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More help for autistic adults

By Joan Chew



Young adults with special needs in institutions of higher learning will receive support services in the form of allied educators and autism-trained counsellors in the next ten years. -- ST PHOTO: SAMUEL HE

WITH an estimated 30,000 people in Singapore with autism but only about 15 per cent of autism adults who are able to hold down jobs, the Autism Resource Centre (ARC) has turned its attention to help these autism individuals in the older age group.

The new direction for the ARC was unveiled by its President, Ms Denise Phua, as the added focus for the autism movement in Singapore on Tuesday.

She was speaking at the opening ceremony of the Autism Lifespan WeCAN (Worldwide Collaboration on Autism Needs) Learning Congress 2010, which ends on Thursday.

More than 20 international experts will be sharing best practices in autism to about 560 delegates over the three-day conference. Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan was the guest-of-honour.

ARC will advocate for young adults with special needs in institutions of higher learning such as the universities, polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education to receive support services in the form of allied educators and autism-trained counsellors in the next ten years.

Ms Phua said: 'We want to raise the bar further in early intervention centres and schools up to the tertiary levels so that there is a higher level of consistency in the quality of services we provide.'

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