



Dr Freda Paul was a respected paediatrician at Singapore General Hospital.

PHOTO:
**RUHUNADEVI
JOSHUA**

Late doctor's estate bequeaths \$6.75m to NUS

✓ MALAVIKA MENON

The estate of the late Dr Freda Paul, who suffered from dementia and was wrongly influenced by her maid and two foreign workers into giving them almost \$5 million, has bequeathed \$6.75 million to her alma mater, the National University of Singapore (NUS), the university said in a statement yesterday.

The gift from Dr Paul, a respected paediatrician at Singapore General Hospital and associate professor of paediatrics at the then Faculty of Medicine, University of Singapore, was willed in 2007.

She took an interest in children with special learning needs and had bequeathed much of her estate to help needy female medical students at the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

Professor Tan Eng Chye, president of NUS, said yesterday: "We are deeply appreciative of this generous gift from the late Dr Freda Paul, which will go a long way towards nurturing the next generation of female medical leaders as well as advancing the field of paediatrics."

It was made possible after legal action to recover misappropriated funds.

Dr Paul was single and her sole asset was a bungalow in Haig Road, which was sold in 2009 for \$15.4 million.

She was suffering from dementia and after she had her will written, she was befriended by construction worker Kulandaivelu Malayaperumal and engineer Gopal Subramaniam, who were working on a site adjacent to her home.

Together with her maid, Arulampalam Kanthimathy, they influenced Dr Paul into transferring them large sums of money from the proceeds of the sale of her old home and into making a new will in 2010 that would have bequeathed nearly all of her assets to them. Some of the sale proceeds were used to purchase a smaller home for the elderly doctor.

In 2013, Dr Paul's distant relatives Philip Jeyaretnam and Dr Ruhunadevi Joshua were appointed as deputies under the Mental Capacity Act to manage her affairs. Dr Paul died in August 2016 at the age of 87.

Mr Jeyaretnam and Dr Joshua successfully applied to court for a statutory will restoring Dr Paul's earlier testamentary intentions, including her gift to NUS.

They took proceedings on behalf of her estate against the three individuals and obtained a judgement on May 15, 2017.

About \$4 million was later recovered and further funds were realised from the sale of Dr Paul's later home.

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