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HPB REVIEWS AND REFINES HEALTH PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN WITH HELP FROM NEWLY FORMED WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To better equip women with the skills and knowledge to take care of their health through different life stages, the Health Promotion Board has leveraged the expertise of the newly formed Women's Health Advisory Committee to roll out a Women's Health Booklet, Women's Healthcare Plan and Women's Health Network.

Singapore, 16 September 2012: In Singapore, women below 40 years old need to be more aware of unhealthy lifestyle issues such as obesity, binge drinking and smoking. Older women, however, should pay greater heed to screening for illnesses like breast and cervical cancers.

2. These are some of the findings by the Health Promotion Board (HPB) together with the newly formed Women's Health Advisory Committee (WHAC), set up to assist HPB in:

- Reviewing the current status of women's health in Singapore
- Identifying any gaps and challenges in promoting women's health
- Setting strategic directions
- Coordinating multi-sector initiatives
- Mobilising individuals and organisations

3. Chaired by Dr Amy Khor, Minister of State for Health and Manpower, WHAC brings together 14 organisational and individual advocates of women's health, from the NTUC's Women's Development Secretariat to former Nominated Member of Parliament Ms Eunice Olsen.

4. The aim is to tap a diverse pool of health experts and experienced advocates in order to develop national initiatives that will equip women with health knowledge and tools tailored for specific female life stages, thereby empowering women to take ownership of their health regardless of age.

5. Said Dr Khor: “Women in Singapore are amazing! They juggle multiple roles of being a loving wife, a caring mother, a filial daughter, a successful career woman and perhaps, even a compassionate volunteer in the community. In trying to give 100 per cent to our families, co-workers and society, we often run on empty. We forget to exercise, skip meals or eat unhealthily, and miss health screenings. Women should really watch their health and make that a top priority because if our health fails, we will be unable to fulfil the many important roles that we have. Through the Women’s Health Advisory Committee, which I chair, I hope to help improve the health of all women in Singapore through more readily available health and information kits, targeted and effective initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles among women, and a network of women Health Ambassadors, harnessing ‘Girl Power’ to inspire all women to lead a healthy lifestyle.”

6. Said Mr Ang Hak Seng, Chief Executive Officer, HPB: “A woman’s health issues vary according to the life stage she is at. To ensure all women have the knowledge and tools to take proper care of their health regardless of age, HPB has tapped the expertise of the Women’s Health Advisory Committee, which comprises representatives from the private, public and non-profit sectors, to develop an ‘all-in-one’ Women’s Health Booklet. Called ‘My Journey to a Better Health’, this resource kit focuses on health issues close to a woman’s heart as well as answers any questions women may have about their health. Along with the Booklet is a record book that women can also use to record health milestones, their medical history, as well as any motivating thoughts or inspirational messages captured on their journey to better health.”

7. HPB is launching the Women’s Health Booklet today at a women’s health fair in front of Ngee Ann City. The event is expected to draw 2,000 women across all age groups, and will offer participants a chance to sample food from Healthier Hawker Centres, take part in contests such as the Interactive Diet and Activity Tracker (iDAT) Challenge, make health screening appointments, indulge in free manicures and makeovers, as well as let their hair down on a dance floor.

8. By November 2012, HPB would have distributed 30,000 copies of the Women’s Health Booklet together with women’s magazines. It will also be available at www.inspiringwomen.sg, a webpage where women can blog about their health journeys and share their stories so as to encourage and inspire other women to take care of their health.

9. HPB is currently working with WHAC on a Women's Healthcare Plan, which is a roadmap that identifies possible gaps, challenges and focus areas in health promotion programmes across a woman's lifespan; sets strategic directions and formulates effective programmes.

10. To coordinate multi-sector initiatives in rolling out accessible and affordable women's health programmes at the workplaces and communities, HPB also aims to mobilise key individuals and organisations by forming a Women's Health Network.

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