

Singapore

## **Cancer didn't stop nurse from caring for others**

285 words

28 May 2007

[Straits Times](#)

STIMES

English

(c) 2007 Singapore Press Holdings Limited

BATTLING breast cancer was not easy for nurse Deval Devi Karnail Singh.

She still breaks down when she thinks of that period in 2002 when she had to undergo chemotherapy.

Diagnosed with breast cancer in April that year, she underwent treatments till September 2002.

Yet, she did not let her illness keep her away from work.

Ms Singh, 53, was soon back on her feet at the wards of Ang Mo Kio-**Thye Hua Kwan Hospital**, instead of brooding at home.

She still goes for mammograms but is out of danger now, and she shares her experience with those facing similar life-threatening illnesses.

'When you see the smile on a patient's face, it's like a glowing candle; it gives me great satisfaction to see that,' said Ms Singh.

One such patient was Mr Chia Sian Hock, 73, who was diagnosed with Guillain Barre Syndrome, a disorder that leads to nerve inflammation, causing muscle weakness.

Mr Chia lost the strength in his legs, a disability his wife had difficulty coping with, but Ms Singh allayed her concerns by supporting and counselling her.

She cared for Mr Chia from June to October 2005. Mr Chia, who was on a wheelchair when he was discharged, went for rehabilitation and can walk now.

'It's all the little things that she did, like switching on the television set for me, that made it important in the end,' said Mr Chia.

Working mostly with the elderly, Ms Singh, who is married with two children, now volunteers with the Sembawang Community Centre's Women Integration Network, where she helps those who need guidance and advice on elderly issues.