



HEARTBEAT



Unwavering Spirit

Eric Koh speaks to an elderly lady whose fierce independence has helped her through two bouts of illness

Posed picture

Mdm Chin* is 76 years old. She was just 26 years old when she came to Singapore from Ipoh in Malaysia to work as a cleaner at the then Radio Television Singapore.

When she was in her 40s, she fell ill and the treatment cost her most of her hard earned savings.

More recently, in 2001, misfortune struck Mdm Chin again. She fell seriously ill once more, this time, with breast cancer. She underwent surgery but her illness left her too ill to continue working.

In 2003, Mdm Chin turned to the Central Singapore Community Development Council for help. She

was given a Public Assistance grant of \$260 a month which helped her with her basic needs.

Last year, Mdm Chin's condition improved and she began to feel better. Determined to be self-reliant and armed with the courage and strength which saw her through so many difficult times, Mdm Chin decided to work again.

She found employment as a helper in a food court clearing dishes for \$650 a month and asked that the money she received under the Public Assistance scheme be discontinued.

Although her work requires her to be on her feet for 8 hours a day, Mdm Chin would much rather work, earn her keep and be independent than to have continued relying on the monthly grant under the Public Assistance scheme.

Whenever she is not working, she sometimes enjoys taking a stroll from her place in Toa Payoh to Potong Pasir. It can take up to an hour and is quite a feat for a person her age.

Mdm Chin leads a simple life. Her qualities of strength, determination, and a belief in hard work and self-reliance are all virtues which we should all aspire to.

Mdm Chin is an example to us all!

** Name has been changed for privacy reasons.*