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NATIONAL PILOT OF HOLISTIC C.A.R.E PROGRAMME FOR SENIORS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Stepped-up three (3)-pronged approach to exercise regularly, eat wisely and think positively for a healthy South West Community

South West Community Development Council (CDC), in partnership with the Health Promotion Board (HPB), will pilot the **Caregivers Always Ready and Empowered (C.A.R.E)** programme this Sunday at the annual South West Active Ageing Roadshow. C.A.R.E. recognises the pivotal role caregivers play in addressing the health and wellbeing of the seniors in the community. It aims to equip the caregivers with the knowledge and skills to provide better care for their elderly loved ones. The National Health Survey (NHS) 2010 revealed that 8.1%¹ of Singaporeans aged 18 to 69 years provided regular care or assistance to friends or family members. 23.2% of the caregivers reported that they needed training to help relieve the anxiety or depression of others. Targeted at seniors and their caregivers, the programme will provide accessible, holistic and practical solutions to active ageing and a healthier lifestyle.

2 Mayor Amy Khor said, "The South West CDC recognises the challenges the growing population of seniors will face. Since 2008, we have organised the annual Active Ageing Roadshow to encourage and help seniors age actively and healthily in the community. In line with this vision, the South West CDC is promoting five (5) key health pillars namely (1) exercise regularly, (2) eat wisely, (3) think positively, (4) stay smoke-free, and (5) keep clean to prevent the spread of bugs. This is part of our ongoing efforts to help residents in the South West and in particular our seniors live long and live well. Additionally, we also need to pay attention to the caregivers of the elderly, especially the frail elderly. According to the National Health Survey 2010, 8.1% of Singapore

¹ Of these, 52.6% provided care to their parents and 7.2% to their parents-in-law.

residents aged 18 to 69 years plays a caregiver role. With this in mind, we have partnered HPB to launch a capacity building programme to equip 2,000 caregivers over two (2) years in South West district with the knowledge and skills to effectively care for seniors”.

3 Mr Ang Hak Seng, Chief Executive Officer, HPB, said, “Our survey has shown that about 20% of caregivers spend more than 12 hours daily attending to the care recipients. This could lead to caregivers facing physical, social and emotional issues. It is therefore imperative to offer caregivers as much support from the community as we can. HPB has launched a pilot programme – **Caregivers Always Ready and Empowered (C.A.R.E) Programme** – to offer caregivers the necessary support in their caregiving roles. The programme aims to equip caregivers with knowledge about healthy ageing in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, smoking control, chronic disease management, mental wellness and communicable disease prevention. Through this programme, caregivers will be able to provide better care for the seniors. We will extend the C.A.R.E Programme to all districts following this pilot”.

4 According to the National Nutrition Survey 2010, among seniors aged 60 to 69, only 26.6% and 23.7% meet the daily recommended intake of fruit and vegetables respectively. To encourage healthy eating habits and a healthy lifestyle, the CDC will introduce an online South West Guide to Healthy Living that is jointly produced with HPB. The handy and easy-to-read guide will map out healthier hawker centres and coffee shops, “Healthy Together” corners and health services in the district. The guide aims to instil in residents the awareness of healthier food options that are within reach and inculcate good eating habits. The guide can be accessed via the CDC’s website. As part of the C.A.R.E programme, HPB will also be organising interactive healthier cooking demonstrations for caregivers to showcase senior-centric recipes which have been developed according to the latest dietary guidelines for seniors.

5 Mental wellness is another important aspect of healthy ageing and the C.A.R.E Programme has incorporated a toolkit for caregivers to learn more about common mental health issues such as dementia among seniors. It will

provide them with information on sources of help and support in the community. In addition, a new series of skits will be launched to raise public awareness of various pertinent health issues. For a start, the skit will focus on the various health financing schemes to support the healthcare needs of the residents. Specially scripted to resonate with seniors, the skit will reinforce the importance of early detection and prevention and existing healthcare financing schemes. It will rove all 18 divisions in the next two (2) years.

6 The launch of the C.A.R.E programme complements efforts by the CDC and HPB to bring healthy living closer to residents and develop both the software and hardware of a self-sustaining healthy community and improve quality of life through enhanced empowerment and engagement of residents.

Jointly Issued By South West Community Development Council and Health Promotion Board