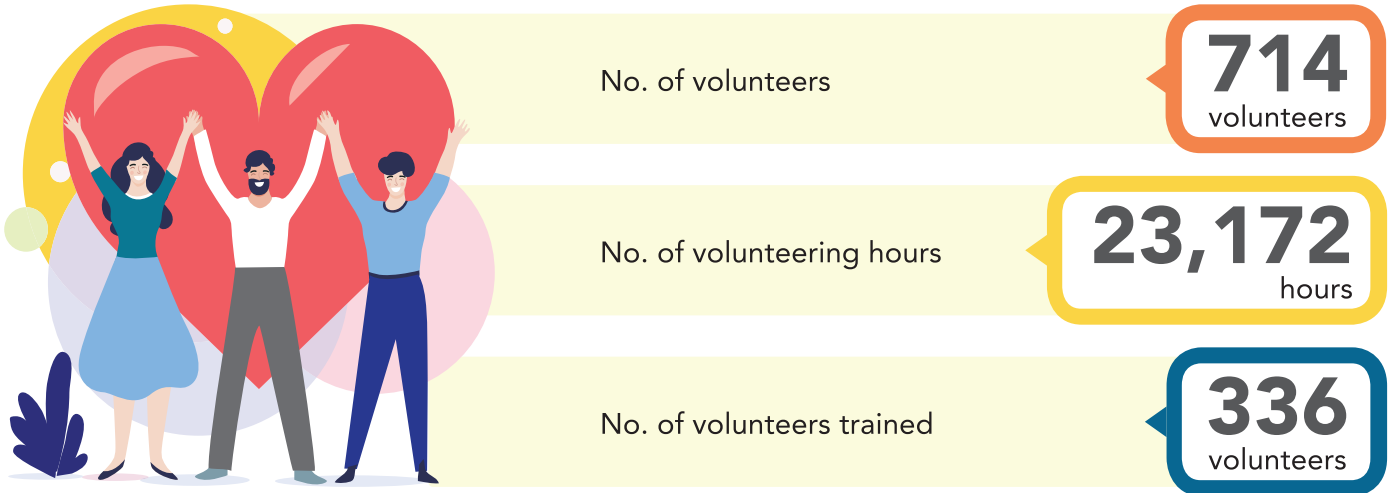


We provided **209** healthcare professionals (doctors/nurses/allied health professionals) with profession specific training and attachments

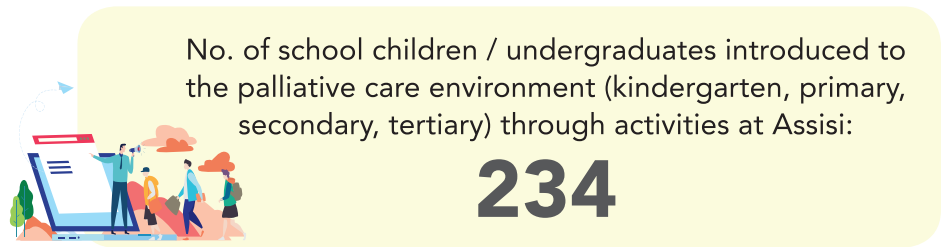
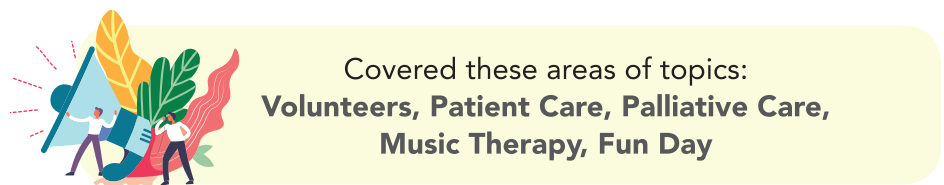
over **64** sessions



## Giving by the community



## Advocacy



## A Caregiver's Journey



Jack Wong, aged 58, grew up in a close-knit family of four in the neighbourhood of Bukit Ho Swee. He promised himself that he would be his mother's caregiver when she grew old.

Jack enjoyed a successful career and was jet-setting around Asia, in a senior management capacity in international and local media companies. His mother Mdm Poon Chew Ngor, started to suffer from dementia in her late 70s. When her condition worsened in 2012, he quit his job to be her full-time caregiver. In addition to dementia, she was diagnosed with ear cancer and lost her hearing in her remaining good ear after an operation in 2017.

Jack said, "My mother was someone who was fiercely independent and refused help from 'outsiders'. We tried getting a helper when she was first diagnosed with dementia and it did not turn out well."

She had a relapse in 2018. She became bed-ridden and needed assistance for her daily activities. She could not go to the bathroom on her own and required draining of urine using the catheter every six hours. As for her mental wellness, Madam Poon could recognise Jack, but was confused about events and dates. Knowing that Jack needed support, his younger sister who lives in London flew back to help. However, they still found the caregiving challenging.

## Assisi Hospice 50th Anniversary Medallion

The Medallion is specially created to commemorate Assisi Hospice's 50 years of caring for life. The design is part of the Hospice's logo, reflecting our missionary role to reach out and welcome all who need our care. The phrase at the back "We Rise By Lifting Others" captures the joyful love that is shared when one gives kindly, patiently and humbly.

All proceeds from the medallions will go to patient care, enabling us to continue our mission and service to those in need. Donations for the medallions will receive the full 2.5 times tax deduction. For more information, please contact Ms Lilian Lee at 6832 2880 or email us at [donate@assisihospice.org.sg](mailto:donate@assisihospice.org.sg).

In December 2018, Mdm Poon, now 87 years old, was admitted to Assisi Hospice's Dementia Palliative ward. He recalled with a smile that Mdm Poon's first impression of the place was "the nurses' dresses (uniform with flower prints) are very pretty".

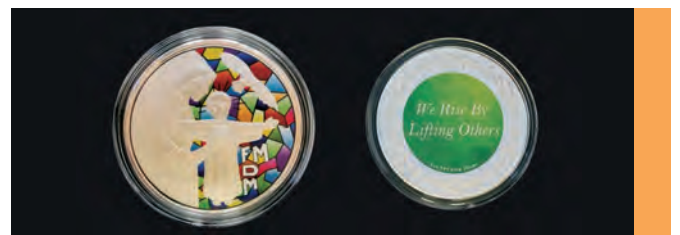
Jack said, "The doctors and nurses were very gentle with Mum and made her very comfortable. She required syringe feeding and it could take an hour to feed her. The nurses would talk to her and feed her patiently. The volunteers would push her to the garden for some sun."

He described that the care provided by the team was "beyond what he could have given her". He said, "I did not realise then, but I was actually suffering from burnout. Knowing that she was well-taken care of, I could finally get more sleep. I had more time to sit down and hold her hand, talk to her and just be with her."

Palliative care also includes taking care of caregivers. Jack shared, "The social worker would always ask me how I was and if I needed any help. The nurses always checked in on me and my sister. It was Christmas period and the volunteers who came with the festive treat trolley brought us much cheer. The volunteer dogs which visited made us very happy too." Mdm Poon passed away peacefully in January 2019 after spending a month in Assisi Hospice, with Jack and his sister and brother-in-law by her side.

Jack said, "I had intended to take care of her at home by myself till she passed away. However, I cannot imagine anywhere else (besides Assisi Hospice) that she would get the care she deserves. My advice to caregivers is not to let your ego dictate how you want to take care of your loved one. Always think of their comfort and put that at the top of your priorities."

There is no right or wrong in caregiving. And caregiving at end of life can be the kampong way, with caregivers surrounded by support from others.



# Our Story

Assisi Hospice was founded in 1969 by the Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM), and we celebrate 50 years of God's blessings this year.

Assisi Hospice began at the Khoo Block of Mount Alvernia Hospital. First known as Assisi Home, the name was derived from the birthplace of St Francis, the founder of the Franciscan Movement. The Home was for the care of aged and chronically-ill patients in financial need. In 1988, the FMDM Congregation decided to provide hospice care to meet the needs of the community and began to receive only patients requiring respite and hospice care, providing compassionate care to those in their final journey. Over 50 years, Assisi Hospice has grown from its humble beginnings to a six-storey purpose-built hospice, providing care for patients across the continuum of Home Care, Inpatient and Day Care.

## January - Thanksgiving Mass

On 14 January, our FMDM Sisters, friends, supporters and staff gathered together for a Thanksgiving Mass held in our Chapel. We gave thanks to God for His faithfulness and prayed for His grace to be with us as we continue our journey of love in serving His people.



Over 120 people attended the Thanksgiving Mass, including the FMDM sisters, staff and supporters.

Our 50th anniversary badge was also launched during the Thanksgiving Mass. The design of the badge consists of a golden tree with a heart. The tree is a symbol of our care, providing shelter to our patients and their loved ones when they face the final journey together. The colour gold captures the vibrancy of our golden jubilee. The badges were blessed by celebrant Friar Michael D'Cruz, OFM and distributed to everyone at the mass.



Assisi Hospice's (from left) CEO Choo Shiu Ling, Chairman Ms Anita Fam and FMDM Congregational Leader Sister Jane receiving the 50th anniversary badge.

## April - Assisi's 50th Anniversary Appreciation Evening

It was a fun-filled and heart-warming evening of treasure hunt (for the young), celebration cocktails (for the young-at-heart) and heartfelt sharing, as we held an Appreciation Evening at Assisi Hospice on 11 April to thank our supporters.



Children completing the "50 Years of Caring for Life" jigsaw puzzle.



Sharing by Mr Gerald Lee and his wife Valerie on how our Home Care team supported both their mothers in their end-of-life journey.



"A50" is the name of the commemorative drink for Assisi Hospice's 50th Anniversary – A for Assisi Angels, which include staff, donors, volunteers and supporters of Assisi.