

The need for the government to bridge the reality gap between preference for end-of-life & reality

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A Market Journal, 17 July 2019

According to Singaporeans, the ideal situation of a 'peaceful death' is to die at home where you are surrounded by your loved one. On the contrary, a report released by the Institute of Policy Studies on 12th of July, this desire to have a dignified way of passing is far from the reality on the ground & contends that in order to change the way end-of-life care is handled, there is a lot which needs to be done.

The report entitled as 'Leaving well: End-of-Life Care Policies in Singapore", gave reference to a 2014 survey by the Lien Foundation which revealed that 77 percent of Singaporeans willed to die at home. Sadly, as of 2017, nearly 70 percent of them passed away either in hospitals, nursing homes or charitable institutions. No more than 24 percent of the Singaporeans got the privilege of dying at home.

In order to bridge that reality gap, the report stated that it wanted the government to relook at this matter.

The authors stated that with more than 20k Singaporeans at present aged 75 or above & so many family members having so soon struggle with the difficult issue which is the end of life this gap between reality and preferences which needs to be addressed.

The research called for a realistic outlook on death which concentrated less on finding the cure for patients who are terminally-ill as treatment might be pointless, & more on giving them an enhanced quality of life as their last days get closer.

A few suggestions were also offered by the study on how to enhance the end-of-life care for the Singaporeans like bringing up conversations on death. It also recommended having a payment system based on the overall needs of the patient, rather than the current method which focuses on the number of consultations.