NURSE MATILDE Leong and her father, Rang Boon Wan, have been in and out of hospital. He was staying with his only son, Mr Zulfakar Ali Khan, who used to be a typical carefree youngster. But after his stroke, Mr Leong was in and out of hospital. He died the next morning at 93. “I'm very grateful that I could stay with him,” Ms Leong said.

Palliative care is a sub-specialty of medicine that focuses on relieving pain and suffering at the end of life. It is not a death sentence. The best places to die, according to the World Health Organization, are at home, with family and friends. Palliative care can be provided in hospitals, nursing homes, hospices, and homes. It is not a death sentence.

Dr Low said there is a shortage of palliative care specialists in Singapore, with less than 100 specialists in the country. Among them, 10 were non-specialists now working in other hospitals. There are already shortage of specialists in the fields of palliative medicine, internal medicine, and medical oncology.

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