

## Elderly residents get help in monitoring system



Photo: TNP

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The New Paper

SINGAPORE - This senior citizen who lives alone in a one-room rental flat in Casa Clementi was afraid no one would know if something happened to her while she was at home.

But 75-year-old Ong Hum Ho's fears will soon be allayed.

On Tuesday, Project Helping Hands moved into production mode with the signing of a contract with Nextan to provide an elderly monitoring system.

The surveillance solutions company will now be tasked with manufacturing and setting up 500 wireless motion sensor systems in the flats of senior citizens living alone, including Madam Ong's.

Project Helping Hands is a partnership between Ngee Ann Polytechnic, voluntary welfare organisation Lions Befrienders Service Association and The New Paper (TNP).

On Tuesday, Lions Befrienders chairman Richard Koong, 64, and Nextan managing director Sean Tan, 49, signed the contracts at the Lions Befrienders Senior Activity Centre in Clementi. Lions Befrienders, which has recommended 500 elderly citizens islandwide to be beneficiaries of Project Helping Hands, is working with funds raised by TNP, which is targeting to hit \$1,000,000 by its 25th anniversary on Thursday.

Mr Tan said the company plans to set up the system in five flats in the first three months before ramping up production. "We are looking to roll out the 500 units in phases which will take up to a maximum of 11 months," he said.

The wireless motion sensor system, which Nextan named LUV1, detects movement in senior citizens' flats and sends alerts when there is no activity.

### - False alarms -

Mr Koong said: "In the past, when some flats had manual alarm systems with pull cords, there were many false

alarms or triggers that were non-emergencies. We wanted to cut down on that with this system which can send SMSes with different content. We went with Nextan considering they had a passion to commit to helping the seniors." Telco SingTel will provide full sponsorship of the SIM cards to be used in the system, saving the project up to \$20,000.

Madam Ong is part of the initial pilot testing phase.

Speaking in Teochew, she said: "I am grateful that I am healthy now but I'm happy that if something happens to me, someone will know."

If you would like to donate, make your cheques out to: Lions Befrienders Service Association (Singapore) Block 130, Bukit Merah View, #01-358, Singapore 150130

Please indicate on the back of the cheque: Project Helping Hands, your full name, NRIC, address and contact number.

## **How it works**

### **SENSORS**

Five motion sensors will be placed at strategic points around Madam Ong's one-room rental flat in Casa Clementi so her movements within the room can be detected. Each motion sensor can detect angles up to 100 degrees at a distance of 10m.

### **COUNTDOWN**

The sensors have a countdown timer which can be programmed from a few seconds to several hours. If motion is detected, the countdown timer resets itself. If the timer hits 'zero', meaning Madam Ong has not made a movement for that time, the system sends an emergency SMS to up to six pre-determined Lions Befrienders caregivers or family members.

### **SLEEP**

The sensors are also intelligent enough to detect minimal movements when Madam Ong is sleeping, thus preventing false alarms.

### **EMERGENCIES**

Should Madam Ong be in any form of distress, there is also an emergency device that she can press to trigger the system to send an SMS.

### **DOOR SENSORS**

The door is the only entrance and exit point to the flat. Each time Madam Ong goes out, the magnetic door sensors update the controller to stop detecting motion within the flat. The countdown timer is reset when Madam Ong returns.



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