

# One-stop eldercare centre to go up in Serangoon

The old Serangoon bus interchange will be converted into a multi-purpose centre with eldercare and childcare facilities, a public gym as well as more parking spaces for residents.

ST PHOTO:  
TED CHEN



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An old bus interchange in Serangoon Central will be transformed next year into an Integrated Day Facility, or one-stop eldercare centre. Up to 40 such facilities will be built, and this is the first to be announced.

The 13,000 sq m site will also house a childcare centre. With room for 220 children, it will be the largest such facility in Serangoon – and the first in Singapore to be built on the same site as an eldercare facility.

Minister of State for Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS)

Halimah Jacob announced the plans yesterday with Marine Parade GRC MP Seah Kian Peng.

She described the facility as a “new-generation” one with one-stop care for the frail elderly. It will offer nursing care, physiotherapy, community rehabilitation and dementia care. It can cater to 100 people.

Madam Halimah was speaking to residents at the Braddell Heights Town Night. The event, held to mark Racial Harmony Day and the first day of Ramadan, took place at the site of the future Integrated Day Facility.

Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, Minister of State for National Development Tan Chuan Jin, and Mountbatten MP Lim Blaw Chuan also attended the event.

There are now standalone community-based care facilities such as social day-care centres, day dementia care centres and day rehabilitation centres.

“This is rather troublesome and time-consuming for the elderly and their caregivers as they would have to shuttle from one place to another,” Madam Halimah said.

The Serangoon site will also house a public gym, a landscaped civic plaza, a playground and 125 parking spaces.

“The integrated facility will adopt a three-in-one approach, benefiting the elderly, their families, and the community,” she added.

Mr Seah said residents in his Braddell Heights ward had a “wish list” of amenities for the area, which included a day-care facility and more parking spaces. “In this year’s budget debate,

when MCYS mooted the idea and announced plans for Integrated Day Facilities, I pounced on it,” he said, adding that he suggested the old bus interchange be considered for the location.

He said the new development would serve his ward well as 39 per cent of its residents are above 50 years old – higher than the 30 per cent national average.

“What we don’t need are more shops and more condos,” he said.

The redevelopment is estimated to cost \$3.9 million. Work will start at the end of the year, and is scheduled to be completed by the third quarter of next year. The Government will build up to 40 Integrated Day Facilities by 2016 at a cost of about \$100 million. They will cater to 6,000 people, although not all will have childcare centres.

Residents The Sunday Times spoke to welcomed the development.

Manager Ivy Ong, 46, said: “It’s a wonderful idea. There will be one more option for families who do not have domestic help.”

Accountant Elcie Lin, 41, agreed. “I have two elderly folks at home – my father-in-law who is 86 and mother-in-law who is 77 – and there are no activities for them during the day except TV and sleep. We have been looking for a half-day eldercare to let them have some interactions with others.”

Residents hope it will be affordable. Madam Halimah said rates have not been decided, but are likely to be similar to current day-care charges of \$500 to \$600 a month before subsidy.

**Additional reporting by Pearl Lee**