

I am not alone as a caregiver

During the COVID-19 and Circuit Breaker period, I have to work from home juggling between work and caregiving.

Not too long ago, my father was admitted to hospital. Besides managing my work, I had to follow up with the doctor, provide listening ears to my father who was anxious about his medical condition, prepare and bring essential items to him etc. For me, as far as possible, I did not want to trouble my sisters who were also juggling with their work and family commitment.

However, I was overwhelmed with a lot of emotions – panic, anxiety and worries. I knew that I had to make a decision to seek support. This was not an easy decision to make but was a decision that I had to make so that I can better care for my father and myself. I did so through delegating some of the tasks to my siblings based on their availabilities, such as having one sister follow up with the doctor and another sister bringing essential things to my father. As for me, my role is to provide emotional support to my father over the phone.

My father has since been discharged and I would like to convey my heartfelt appreciation to Tan Tock Seng Hospital medical and non-medical teams who took good care of my father, to my siblings who readily rendered their support and to my colleagues who supported me when I needed it. Last but not least, I would like to thank my father for being so brave and strong in journeying with me especially during this period of uncertainty.

'I am not alone' is how I feel deep inside my heart because I have truly experienced the warmth of many people.

May I also invite you to think about your existing village/community of support in your caregiving journey (i.e. they could be your relatives or social service agencies) and reach out, if needed.

Now, I am going to have some light hearted time with my father who is waiting to have his Kopi with me.

Lina Koh
Counsellor of Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, Tsao Foundation

