

# Let's try to be more caring

Letter from William Tay

I REFER to "Some cleaners just not fit for the job" (May 11).

I am not sure whether Mr Francis Han has an issue with our elderly citizens working as cleaners or whether they are not fit to work at any form of "physical" jobs.

Mr Han should get real – what other job options or choice do they have?

Besides, many of the cleaning jobs mentioned are in fact not performed by elderly citizens but rather by young/middle-aged able bodied individuals. As for old folk who take on cleaning tasks, many of them handle lighter duties like sweeping, cleaning toilets, washing dishes, et cetera.

I have befriended many of them; they are very warm people despite their plight.

Herein lies the issue that many of us tend to overlook or pretend does not exist – do you think they really want to work if they have a choice?

When I return from business trips, I cannot help but notice the

elderly folk who work as "trolley captains", "taxi captains", "toilet captains", etc.

I guess many of them are in their 70s. They have nice titles but I do not think these enhance their pride as senior citizens.

Many foreign friends have commented to me: "Are Singaporeans so proud as to display to the whole world that you cannot or do not take care of the old? Or are you just being grossly uncaring?"

Many elder people may not be as fortunate as Mr Han. Instead of setting another standard we need to comply with, can we be a bit caring for a change?