

**1999** is the International Year of Older Persons with the theme *Towards a Society for All Ages*. By year 2020, 11% of the population in Malaysia would be 60 years old and above (the United Nation defines an aging society as one in where 7% or more of the population is over the age of 60). Recognising this, our government has planned and done a fair share, including recently setting up

**ANOTHER HOSPITAL PROJECT  
BY COLUMBIA PACIFIC HEALTHCARE**

## Caring for those you care about



geriatric units in University Hospital in Kuala Lumpur, Seremban Hospital, a few day centres for the elderly, and since 1992 providing tax exemption to those who pay their parents' medical bills. In a few years' time, geriatric care will be made available in all states. But why wait a few years? Private sector is also expected to play its part in meeting the needs of an ageing population. Well aware of this demographic changes, Columbia Pacific Healthcare Sdn. Bhd. has set up Malaysia's first purpose-built, free-standing, sub-acute hospital with a focus on Aged Care Services, in Shah Alam. Columbia Pacific Healthcare Sdn. Bhd. is a private joint-venture company between Chemical Company of Malaysia Bhd. and Healthcare Corporation of Asia Ltd., a subsidiary of Columbia Pacific Management Inc. Asia.



**HOSPITAL GERIATRIK, Shah Alam** is located at Lot No. 2 Jalan Baung 17/22 in Section 17, Shah Alam, occupying a strategic site of slightly more than one acre. This hospital encompasses the special needs of those requiring Aged Care Services as well as capturing an environment that provides a high standard of comfort for those seeking treatment at the facility. It aims to serve older persons discharged from acute care hospitals who require less intensive medical supervision in transition to returning home, and those acquiring outpatient treatment which are prescriptive to their particular needs. It also serves older persons and their families who are no longer able to provide the comprehensive "in-home" care (assisted living). Some residents are just individuals who require rehabilitative therapies. Whichever the case, the hospital strives to assist patients in gaining increased independence in daily living tasks.

The hospital hosted the National Conference on the Care of the Aged Population with The Gerontological Association of Malaysia, Malaysian Medical Association (Selangor), Malaysian Psychiatric Association and Malaysian Occupational Therapist Association at a leading hotel here recently. The 2-day conference, participated by an international panel of speakers, is an example of the hospital's values in educating and disseminating knowledge in this field to our healthcare professionals.

## **FACILITIES & SERVICES**

This 60-bed 2-storey rectangular-shaped hospital has a large and beautifully landscaped courtyard in the middle for patients to maintain contact with the outdoors. This provides ample natural lighting that changes throughout the day and a secured outdoor space for umbrella seating, activities or just socialising. Of course, it is also intended to soothe some anxious patients.

Staffed with geriatric-oriented medical personnel and a full complement of Nursing, Administrative and Support Staff, the array of services currently provided by the hospital are outpatient clinics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy, palliative care, nutrition management, non-specific TPN (Total Parenteral Nutrition), family consultation, laboratory, ambulance services, age appropriate activities, life enrichment activities, 24-hour medical care and professional nursing care. Its Extended Care services for the elderly includes Community Home Health and respite care. In the near future, it will have Day Care services. The hospital has full kitchen and dining facilities, prayer rooms, multipurpose recreational rooms and a medical/occupational therapy equipment retail shop.

## **DESIGN APPROACH**

Hospital Geriatrik was designed to relate to its sprawling mixed development township ambience albeit facing the main arterial road of Persiaran Jubilee Perak, so the look is far more sober and universal than being too institutional or residential. In other words, it must not be pretentious. A design that balanced economy, user-friendliness and architectural wit is this freestanding facility. It incorporates a number of architectural styles to create a visually reassuring as well as contextually-agreeable scale, which the neighbourhood can relate and distinguish architecturally.

This 32,240 sq. ft. facility combines the geometric frame of structural R.C. columns and spandrels of Modernism, details that invoke the architecture of International Style,

# **CREDIT**

Columbia Pacific Healthcare Sdn. Bhd. led the team to practise a participatory and dynamic approach both in the design development and construction phases. The other facilities of Columbia Pacific Healthcare in Seremban (see inset) and Miri provide acute care services to the community. The company will continue to plan, build, transfer knowledge/technology and operate further community-based facilities throughout Malaysia. The next hospital now in the drawing board is sited in Bintulu. The Project Team for Geriatrik Hospital Shah Alam are :

### Owner & Operator

Columbia Pacific Healthcare Sdn. Bhd.

Architect & Interior Designer  
Environmental Design Partnership

### **Civil & Structural Engineers**

Perunding KCT

Mechanical & Electrical Engineers  
Perunding Mektrik Sdn. Bhd.

Management & Main Contractor  
Am Sama Bina Sdn. Bhd.

and a college touch in use of IBSB concrete full blocks as infills. The same blend of styles and blockwork is repeated inside. The architectural language used in this hospital is necessarily different from the other hospitals developed by the same owner.

The interior was designed with the focus of "friendliness of home, comforts of hotel and confidence of a hospital". Interior spaces were layed out to create an environment that addresses the physical, social and emotional needs. Older persons (in particular Asians) and their needs are by nature anti-institutional. Yet, expressing a certain degree of a comfortable "hospital feel" makes a spiritually liberating statement that is beneficial to such patients. For instant, every bed has a signal buzzer and if a resident is in need, the staff would immediately come to his or her aid. Two stretcher-size lifts ensures a barrier-free vertical movement, whilst all rooms have disabled-accessible bathrooms.

Throughout, a combined feeling of privacy and spaciousness is achieved using glass walls, overlooks, central open courtyard concept and views opening on to activity areas. Moreover, it took into account not only the patient's but those of his or her family by making extensive use of natural light and interaction areas - lounges, common dining, karaoke, discussion room and alcoves, etc. - to promote rehabilitation and facilitate to life in the "real world". This is where the concept of care-giver comes in. "Family members who deals with any aged persons need to be educated as well on how to appropriately take care of them", says Dr. Jude Selvaraj, the hospital's resident medical officer. This is in tandem with the hospital's belief in the dignity of the older person and restoring self-sufficiency with compassion. **B&I**