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From Adversity to Achievement: Qistina's Journey of Hope and Resilience

Singapore, 30 December 2024 – At just 15 years old, Qistina's vibrant world was turned upside down. Diagnosed with leukaemia, she faced not only the gruelling reality of battling cancer but also the emotional toll that comes with it. Yet, through sheer determination and the unwavering support of Children's Cancer Foundation's (CCF) and its programme, Place for Academic Learning and Support (PALS), Qistina rose above her challenges, excelling in her N-level exams and becoming a beacon of aspiration for others.

A Life-Altering Diagnosis

For Qistina, the diagnosis was devastating. Once a lively teenager focused on school and friendships, her days became filled with hospital visits, chemotherapy sessions, and medical procedures. *"It felt like my whole world stopped,"* Qistina recalls. Her family was suddenly thrust into a whirlwind of caregiving, juggling work, hospital schedules, and the emotional strain of supporting her. *"I remember the nights I stayed up, watching her sleep, praying she'd make it through,"* Qistina's family shares. Despite the overwhelming uncertainty, they refused to give in to despair, choosing instead to stand firm for Qistina.



Qistina with her family.

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ANNEX A

About PALS

Incepted in 2012, Place for Academic Learning and Support (PALS) was set up to cater to the educational needs of children and youths with cancer of different academic levels, from Nursery 1 to Secondary 5 who are unable to attend mainstream schools due to their compromised immunity.

The centre provides an infection-controlled environment, a holistic curriculum and personalised academic coaching to prepare the children for their eventual return to school. In 2019, PALS also started offering support to students with special needs in the primary level. As of 2024, more than 400 students have enrolled in PALS.