

Tea time treat for patients

Residents of hospice taken out for a jolly good afternoon outing

By JEREMY TAN
north@thestar.com.my

RESIDENTS of Pure Lotus Hospice of Compassion relaxed over a special tea time hosted by the Eastern and Oriental (E&O) Hotel in Penang.

The nine cancer patients, accompanied by 11 volunteers, enjoyed traditional English afternoon tea served in the 1885 restaurant's private room.

Tiers of dainty sandwiches, cakes and pastries were washed down with hot cups of Earl Grey, Jasmine Gold and Pure Camomile teas.

Among the guests were 68-year-old Seah Ban Lee, who said it was the first time she had been in such a classy establishment.

Spirited 97-year-old Ng Ah Yeow serenaded her friends with a short song during the recent outing, with some clapping along.

The hospice's founder and director Ven. Lyan Shih said that such outings helped lift the spirits of patients.

"When we first told them about it, everyone was so excited. They were all looking forward to the outing.

"While some are unable to eat much, they still wanted to come and experience this special tea time," she said.

E&O Bhd group strategy and communications (Penang) senior manager Ann Tan said the simple gesture was part of the hotel's ongoing commitment to the community.

Group hospitality and lifestyle director Michael Saxon said he was touched by the effort and care shown by the hospice and its volunteers.

Ven. Lyan Shih said the centre in Jalan Utama had been providing care for end-stage cancer patients for the past 14 years but there were not enough beds to cope with demand.



An afternoon to remember: Saxon (coat and tie) serving some pastries to Seah at tea time, watched by volunteer Mandy Tan. With them are (standing) Ven. Lyan Shih and Ann. — ZAINUDIN AHAD / The Star

Currently, the hospice can accommodate only seven full-time patients with roughly the same number receiving care on an out-patient basis.

There are plans to build a new 13,000sq ft four-storey centre on a plot adjacent to the present premises.

The new centre will be able to accommodate up to 40 patients.

"It will cost an estimated RM5mil

and we have so far raised only RM2mil," she said.

She hoped that more donors would come forward to support their effort.

The organisation is also appealing to the state to waive the RM2.4mil premium required to convert the residential land for hospice use.

Well-wishers can contribute by writing out a cheque to Penang

Pure Lotus Society Hospice of Compassion to Public Bank account number 4-4014874-05.

For tax exempt contributions, one can donate directly to Pure Lotus Cancer Foundation at CIMB Bank via account number 86-0095827-0, Swift Code CTBBMYKL.

For more information, visit www.purelotushospice.org or call 04-2295481.

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Ven. Lyan Shih