



Mr Tan Mia Hiok

When Mr Tan Mia Hiok, a 65-year-old home care patient of Dover Park Hospice received news of his cancer in May 2019, he accepted it calmly.

A divorcee with no savings, Mr Tan lived in a two-room flat with his cousin. A happy-go-lucky person who took things easy in life, Mr Tan had worn many different hats. He was a *karung guni* man who bought and resold junk, a dishwasher, a cleaner, and a newspaper deliveryman during his younger days. He was also a cook during National Service. Mr Tan continued to find joy in cooking despite his illness. He cooked for himself and his cousin every day with *laska* and curry being his best dishes.

When Mr Tan found out that he had only nine months left to live, he was not afraid.

*“I know cancer is not curable and only the symptoms can be managed. So, I have decided to let nature take its course. Death is something which everyone has to face someday.
So, what is there to be afraid of?”*

Mr Tan’s carefree outlook in life has taught us the importance of living life one day at a time. “If I crave any type of food, I will buy it without any hesitation and enjoy it. If I have difficulty walking long distances, I stop to give myself a break and learn to pace myself.”

Despite his resilience, Mr Tan’s journey was not an easy one. He had to cope with the side effects of radiotherapy and rely on various medications to manage his pain and symptoms. Nevertheless, he continued to motivate and encourage other cancer patients to remain positive and take each day as it comes. To Mr Tan, each day was a day of hope and he was always grateful to be able to wake up to a brand new day.

In December 2019, Mr Tan came under the care of Dover Park Home Care team. A team comprising a doctor, nurse and medical social worker provided home medical, nursing and psychosocial care to him in the comfort of his home. “Every two to three days, I will receive a call from a nurse who regularly checks in on me. My social worker has also supported me emotionally with her frequent visits.”



In February 2020, Mr Tan's condition deteriorated unexpectedly and he was hospitalised. He became weaker, and his gait unsteady. To fulfil his wish to remain comfortably at home, Dover Park Home Care engaged a private nurse to care for him at home upon his discharge. We also made transport arrangements for his medical appointments and successfully helped him to apply for financial assistance.

Mr Tan passed away peacefully on 28 February 2020, five days after he was admitted to Dover Park Hospice as an inpatient.