

# Man, 65, gets 2 free knee transplants

BY LYDIA LAM

**M**OST people would be thinking about retiring at 65 but Lam Kwan Shiang is planning to look for a job after he got a new lease on life, thanks to two free knee transplants.

Mr Lam, who had worked as a taxi driver for 30 years until 2014, told My Paper he had suffered from knee problems for 15 years.

He was starting to get bow-legged and could not sit for more than half an hour without experiencing severe pain in his knees when getting up.

"They would go 'crack'," he said.

He had tried taking glucosamine supplements, hoping they would relieve the pain, but that did not work.

A friend told him that he could get free knee transplants under private healthcare group Parkway Pantai's Life Renewed programme for financially needy Singapore citizens and permanent residents, so he signed up for it.

"I was surprised it was free," he said.

A typical total knee replacement costs between \$21,000 and \$25,000.

He underwent two separate surgeries, one for each knee, at Parkway East Hospital.

Mr Lam recalled being nervous for his first operation, on his left knee in 2014, as it was his first major surgery.

As he had excessive bleeding, the transplant for his other knee took place only in October last year.

He could walk five days after his first operation and three days after his second.

"Now, I can walk. I want to look for a job in one or two months when this knee

recovers, maybe as a store supervisor," he said.

"Sitting at home is very boring. I used to run cross-country when I was young. I can't do that anymore but maybe now I can go jogging," he added.

He was energetic and upbeat when My Paper visited his studio apartment in Tampines where he lives with his wife of more than 20 years, Jenny Ng, 59.

The pair do not work and have no children.

Mr Lam said his nieces and nephews give him some money.

The Life Renewed programme, which was launched in 2013, is supported by the Khazanah IHH Healthcare Fund. It has sponsored 166 medical treatments for financially needy Singaporeans and permanent residents.

Parkway East Hospital, which has done 15 total knee replacements under this scheme, is looking to sponsor five more cases of total knee replacements by Sept 30 this year.

To be eligible, applicants must be Singapore citizens or permanent residents with an average household income of less than \$1,100.

Interested applicants may contact Parkway East Hospital at 6340-8680.

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**NEW LEASE ON LIFE:** Mr Lam could walk five days after his first operation and three days after his second. PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM