

SINGAPORE (/NEWS/SINGAPORE)

Pilot scheme offers free health tests for those above 50 at Punggol CC



Ms Yeo Wan Ling (in dress), MP for Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC, viewing the telehealth screening booth at Punggol 21 Community Club. Up to 1,000 residents can register online. TNP PHOTO: TIMOTHY DAVID

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A pilot scheme to provide free health screening services, using the latest health technologies, for Singaporeans aged above 50 is now under way at the Punggol 21 Community Club.

Up to 1,000 residents can register online to visit a telemedicine booth at the community club, where they will be checked for eye and cardiovascular diseases and other conditions including diabetes and obesity.

At the booth manned by volunteers, residents can check their vital signs such as blood pressure, body mass index and blood glucose level.

An eye machine will capture their retinal images, and an artificial intelligence system will process the images to determine their health conditions.

INSTANT REPORT

The whole process takes 20 minutes, and residents will receive a health report on the spot.

The booth will be up till Feb 28 and is part of a ground-up initiative called the Community Telehealth Service that was started by a group of nine graduate students from Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

The leader of the project, Dr Michelle Law, 31, a medical doctor who is now a PhD student at NTU's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, said they started this initiative after witnessing how the pandemic had delayed many health screenings for the elderly and those at risk of health problems.

Mr Alvin Chew, 28, one of the project's co-founders, said this health screening cannot replace an official doctor's diagnosis, and they would refer users to a polyclinic or hospital for follow-ups if any abnormalities are observed.

"Residents can just pop by and check their health status while on their way to the market; this is much more convenient compared with them (going) to a clinic or polyclinic," said Mr Chew, a PhD student with NTU's Interdisciplinary Graduate Programme.

He said all slots in the first two weeks have been booked.

The scheme is funded by the Young ChangeMakers grant administered by the National Youth Council, and the oscar@sg fund by Temasek Trust. It is supported by NTU's Graduate College.

Residents can register for screenings at blogs.ntu.edu.sg/communitytelehealthservice/