

# ReU Living redefines ageing with dignity

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WHAT does it mean to age well during one's golden years? For the people behind senior living and post-hospitalisation recovery centre ReU Living, it is connection, community and dignified care that define quality of life for ageing individuals.

"Often, elderly people at home can become invisible, in a sense. Most don't get to know their preferences or try to see things the way they do," says Estee Tan, ReU Living's chief executive officer.

"What we do is make sure they are well taken care of, and able to raise their head and talk to people. They don't feel like they're hidden away."

She adds that to age with dignity, elderly people should be treated with respect, have the agency to make choices for themselves, and be given opportunities to continually learn and contribute their skills to the community.

As a premium assisted living facility operator, ReU Living aims to meet these needs by creating spaces focused on holistic care grounded in wellness, purpose and community.

The company, a subsidiary of IGB Bhd, combines personalised service, engaging programmes and comfortable, well-appointed furnishings to deliver quality care for seniors during a crucial period in their lives.

## Home with heart

Its first care centre at MiCasa All Suites Hotel in Kuala Lumpur has 72 rooms in studio, two-bedroom and three-bedroom layouts, with a guest capacity of 100.

Facilities for residents include a spacious community activity clubhouse, physiotherapy centre, family meeting area, traditional Chinese medicine room and a beauty area for hair, nail and facial sessions.

Each apartment suite features a pantry and a living space, encouraging social interaction and support among residents. Additionally, a team of nurses and caregivers offer 24-hour care.

"Nurses are stationed on every floor, and we also have a system where guests can press a call button to have a caregiver attend to them," Tan shares.



The care centre combines personalised service, engaging programmes and well-appointed furnishings.

Occupying a repurposed block of the city centre hotel, ReU Living draws heavily from its hospitality roots across its operations. Staff are trained in guest experience, in addition to caregiving, bringing a hospitality approach to every element from the welcoming of visitors to the serving of meals and maintenance of rooms.

"Whether it's surprising a resident with their favourite dessert on their birthday, helping them to make online calls to family, dressing them up for a function,

or arranging a family reunion party, we strive to bring joy to their daily lives," she says.

This aspect of personalised, attentive care is a hallmark of ReU Living. Prior to a guest's check-in, the team makes sure to learn about their habits, preferences and personality. They then make arrangements to cater to their specific needs, such as procuring their preferred reading materials or setting up their favourite games.

The healthcare staff also conduct assessments, communicate



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**Tan:** To age with dignity, elderly people should be given the agency to make choices for themselves, continually learning and contributing to their community. Photos: ReU Living

with their doctor, and go through their medical report to develop a suitable care plan for them before they are admitted.

At the same time, the experience is intentionally designed to encourage functional independence.

"We are focused on helping them maintain daily life skills in a safe and supportive setting. For instance, our occupational therapists will train stroke recovery residents on things like buttoning their own shirt, holding a spoon, and getting up from a chair," she says.

For residents in post-operative and post-hospitalisation recovery, the company partners with DBC Physiotherapy for its integrated physiotherapy centre, which has sophisticated equipment from HUR and Fourier.

## Changing perspectives

With premium assisted living centres like ReU Living gaining prominence, there's been an increasing shift in how aged care homes are perceived locally.

Where moving your parent into such a facility was once regarded as disloyal or ungrateful, Tan says this sentiment much less prevalent now.

"Our residents are proud to stay here and are eager to invite their family and friends to come visit, because this place says, 'My child cares so much for me that they paid for me to have the best possible care and comfort here'."

At the same time, she notes that a growing number of the baby boomer generation (born between 1946 and 1964) are proactively planning to move themselves into a well-built aged care facility when they reach their sunset years.

"These are individuals that have the financial resources, and don't want to be a burden on their children. They are drawn to the freedom to do the activities they enjoy without worrying about daily meals or chores," she says.

Despite this, a mindset change towards the elderly care as a career is still needed to address the lack of qualified caregivers available locally.

"It should not be seen as a low status job but a path that leads to opportunities here and abroad," she says. The company is currently working with local institutions and training schools to offer internship and employment for occupational therapists and caregivers.

This year, ReU Living opened its second location in St Giles Gardens Residences focused on personalised post-surgery care and post-hospitalisation care.

On plans for further expansion, Tan says the strategy will centre around high-growth urban and suburban areas where the senior population and demand for post-hospitalisation care are rising.

The company is also looking towards bringing its services to the Asean region, forming strategic partnerships with healthcare providers and property owners with the same vision of building integrated senior ecosystems.

"Leveraging our experience with guests from various nationalities and cultures, we seek to showcase Malaysian hospitality to our neighbours through the way we care for elders."

■ Premium assisted living facility blends hospitality and holistic health for seniors

■ Personalised care plans and facilities emphasise dignity and quality of life

■ Growing public shift away from stigma surrounding aged care homes