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What retirement living should be

Letter from Julia Ng

IT IS encouraging to see in recent years that the Government has been restructuring the healthcare system in view of the ageing population.

There is also a compelling need to rethink the delivery of retirement living options beyond health-related nursing homes, daycare centres, etc.

Besides the impoverished and sickly seniors who undeniably deserve the attention of our healthcare system and community aid schemes, those who are healthier and more financially independent have different needs to age successfully.

While an ageing population is a challenge, it also creates new economic opportunities. Property developers should pay heed to this growth area.

The newly ageing populace will have a different profile from most of our elderly now. The former are in their 50s today, and most would be well-educated and relatively financially independent by the

time they hit retirement.

They are not likely to require round-the-clock nursing home care. Their key concern, whether married, single, child-free or otherwise, is to grow old actively and gracefully.

Their aspiration is for individual, non-institutionalised living within a communal setting. They do not want to be dependent on their children and understand their children's need for their own space.

They will reshape the traditional notions of ageing. They want more retirement living options that would better cater to their need for easy access to care while remaining independent.

Their expectations are not about daycare centres or 30-year-lease studio flats. Having travelled more and exposed to the finer things in life and life's choices, they expect no less a quality of lifestyle as they step into retirement.

A key component of this would be a decent range of retirement living options, which is sorely missing now. The new

agers' expectation of a retirement village or community would be a menu of homes, tailored to price and affordability.

Facilities expected may include a well-being centre, exercise facilities, library, swimming pool, hair salon, cafe, security, emergency back-up, communal lounge, mini gardens and guest suites where relatives can stay for a fee.

The social interactions made possible within such a community concept would provide an ideal environment for active retirement. The families of these senior residents would want to visit, too.

Such retirement villages would not become cut off from society, and older people would be unlikely to end up alone.

I hope the Government would work with developers and perhaps incentivise businesses to establish bustling residential centres or communities for the new generation of active, elderly Singaporeans.

Hopefully, there will not come a day when the bulk of the more affluent agers are retiring in neighbouring countries.

**WP STILL HAS AN
EDGE IN HOUGANG
OVER OTHER
OPPOSITION
PARTIES**



Get a QR code reader app from your smartphone's app store (simply search for "QR reader") and scan the code using the app, or you can visit <http://tdy.sg/vgdiel> on your browser for the letter from Chan Chong Onn.

Why shouldn't the WP field a candidate?

Letter from Francis Valentine Tan

I WAS intrigued by Mr Jason Lee's letter "Workers' Party should not field candidate in Hougang by-election" (Feb 17). He suggested that with seven representatives in Parliament now, the WP should offer the opportunity to other opposition parties.

I wish to point out that the People's Action Party holds 81 out of 87 seats in Parliament. Does that mean that it ought

**Suggesting that the
WP not field a
candidate is naive.**

to contest fewer seats since its voice will still be heard as the majority in Parliament?

The WP has won the Hougang seat at every election since Mr Low Thia Khiang first contested in 1991. It is only right that it

puts up an able candidate for the by-election.

It is unfortunate that Mr Yaw Shin Leong has acted this way. It is also unprecedented for the WP to expel an elected Member of Parliament.

But political elections in Singapore are serious national events and not acts of charity. Suggesting that the WP not field a candidate is naive. Ultimately, it is up to voters in Hougang to choose who will best serve them.

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