

SINGAPORE

NUS CARES initiative to improve lives in community

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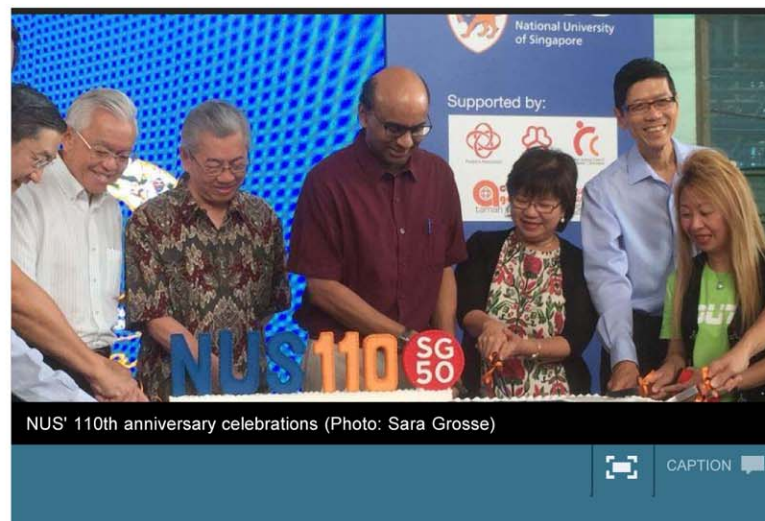
By Sara Grosse

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 PHOTOS  VIDEOS



SINGAPORE: The National University of Singapore (NUS) has launched a new initiative that leverages on its academic research and expertise to improve lives in the community.

The NUS CARES (Community Advancement with Research and Education Synergies) initiative was announced on Sunday (Feb 1) as part of the university's 110th anniversary celebrations.

Under the programme, NUS faculty, researchers and students will work with various partners to identify community issues and find practical solutions to them. For a start, NUS CARES will work on three projects with three partners.

The university will work with Central Singapore CDC to look into addressing issues faced by the elderly and needy residents, particularly in the use and maintenance of wheelchairs.

"If you want to build an electronic wheelchair, the cost is actually rather high," said NUS student Felicia Tay, who is part of the NUS CARES Wheelchair Project. "So our number one priority is to bring down the cost price."

She added that the project is also looking to improve the comfort level of wheelchair users. "Wheelchair users actually spend most of their time on the wheelchair itself. Most working adults, when they sit down for a long time, already feel some aching, so we are trying to overcome this problem for the wheelchair users."

NUS will also partner the National University Health System to examine the underlying social and medical factors associated with repeated admissions and devise strategies aimed at reducing frequent readmissions in the National University Hospital (NUH).

Finally, NUS CARES will team up with NUS Medical Society to assess the social impact of MedSoc's Neighbourhood Health Service. The service began in 2008 to integrate the elderly and the disadvantaged back into the healthcare system through health screening.

Mr Jonathan Han, a student from the NUS Medical Society, said: "NUS CARES will be helping us to do an analysis on the social impact so we can alter our project to really meet the needs of the residents. So for example, maybe there are certain aspects of our projects the residents are not happy with and certain aspects of the projects the residents like. As a result, we can tweak our project to see what the needs of the residents are."

NUS kicked off its anniversary celebrations with a special community event at Taman Jurong Community Club on Sunday.

- CNA/ir/ec