

# Helping the physically challenged get back on their feet

## How ABLE provides physical rehabilitation and employment support



Left: Ms Stephanie Yip at a physiotherapy session.

Below: An ABLE staff assisting a client in his rehabilitation.

When she woke up one morning feeling weakness in her legs, Ms Stephanie Yip realised she had suffered a stroke. She was hospitalised for a month.

Ms Yip, who is in her early 60s, had been suffering from diabetes before her stroke in May 2015.

The stroke led to weakness in her left arm and stiffness in her fingers which impeded her ability to carry out daily activities, such as bathing and eating, in the initial months.

Nonetheless, she was optimistic about returning to work as an accounts assistant after her rehabilitation. After coming to know about Abilities Beyond Limitations and Expectations (ABLE) from St Andrew's Community Hospital, Ms Yip joined the charity's Return-to-Work programme in September 2016.

In addition to the weekly therapy sessions, she attended a career fair with ABLE's case manager where she had the opportunity to be interviewed for a few jobs in the hospitality and printing industry.

Ms Yip was successfully placed as a full-time staff at ABLE SEAS in December 2016, where she is employed as a full-time accounts assistant.

ABLE SEAS is a social enterprise start-up funded by ABLE, which seeks to be the accounting services provider of choice to the charities sector and beyond.

Ms Yip is also currently attending the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) certification training arranged by ABLE.

### Return-to-Work

ABLE's rehabilitation centre offers

two main programmes – Return-to-Work (RTW) and day rehabilitation. The RTW programme aims to support the vocational goals of clients, aged between 18-67, and equip them with specific skills for reintegration into the workforce. Day rehabilitation aims to improve functional performance for daily living and community participation.

There are currently 45 clients on the RTW and day rehabilitation programme. Six clients have been successfully placed in employment to date. Over half of the clients are stroke survivors.

The RTW programme involves a three fold approach consisting of:

- Physical rehabilitation (occupational therapy, physiotherapy and pilates rehabilitation) to optimise functional capacity.
- Case management to address psychosocial well-being.
- Vocational rehabilitation to facilitate suitable and sustainable employment.

The programme provides for:

- A holistic, individualised and client centred care plan.
- An active physical and vocational rehabilitation by a multi-disciplinary team.
- Training to enhance employability.
- Pre- and post-job placement support

To provide a differentiated therapeutic approach, ABLE also offers pilates rehabilitation techniques, which complement other conventional rehabilitation. ABLE's volunteer pilates instructors (presently five volunteers) and therapists undergo annual refresher training with Ms Elizabeth Larkam, pilates master instructor and creator of The Moving Body programme in the US.



### About ABLE

ABLE's vision is "to be a vibrant hub of the Catholic Church's Social outreach to the Physically Challenged community." It is a member of Caritas Singapore, incorporated in October 2010, and is certified as an Institution of a Public Character (IPC). ABLE provides rehabilitation therapy, training and job support services to enable the physically challenged to return to suitable and sustainable employment. It also offers respite services to family caregivers and their physically challenged care recipients.

Since November 2015, ABLE has been providing these services at the Rehabilitation and Respite Centres at Agape Village.

ABLE welcomes those who know someone who is physically challenged and may need rehabilitation therapy, family caregivers of the physically challenged who need respite, those who are able to help with employment opportunities, and volunteers.

For more information, visit [www.able-sg.org](http://www.able-sg.org), call 6801-7460 or email [enquiries@able-sg.org](mailto:enquiries@able-sg.org). □