SMU students to raise cancer awareness with photo show

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It may be just a school project about breast cancer awareness. But, to the eight Singapore Management University (SMU) students doing the project, it means more than that. This is because three of them have had relatives or friends suffering from cancer.

For one of them, a 20-year-old business student, the message of the project – that cancer is not a death sentence – could not have come any closer.

Her mother had been diagnosed with breast cancer a few years ago, and suffered a relapse last year. She declined to have her name published to protect the privacy of her mother, who is undergoing treatment.

She said: "To see a lady who was diagnosed with breast cancer in the past one to two months still being very positive and happy was inspiring for me."

The group, comprising students studying business, social science, economics, accountancy and information systems, is planning a photography exhibition at Old School on Mount Sophia on March 15.

The project, part of their Leadership and Team Building module, will showcase photos taken by 10 breast cancer patients, aged 40 to 67, who live life to the fullest in spite of their illness.

In addition to raising awareness of breast cancer and on early detection, the students hope to encourage cancer patients through their project, which is a collaboration with the Breast Cancer Foundation.

They also want to highlight to family members how important they are in supporting relatives with cancer.

Each patient will have 10 to 15 photos on display, taken along the theme of "I Dare. I Live. I Experience."

Said the student whose mother has cancer: "A lot of the photos taken by the patients were about their families. They said these people were their main reason for living."

Similarly, her mother’s illness has brought the family closer.

She said: "My family became more expressive after the diagnosis. We said things people usually find hard to say. "We exchanged more 'I love yous'."

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