

NTU students' health screening scheme now covers Bt Gombak seniors

John Elijah Gan

A free health screening initiative led by graduate students of Nanyang Technological University's (NTU) Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine and Interdisciplinary Graduate Programme has been extended to seniors in Bukit Gombak.

The initiative, Community Tele-health Service (CTS), began on Sept 25 last year in Bukit Gombak and aims to screen 2,000 residents, following a successful pilot with more than 600 screened residents in Punggol in January the same year.

CTS, manned by 30 NTU graduate and undergraduate students, along with 51 community volunteers, runs pop-up-style booths at accessible locations for the health screening.

Mr Wee Soon Keong, 29, one of the leaders of CTS, said: "Many se-

niors have missed their health screening during the Covid-19 pandemic. I am happy to see many residents getting their health checked here. Some have discovered possible indicators of diseases."

One addition to the booths in Bukit Gombak is a questionnaire based on the World Health Organisation's Five Well-Being Index to monitor mental health.

Associate Professor Ringo Ho, an applied psychologist at NTU's School of Social Sciences and one of the researchers involved in CTS, said: "The mental well-being of seniors in Singapore has become of larger concern as the disruptions caused by Covid-19 may have led to a sense of fear and anxiety."

At the booths, residents can get their body mass index and blood pressure measured, and undergo capillary glucose tests and retinal checks of selected eye conditions.

A physical report is provided



NTU student Shan Zecheng (left) and community volunteer Angela Thay assisting Madam Teh Kim Eng during a health screening in Bukit Gombak yesterday. ST PHOTO: JASON QUAH

immediately after the tests and a health coach helps residents interpret the readings and suggests appropriate medical help if needed.

The initiative does not provide

any medical diagnosis.

Currently led by volunteers, the booths operate on Fridays and weekends in two locations – Bukit Gombak and Kembangan-Chai Chee.

Mr Gan Teng Fong, 35, who oversees the business development of CTS, said: "Going forward, we will be transitioning the project into a social enterprise start-up model, where we can operate out of many more locations and timings within the community in a more sustainable way."

Madam Tay Poh Eng, 65, found the service to be a great convenience. "It has been very long since my last health screening, and because of the pandemic, I try to minimise going to clinics," she said.

"I hope to see more health screening services that are accessible and convenient. They would be helpful for older people like me."

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