

Health care for all

What are the biggest healthcare- and medical-related challenges facing Singaporeans today? What needs to be done to ensure that healthcare and medical treatment remain available and affordable to all, now and in the future?

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WITH Singapore being one of the cities with the highest life span in the world coupled with our declining birth rates, the biggest challenge facing the urbanised society is an ageing population that will eventually be supported by a disproportionate population of the younger generation. This raises social and economic burdens, and naturally with greying concerns, the healthcare department gets the hardest hit.

Financial and time commitments are the two biggest burdens on the working crowd supporting the ageing elderly. To address these, it is important to make health care easily accessible in terms of reach and costs to the general public especially so for the lower income families where preventive practices could be lacking.

Education on prevention and making preventive measures affordable could help to mitigate eventual costs involved in medical related issues.

As with all developed nations, a processed diet is commonplace along with heightened stress levels which inevitably leads to increasing numbers of illnesses that need regular treatment and medication.

Perhaps a micro study on the usage of our Medisave funds to allow broader applications and enhanced relevancy to today's needs, could help alleviate financial burdens. Measures could be put in place with both public and private medical institutions in authenticating needs to allow patients to draw from Medisave. By extending usage to the private sector, we help to ease the waiting time at public medical institutions and thereby allow faster and greater medical attention to be given to all.

It sounds cliched, but prevention is still the best cure. I would advocate discipline in diet and exercise regime as a lifestyle for quality lifespan and not just quantity.