



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY ANITA FAM, PRESIDENT,
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
AT COMMUNITY CHEST HEARTSTRINGS WALK 2025
ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2025, 6.30PM
AT MARINA BAY SANDS**

Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Minister for Social and Family Development,

Friends of Community Chest,

- 1 Good evening and welcome to the Community Chest Heartstrings Walk 2025!
- 2 A big thank you to our Guest of Honour, Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Minister for Social and Family Development, for joining us today to celebrate our nation's 60th birthday at Community Chest's largest community event!
- 3 I am so delighted to see more than 3,000 of you today. Thank you for coming together to support families and individuals in need. I would also like to acknowledge the Li Foundation and Zephr Running Club, who organised Relay Majulah, a national 600km relay where 60 teams ran for 60 hours with the final team completing their last leg right here at today's Heartstrings Walk. This remarkable effort truly embodies the spirit of community support we celebrate today.

- 4 In today's fast-paced and ever-changing world, mental health support is more crucial than ever. As sector developer, the National Council of Social Service continues to identify emerging needs, with Community Chest raising the necessary funds to support these needs. We have evolved our focus over the years – from disability and special needs education, to addressing stigma in mental health through initiatives like Beyond the Label.
- 5 This shift reflects a growing reality. Community Chest has increased funding for mental health programmes in the last three years, from \$9.11 million in 2022 to \$13.35 million in 2024, so that more mental health support can be provided for the community.
- 6 Our recent research validates exactly why this increased investment is so crucial. NCSS's 2025 Quality of Life study examined mental health as a continuum for the first time. We found that 26% of respondents experience mild depressive or anxiety symptoms, 19% moderate, and 7% severe. As the severity of symptoms increase, quality of life declines significantly. This means we need care across all stages of recovery, which is why your support for Community Chest creates real impact.
- 7 Collaborations with corporates and the community like yourselves are key to meeting social needs. Through sustained giving, we can enable thirteen SSAs like Singapore Association for Mental Health, Club HEAL and Samaritans of Singapore Limited to run vital mental health programmes. The Community Chest-funded programme, Suicide Crisis Intervention Programme by Samaritans of Singapore demonstrates this impact. Their 24-hour SOS hotline supports those facing crises



or contemplating suicide. Over 89% of callers reported feeling less distressed after using the service. This is the real difference your support makes.

- 8 Beyond mental health, your support will continue to uplift the lives of over 80,000 individuals across 200 critical social service programmes. The impact of your donations to Community Chest this SG60 will be amplified as every dollar will be matched by the Government under the SG Gives matching grant.
- 9 Before I conclude, I would like to thank our co-organiser, Marina Bay Sands, for being our steadfast long-term partner. Beyond today's Heartstrings Walk, they have also pledged a three-year commitment with Community Chest to sustained giving to fund critical programmes for the community and those in need.
- 10 And finally, a big thank you to all for being here today and rallying your friends, family and colleagues to support our cause. With strong community and corporate support, we can all make a real difference to the lives of those in need and build a more caring and inclusive society, this SG60 and beyond!