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PRESS RELEASE

HEALTH PROMOTION BOARD SHOWCASES THE FIRST HEALTHY COMMUNITY ECOSYSTEM IN ACTION

Singaporeans enjoy greater accessibility to healthy options as HPB leads a multi-agency effort to link up health promoting elements to form an ecosystem

Singapore, 29 January 2014 – Following the launch of the Healthy Workplace Ecosystem in October 2013, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) now showcases the elements of a Healthy Community Ecosystem. Sembawang and Chua Chu Kang have been identified as the first healthy community ecosystems. The ecosystem enables Singaporeans easy and convenient access to a menu of healthy lifestyle options at their doorstep.

Placing Residents at the Heart of the Healthy Community Ecosystem

Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Chairperson of the HLMP Task Force said, “Good health, a sense of well-being and good relationships with family and friends are important to everyone. We put residents at the heart of our planning and asked: what would motivate us to live a healthier lifestyle? Health promoting elements like walking trails and fitness corners already existed in the community but we wanted more residents to choose to use these facilities. It was clear that we needed to fully connect the existing health promoting elements and create a conducive environment so that residents could conveniently access these health promoting facilities and amenities.”

The HCE embodies the community focus of the Healthy Living Master Plan (HLMP), which is a roadmap on how Singaporeans can achieve the vision of healthy living together anytime, anywhere.

Multi Agency Partnership to Promote Healthy Living

HPB collaborates with agencies like Land Transport Authority (LTA), National Parks Board (NParks), Ministry of Education (MOE), Singapore Sports Council (SSC), and the People's Association (PA) to create healthy community ecosystems.

Mr Zee Yoong Kang, Chief Executive Officer, HPB, said, "We aim to provide residents with access to three or more healthy living options within the residential estate. This will make it easier for residents to make healthy living their default choice. What you see in Sembawang and Chua Chu Kang is a start. We have facilitated a multi-agency effort to make healthy living options more accessible and piloted our new programme called Sundays-at-the-Park to the community. We look forward to receiving the feedback from residents and will incorporate their feedback in our plans to introduce other Healthy Community Ecosystems to more constituencies in the future."

Encouraging physical activity by leveraging infrastructure

The Land Transport Authority's (LTA) Walk2Ride programme will extend sheltered walkways and build rest areas by 2018 between MRT stations, bus stops to schools and healthcare facilities within 400m of public transport nodes. To complement the Walk2Ride programme, HPB is working closely with LTA to ensure there are elderly friendly features at the rest areas and there will also be relevant health messages on the infrastructure at Sembawang and Chua Chu Kang. This will encourage greater physical activity among residents while facilitating active commuting to/fro the MRT stations. Sembawang residents can look forward to the feature in early 2015 at Admiralty MRT station.

Besides this, LTA has implemented more than 10km of cycling paths in Sembawang to improve intra and inter-town connectivity. The network connects residential areas to key local amenities within the town, as well as to neighbouring towns Woodlands and Yishun. A similar cycling path network will be built in Chua Chu Kang. In addition, the National Parks Board (NParks) has also developed more than 200km of park connectors, including the 25 km Northern Explorer Loop which connects several major parks in the north including Admiralty Park, Sembawang Park, and Woodlands Waterfront, and the 23km Western Adventure Loop which links several parks in the west including Choa Chua Kang Park, Bukit Batok Nature Park, and Dairy Farm Nature Park.

HPB is also working with NParks to develop a Health Promoting Park framework which will provide residents with more options such as activities that benefits both physical health and mental well-being. Residents in Sembawang and Chua Chu Kang attend 'Sundays-at-the-

Park', a free programme by HPB that offers a range of activities such as Yoga and Zumba classes, to treasure hunts and games.

HPB is also working with the Town Council to incorporate health messages in HDB blocks to promote stair-climbing among the residents. To date, HPB has installed visual cues in all 119 HDB blocks in the Sembawang estate.

Since last year, SSC has piloted ActiveSG programmes and activities in the western region, which included Chua Chu Kang, to encourage residents to live better through sports. ActiveSG, which will be officially launched in the second quarter of this year, will offer Choa Chu Kang and Sembawang residents holistic and affordable sports programming with an island-wide sporting network and membership with programmes, leagues and competitions coordinated at the regional and community level. Residents from both constituencies are also given more opportunities to play sports through the Dual Use Scheme (DUS), a joint project between the Singapore Sports Council (SSC) and Ministry of Education (MOE). There are currently 1 school in Sembawang constituency and 3 schools in Chua Chu Kang constituency under this scheme where residents can use school fields and school halls for sports activities.

In addition, heartland malls such as Sembawang Mart and Woodlands Mart are on board HPB's Health Promoting Malls programme, where residents can now enjoy free regular physical activity programmes such as mall aerobics and healthier food options at the food courts.

Making healthy eating the natural choice

HPB is working with eateries and coffee shops to offer healthy eating options in the community. Residents can look for healthy eating options using healthier ingredients such as healthier oil and salt at neighbourhood coffee shops. By February, healthy eating options, including meals with calorie counts of 500 and fewer, will be available in both Woodlands Mart and Sembawang Mart food courts.

Enabling healthy living for all ages

Schools in Sembawang have been engaged to become health promoting schools under HPB's and MOE's Health Promoting School Framework, in support of the drive to inculcate healthy habits among youths from an early age. Eight pre-schools in the Sembawang area are currently engaged under the CHERISH Junior programme which brings health promotion upstream to pre-schools, nurturing lifelong healthy habits in very young children,

To promote healthy ageing and greater ownership of their own health, HPB has partnered with Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH) and PA to conduct subsidized chronic disease screening with targeted follow-up by KTPH for residents aged over 40 in Sembawang and Choa Chu Kang constituencies since September 2013.

Tapping on the energy of grassroots

HPB is also tapping on the energy of grassroots to spearhead community health programmes through grants and capacity building via the Health Ambassador Programme. Grassroots leaders of Sembawang and Chua Chu Kang constituencies have utilised HPB's Constituency Health Promotion Grant worth up to \$10,000 per constituency yearly, to organise regular health programmes and activities for residents. This includes exercise interest groups, healthy cooking demonstrations, supermarket tours, mental wellbeing talks and workshop.

HPB's Health Ambassador Network recruits individuals in Sembawang and Chua Chu Kang who are passionate about leading a healthy lifestyle and inspiring others to become advocates for fellow residents in their towns. Health ambassadors will be equipped with knowledge and skills on health topics, communications and mentoring. They will then reach out to their social networks to mentor and inspire their peers on leading a healthy lifestyle.

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Issued by Health Promotion Board

Health Promotion Board's Sundays At The Park Programme

Fact Sheet

Background

Sundays at the Park is a programme for individuals and communities to participate in activities that enhance physical and mental wellbeing through a series of meaningful, enjoyable and socially engaging experiences.

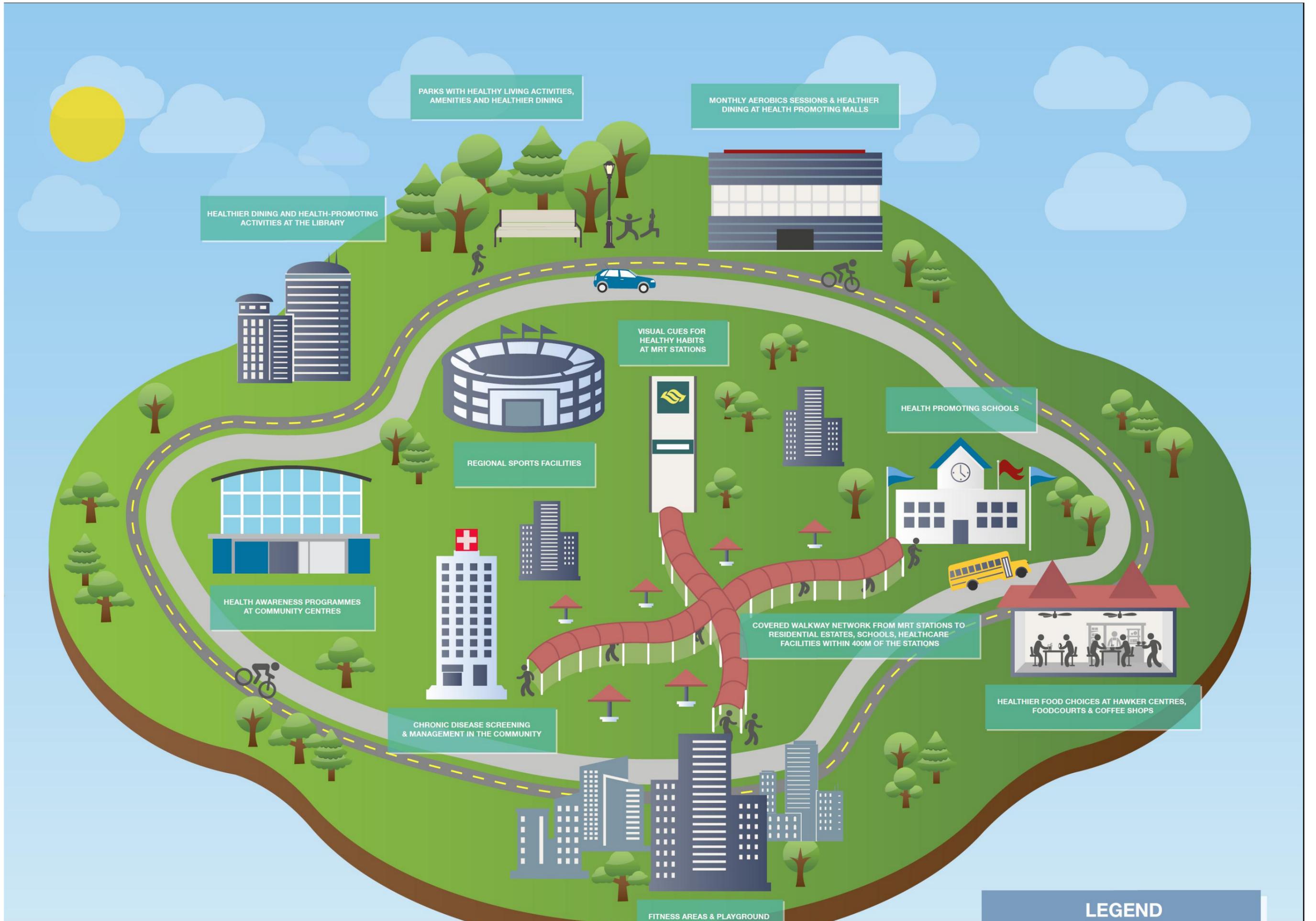
The activities are designed to move the body, relieve stress, build resilience, stimulate and sustain positive feelings from the social interaction among participants. The park offers a conducive environment that nurtures an individual's mental wellbeing through physical and social bonding activities such as Yoga, Zumba and Art & Nature.

The Sundays at the Park programme is available at Sembawang Park and Chua Chu Kang Park.

Programme Structure

- A total of 12 weekly sessions over 3 months. Sessions are conducted in English and/or Mandarin.
- Duration of each session: 2 hours
- Each session is capped at 100 participants.
- The programme is currently available for free. Interested participants can call 9112 3972 to reserve their slot
- Participants will take part in two activities per session. Activities conducted during the session includes:

S/No	Activities	Benefits
1	Yoga	Yoga is a perfect bonding activity for participants to have a great workout together. It promotes flexibility, strength, coordination and conditioning as well as self-discipline and concentration. Parents will also be able to guide their child throughout the entire session.
2	Physical Exercise (i.e. Loopz/ Zumba/ Jazzercise)	Fusion of various activities incorporated with pop music tends to be more fun and exciting. The intensity of the exercise is moderate and therefore is able to induce the body to release happy hormones to relieve stress and boost self-esteem.
3	Win, Lose or Draw!	Win, lose or draw challenges participants to guess what their teammates are drawing in order to score points. With drawing being the main form of communication, participants have to work closely as a team.
4	Art & Nature	Being outdoors can lift our spirits and stoke our creativity. Participants will learn simple art and craft within the park as art is everywhere in nature. Participants will be able to draw inspiration provided by the textures, colours, as well as the sounds from the beautiful park.
5	Treasure Hunt	Participants will pose as treasure hunters within the park, hunting for clues to solve the mystery for the week. Clues will be planted around the park so as to encourage participants to work as a team as well as to fully explore the beautiful park.



LEGEND