

# Caring vets who treated my pet

WORDS can't describe the loss one feels with the passing of life, including the four-legged kind. We often read about doctors' compassion, kindness and professionalism but today, I want to talk about the unsung heroes – the veterinarians at the University Veterinary Hospital (UVH) of Universiti Putra Malaysia. I would like to thank Dr Hemadevy Manoraj, the veterinarian in charge, and consultant Assoc Prof Dr Malaika Watanabe and Dr Lim Sue Yee for the 14 days that they treated my cat Ginger in what turned out to be the last days of her life.

Dr Hemadevy treated Ginger with such professionalism, kindness and dignity as she lay ill. When Ginger needed shots, she apologised that it was going to hurt a little, whether or not Ginger could understand. When she listened to Ginger's heart and lungs through her stethoscope, she spread a towel and when the towel began to slip, she pulled it up to make her more comfortable. She

placed a heating pad not only when Ginger's body temperature needed regulating but also when the room was just a little cold.

She cared so deeply for Ginger, helping her climb into her cage when her back hind legs were weak, and answering my questions with incredible patience. My family felt involved in her care. I can't tell you how important that was to us.

How many times did she walk into the room to find me in tears, my head down, and quietly go about her task? How many times did she help me, crawling into the mess of tubes around her cage in order to place Ginger closer to me?

How many times did she check in on me to see whether I needed a better medical explanation, or to share a picture of how Ginger was doing during her late-night shifts?

How many times did she console me? How many times did she deliver bad news with compassionate words? And on that fateful Sunday

when she helped to usher Ginger into the ICU, she was on leave and yet rushed over early morning.

When other veterinarians insisted I put her to sleep three weeks ago even though she was not in pain, you left me in control, never pushing and so respectful of Ginger.

That decision allowed us to spend three great weeks with Ginger and she even went home for a week, rolling and sunning in her favourite spot. You made that possible. You share our belief that animals are a wonderful gift from God, to be treated as equals, with respect and care.

We thank you for the flowers and the lovely letter of comfort during our difficult time. I will remember that last hour together for the rest of my life. It was a gift beyond gifts, and I have Dr Hemadevy Manoraj and all the staff and students of UVH to thank for it.

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