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HEALTHIER HAWKER CENTRE BUSINESS MODEL CATCHES ON AS MARINE PARADE STALLOWNERS SWITCH TO HEALTHIER OIL AND SALT

Earmarked a City for All Ages site, Marine Parade now has its own Healthier Hawker Centre from the Health Promotion Board, so that the estate's high proportion of elderly residents need not travel far for healthier versions of their favourite hawker fare.

Singapore, 30 September 2012: Stalls at Block 50A Marine Terrace Food Centre have started serving healthier food prepared with oil and salt that have lower saturated fat and sodium content respectively, as well as brown rice and wholegrain noodles.

2. This fifth Healthier Hawker Centre by the Health Promotion Board (HPB) has garnered nearly full participation rate at its launch, with all food stalls selling cooked meals switching to healthier oil. Seven of these stalls have also started to use healthier salt, brown rice or wholegrain noodles as well. Emeritus Senior Minister (ESM) Goh Chok Tong was the Guest-of-Honour at a community event in Marine Parade this morning to launch this initiative.

3. Healthier oil and salt can reduce the prevalence of high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol, which are risk factors for stroke and heart disease.

4. Some residents in Marine Parade, in particular the elderly, suffer from one or more chronic diseases. Two of the most common conditions are high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol.

5. A separate HPB survey indicates that the average Singaporean eats out at affordable and convenient places like hawker centres at least once a day, five days a week.

6. A key goal of launching a Healthier Hawker Centre at Marine Parade, therefore, is to help the elderly there improve their overall health status by providing them with healthier choices at their neighbourhood hawker centre.

7. Said ESM Goh, “I welcome the Healthier Hawker Centre initiative. It is good for health and good for business.” He also noted that the Healthier Hawker Centre complements the Marine Parade pilot project on ageing that was launched in December 2010 to help policy makers design cost-effective measures to improve the well-being of the seniors. Some of the initiatives under this pilot project had been scaled up and replicated in other estates (e.g. the Enhancement for Active Seniors Programme¹). Beyond improving the physical facilities to make them more elder-friendly, Marine Parade also works with other partners such as the Health Promotion Board to improve the well-being of the seniors through fall prevention workshops, health screening, and elderly outreach. This is in line with the national aim to make Singapore a City for All Ages Project by the Ministerial Committee on Ageing to develop Marine Parade as a place where senior citizens too can live healthily, actively and independently.

8. Said Mr Ang Hak Seng, Chief Executive Officer, HPB: “To make healthy living as effortless as possible for senior citizens at Marine Parade, we rolled out in March this year an integrated community programme to provide one-stop screening for age-related functional decline, chronic diseases and selected cancers; introduced the Health Corner at Marine Parade Community Club and piloted the Mental First Aid Kit Programme to help seniors enhance their memory and cognitive skills. Today, we are happy to launch our most recent Healthier Hawker Centre, so that seniors at Marine Parade may find, a stone’s throw from home, healthier hawker food that is also tasty and affordable.”

9. Said Mr Raymond Tan, Hawker Representative of the Block 50A Marine Terrace Market Committee: “Our food centre at Block 50A Marine Terrace has become the first under HPB’s Healthier Hawker Centre initiative to launch with nearly full participation from stall owners. Not only do we fully believe in the importance of offering customers healthier options, the success of HPB’s earlier Healthier Hawker Centres has convinced us of the business value of this concept. Working with HPB’s network of suppliers, we are able to buy

¹ Under this scheme, the government will subsidise the installation of elderly-friendly features in homes, such as anti-slip treatment to bathroom tiles and grab bars.

healthier ingredients in bulk, which helps to save on costs. At the same time, I am confident that increasingly health-conscious customers, such as elderly residents who are advised by doctors to watch their saturated fat and sodium intake, will be drawn to this eating place.”

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