



1 Yap (seated) trying out a detox machine at the Autorr centre in Ampang while (standing, from right) Chew, Muslim and Noormah look on. **2** Chew (seated) testing one of the computers in the centre's computer room. **3** Chew (centre) officiating the computer lab which was set up using the contributions by the Pudu Rotary Club.



Giving support to the elderly

Ministry collaborates with various groups to help the aged stay active

story by
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RECENT studies indicate that Malaysia is projected to become an ageing population by 2035.

Deputy Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun said data collected from the Statistics Department, higher learning institutions and United Nations showed more than 15% of the population would be 60 years old and above.

“With the average fertility rate of 2.2 child for every couple in 2012, we are on our way to become an ageing nation.

“The current population consists of 8.8% senior citizens.

“We will see this number almost double in 20 years,” she said.

Chew said the ministry had set up a task force to study and prepare for the increase in the ageing population.

“Often senior citizens have to take care of themselves, but that should not be the way.

“We must cultivate a culture where the younger group will look after them. A community support system is needed.

“Among others, we are now

working with Universiti Putra Malaysia students by asking them to organise programmes for the senior citizens to cultivate a caring spirit,” she said after visiting the Aged Unite to Organise Rest and Recreation (Autorr) Foundation centre in Ampang on Thursday.

Chew said Autorr had room to improve its services and advised the National Welfare Department (JKM) to collaborate with the foundation and optimise the facility.

Autorr Foundation founder and trustee Yap Swee Lin said many senior citizen were often lonely.

“After having spent almost all their lives bringing up their family, many feel isolated and neglected when their children and grandchil-

dren are busy with their careers and studies.

“They get very bitter and angry, and this may lead to depression.

“Here, we organise workshops and activities in which those aged above 55 can take part for a nominal fee.

“We have talks, health checks and classes on gardening, floral arrangement and handicraft, among others.

“Some of our programmes, such as parenting and good values, cater to the younger age groups.

“However, we need volunteers to help run the programmes.

“We are very grateful to collaborate with the Pudu Rotary Club, which has a good network of vol-

unteers to help out,” she said.

The club has sponsored more than RM7,000 recently, to set up a computer lab for the senior citizens to learn computer skills.

Also present at the event was JKM deputy director-general Noormah Abdul Rauf and Pudu Rotary Club president Datuk Muslim Ayob.

Founded in 2012, Autorr Foundation is a non-racial, non-religious and non-profit organisation aimed at giving senior citizens hope and a chance to rediscover life in their golden years.

For details, call 03-4295 2261 or email admin@autorrfoundation.com, or visit www.autorrfoundation.com