

## PRESS RELEASE

### **HPB PARTNERS NTUC WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT SECRETARIAT (WDS) TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACES**

*HPB and NTUC WDS collaborate to encourage sign-up of the extended Workplace Health Promotion Grant to support women's health programmes through NTUC women union leaders*

**Singapore, 11 September 2013:** The Health Promotion Board (HPB) and NTUC Women's Development Secretariat (WDS) have collaborated to get 1,700 women union leaders to encourage union companies to sign up for the Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) Grant to support women's health programmes and offer women-centric health promotion programmes to their employees.

2 This will be done through various platforms such as health talks between NTUC WDS and the women union leaders as well as through dialogue sessions.

3 In March this year, HPB sought insights from 120 women aged 18 to 69 on Singaporean women's perceptions and attitudes towards health. Being a woman is stressful as many women today fulfil multiple roles as mothers, wives, and employees. Often, their family needs takes priority over their own health.

4 With this in mind, HPB has collaborated with NTUC WDS as workplaces serve as an effective outreach platform to promote women's health especially among working mothers who play a pivotal role in influencing the health behaviours of their children and family members.

## **Extension of the Workplace Health Promotion Grant to support women's health programmes**

5 HPB and NTUC WDS want to help employers create a supportive work environment and provide convenient and accessible health promotion programmes to employees. Since July this year, an additional \$5,000 is available for companies to organise women-centric events. This is an enhancement to the existing annual \$15,000 WHP Grant launched in 2001.

6 With the availability of the Grant, it offers both employees and employers accessible and affordable tools, resources and guidance to boost women's health at the workplace. Companies can tap on the grant to help female employees offset the cost of their breast and cervical cancer screening tests as well as use the grant to pay for the 'SHE (Strong Healthy Employees) Inspires!' series of health talks.

7 Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Health and Manpower, said, "Working women today have to balance the demands of family and work. Eight in 10 women aged 20 to 39 and one in two older women aged 40 to 69 are active in the workforce<sup>1</sup>. As Chair of the Women's Health Advisory Committee and a working mother myself, I know this is not an easy task. As women juggle work and family commitments, it is so easy for us to lose sight of our own health and wellbeing. We want to help women by bringing health promotion programmes to women at the workplaces. As we move forward, we hope companies understand that investing in the health of their female employees through the Workplace Health Promotion Grant will in turn help them achieve greater productivity in the long term."

8 Ms Sylvia Choo, Director, Women's Development Secretariat, NTUC, said, "Through our pool of 1,700 women union leaders, we hope to work closely with HPB to reach out to our unionised companies, to advocate and promote the benefits of the Workplace Health Promotion Grant for women at workplaces. It is important that our women workers are protected and are provided with such support from their employers. We hope that more companies can tap on this grant, which will in turn benefit more women workers."

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<sup>1</sup> Singapore Workforce 2012, Ministry of Manpower

9 Since the extension of the WHP Grant to support women's health programmes in July, four companies have submitted their application. HPB aims to reach out to 100 workplaces by 2015.

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Annex 1 Factsheet on the extended Workplace Health Promotion Grant – Women's Health

Annex 2 Factsheet on "S.H.E (Stronger, Healthier Employees) Inspires!" Talks

**Issued by Health Promotion Board**

## **Annex 1 Factsheet on the extended Workplace Health Promotion Grant – Women’s Health**

Currently, the Workplace Health Promotion Grant (WHP) comprises funding for three components: General Health, Targeted Interventions and Mental Health. The Health Promotion Board (HPB) is extending the WHP Grant to support women’s health in the workplaces. By keeping women employees healthy, employers can benefit from greater productivity as women employees remain longer in the workforce.

This new grant component will be piloted for one year, from 31st July 2013. Successful applicants may use the grant to encourage their women employees to go for women’s cancer screening by offsetting the cost of breast and cervical cancer screening as well as talks on women’s health and wellbeing. The topics of the talks could include women-related health issues (e.g. breast and cervical cancer, osteoporosis, sexual and reproductive health), work-life balance, parenting and health tips for the family.

The maximum grant funded by HPB is \$5,000. The requesting organisation will need to co-fund 50% of the approved grant quantum for the women’s health project. For Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the organisation will need to co-fund 20 per cent of the approved grant quantum.

Eligibility for the grant requires submissions to include activities focused on both women’s cancer screening as well as education and empowerment programmes.

Women's Health Component	Funded by Grant	
	Yes	No
<b>Women's Cancer Screening</b>	<p>Recommended that at least 50% of total approved Grant be used for the following screening tests*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mammogram for breast cancer screening</li> <li>• Pap Smear for cervical cancer screening</li> </ul> <p>Only for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other health screening (e.g. diagnostic tests for breast cancer and cervical cancer, X-ray, liver function test, ECG)</li> <li>• Other expenses that are covered by other components (e.g. General Health &amp; Mental Health)</li> </ul>
<b>Education and Empowerment Programmes</b>	<p>HPB-approved talks on women's health and wellbeing. These talks aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate women on the importance of healthy lifestyle and encourage them to go for regular health screening and follow-up (in particular, breast and cervical cancer screening)</li> <li>• Equip working women with practical tips to achieve personal effectiveness and work-life balance</li> <li>• Empower women with health tips so that they can make informed health choices for themselves and family</li> <li>• Empower working mothers with knowledge and skills to cope with unique challenges to do with pregnancy and parenting</li> </ul> <p>The list of approved talks can be found in Annex A. The minimum number to conduct a talk is 10 employees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of health education resources (Note: Complimentary resources are available from HPB)</li> <li>• Talks, workshops or seminars with topics on divorce, remarriage, dating and alternative medicine</li> <li>• Physical activity classes or events (e.g. yoga)</li> <li>• Other expenses that are covered by other components (e.g. General Health &amp; Mental Health)</li> </ul>

\* The extended WHP Grant funds only Mammogram and Pap Smear for women employees (Singaporeans and Permanent Residents) who meet HPB's age eligibility criteria. Screening tests are carried out at polyclinics participating in BreastScreen Singapore and CervicalScreen Singapore.

## **Annex 2 Factsheet on “S.H.E (Stronger, Healthier Employees) Inspires!” Talks**

### **S.H.E Inspires! Women’s Workplace Health Series**

The Women’s Workplace Health Series is an initiative under the extended Workplace Health Promotion Grant to support women’s health programmes, which aims to support and empower working women to take charge of their health and be a positive influence to their colleagues, friends and family. Entitled “S.H.E Inspires!”, the acronym S.H.E can stand for a “Stronger, Healthier Employee”. The Women’s Workplace Health Series is targeted at working women aged 18-69 years old and comprises of 6 modules. The key objectives include:

- Educating, supporting and empowering women to go for regular health screening and follow up, especially breast and cervical screening
- Equipping working women with the knowledge and skills to achieve work-life balance and make informed health choices for themselves and family members
- Provide support for working mothers to cope with the unique challenges in pre and post pregnancy life stages.

The modules span across a wide variety of topics, covering breast and cervical cancer screening, pre- and post-natal workshops, children’s health and parenting workshops.

#### **1. On Top of it All**

##### ***Moving towards Work-Life Balance***

The average working woman today wears many hats. With so many demands from the workplace and home, it is easy for them to neglect themselves. From dealing with workplace stresses to managing communication issues at home, this course aims to equip working women with skills to stay healthy and stay on top of life’s challenges.

##### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To equip women with skills to cope with both the challenges of the workplace and home, such as: stress and time management, communication skills and maintaining mental well-being.
- To equip women to cope with women-specific challenges such as coping with pre-menstrual syndrome, managing household demands, communicating with one’s spouse and coping as a caregiver.
- To empower women to go for regular breast and cervical screening.

#### **2. Look Good, Feel Great!**

##### ***Bringing Out the Best in You***

This workshop aims to empower you to make positive choices to achieve a more joyful, more beautiful you. Participants will boost their self-confidence and stay youthful by picking up tips on eating well, keeping fit, choosing healthy habits and dressing smart.

##### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To improve one’s knowledge of proper self-care and weight management through tips on physical activity, nutrition and highlighting harmful effects of smoking and alcohol.
- To empower women to go for regular breast and cervical screening.

#### **3. Baby on the Way**

##### ***Planning for and Dealing with Pregnancy***

Planning for a baby and coping with pregnancy is an important life stage for many women. This course aims to equip women with the knowledge and skills to cope with the challenges, so they can enjoy the process of pregnancy fully.

##### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To prepare and equip women and their spouses with knowledge and skills to plan for pregnancy.

- To improve one's knowledge of the various stages of pregnancy and how to stay healthy for baby.
- To increase confidence of working women and their spouses to cope with the challenges of pregnancy.
- To empower women to go for regular breast and cervical screening.

#### **4. Staying Mummi-licious!**

##### ***A New Mom's Survival Guide***

Being a working mother with a new baby can be overwhelming. The physical, emotional and mental changes occurring post-pregnancy can be difficult to cope with. This course aims to equip you with the knowledge and skills to cope with this stage of life to fully enjoy motherhood as a working mother.

##### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To prepare and equip women and their spouses with knowledge and skills to cope with the physical, emotional and mental changes post-pregnancy.
- To improve confidence of working women and their spouses to cope with the challenges of being a new mother.
- To learn important skills to stay healthy post-pregnancy and tips to look after a newborn baby.
- To empower women to go for regular breast and cervical screening

#### **5. Live Long, Live Strong!**

##### ***Ageing gracefully***

We cannot prevent ageing, but we can surely choose to age gracefully! This course is highly recommended for any woman above the age of 40 years of age. Topics like osteoporosis, menopause, dementia, chronic disease and the importance of regular breast screening will be covered. Inspiring breast cancer survivor stories will be shared.

##### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To equip women aged 40 years and older with knowledge and skills to cope with health challenges that come with ageing. These include topics such as osteoporosis, dementia, chronic disease and menopause.
- To encourage women to go for regular health screening, especially breast screening for those above 50 years of age, through the first-hand sharing of breast cancer survivor stories on video. Call-to-action pledges will be given out for women to make the commitment to screen regularly.

#### **6. I See, I Do!**

##### ***The Power of Positive Role Modelling***

Many of us underestimate the power and influence we have over our children. If you are a working parent, this module is for you! Learn how you could impact your child through positive role-modelling and pick up tips to help your child towards a healthy lifestyle!

##### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To equip participants with the knowledge and skills needed to be positive role models to their children for a healthier lifestyle
- To support working parents with positive parenting and communication tips.