



## ENHANCING COMMUNITY CARE AND CAREGIVING

The Ministry of Health (MOH) will continue to transform healthcare delivery and bring holistic, person-focused care closer to home through better access to primary and community care.

2. With an ageing population, MOH is working closely with healthcare providers, voluntary welfare organisations and community care providers to enhance options for seniors to be cared for at home in familiar surroundings and to live independently in the community. Beyond increasing capacity, we will enhance the quality and variety of care services and strengthen the links between social care and healthcare for our seniors. Efforts include piloting new models of care and enhancing existing services for seniors and their caregivers.

### Strengthening Primary Care

#### *Expansion of polyclinic network*

3. We will continue to expand our polyclinic network and capacity, and strengthen our primary care infrastructure. MOH will open six new polyclinics by 2023, and another four to six polyclinics by 2030. This will enlarge our network to 30 to 32 polyclinics by 2030, and give an added boost to primary care. The new polyclinics include:

- Six new polyclinics (Bukit Panjang, Eunos, Kallang, Khatib, Sembawang and Tampines North) to be completed by 2023.
- Two newly announced polyclinics (Serangoon and Tengah) to be completed by 2025.
- More new polyclinics (locations to be finalised) to be completed by 2030.

4. We will also continue to redevelop existing polyclinics to meet anticipated demand. Recent and ongoing efforts include:

- Redevelopment of Ang Mo Kio and Yishun polyclinics which opened in January and July 2018 respectively.
- Redevelopment of Pasir Ris polyclinic as part of the Integrated Transport Hub.

#### *Expansion of Primary Care Networks*

5. We launched the Primary Care Networks (PCN) scheme in January 2018 to support private General Practitioner (GP) clinics in organising themselves into networks that offer team-based care in the community. Under the scheme, patients receive care through a multi-disciplinary team of doctors, nurses and primary care coordinators for more holistic management of their chronic conditions.

6. Today, there are 10 PCNs comprising more than 450 GP clinics on board the PCN scheme, which is an increase from about 300 last year. More than 40% of Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) GP clinics are now networked through PCNs. Collectively, the PCNs serve more than 70,000 patients with chronic diseases.

### ***Expansion of Community Nursing teams***

7. To support preventive health and anchor care in the community, we set up Community Nursing (CN) teams in 2017 in neighbourhoods across Singapore. Comprising Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs), Clinical Nurse Leaders (NCs), Staff Nurses, care coordinators and volunteers, CN teams provide personalised, coordinated care to seniors with different care needs and allow them to age-in-place in the community.

8. We will expand the coverage of our CN teams from 18 to 29 geographical areas around Singapore by 2020 and partner more Senior Activity Centres (SACs) so that more seniors can benefit from access to community nursing services. Moving forward, more seniors will be able to go to the CN teams through SACs for health assessments and sharing of health advice on managing chronic diseases and general well-being.

## **Communities of Care for Seniors**

### ***Caregiver Support Action Plan***

9. To strengthen support for senior caregiving in the community, MOH has developed the Caregiver Support Action Plan<sup>1</sup>, which will be rolled out progressively from this year. The Action Plan complements the existing suite of programmes and assistance that caregivers currently benefit from. Together with partner agencies, MOH will embark on enhancing five areas: a) Care navigation; b) Financial support; c) Workplace support; d) Caregiver respite services; and e) Caregiver empowerment and training.

10. A key aspect of the Action Plan is to enhance respite options for caregivers. Initiatives planned include a night respite service pilot with selected nursing home providers to support caregivers of seniors with dementia and who experience behavioural and sleep issues at night. This pilot is targeted to be rolled out in the second half of 2019. We will also pilot a home-based custodial care respite service which offers assistance such as showering, dressing and feeding for cancer patients receiving home palliative care from mid-2019. To ensure that caregivers can access respite services in a shorter period of time, the Agency for Integrated Care will also pilot a pre-enrolment system with a number of senior care centres and nursing homes from the first quarter of 2019.

11. Another key recommendation of the Action Plan is a new \$200 monthly Home Caregiving Grant (HCG) to defray the costs of home and community-based long-term caregiving of individuals with permanent moderate disability (i.e. require some assistance with at least three Activities of Daily Living), regardless of age. The HCG replaces the existing Foreign Domestic Worker (FDW) Grant<sup>2</sup>. Caregivers will have more flexibility to use the grant to defray caregiving expenses, such as the cost of hiring a foreign domestic worker,

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<sup>1</sup> More information on the Caregiver Support Action Plan is at [www.moh.gov.sg/caregiver-support](http://www.moh.gov.sg/caregiver-support)

<sup>2</sup> Existing FDW Grant beneficiaries will be automatically transited to the HCG.

costs of home and community-based services and costs of transportation to medical appointments. Eligible care recipients can nominate any caregiver to receive the means-tested grant. The grant will be available by end-2019.

### ***Senior Centres to serve different groups of seniors***

12. MOH is reviewing the eldercare landscape to enhance the scope and reach of services in our Senior Centres. These include SACs, Senior Care Centres and Active Ageing Hubs. For example, those currently providing day care services may offer additional wellness programmes, and services in the centres could be made available to all seniors, not just those living in rental flats. We will consult various stakeholders, including service providers and voluntary welfare organisations, on how we can implement this common vision together from FY2020.

### ***More assisted living options***

13. MOH is working closely with the Ministry of National Development (MND) and the Housing and Development Board (HDB) to explore an assisted living model in public housing, where housing is twinned with care services.

14. Seniors can buy into a home that is senior-friendly in design, together with a package of programmes and services that caters to seniors' needs over time. We plan for seniors to be able to select from different care packages, and optional add-on services best suited to their health status, needs and preferences. These services may include health screenings, exercise programmes, housekeeping services, 24/7 emergency support, care coordination and personal care to support them in ageing independently.

15. At the same time, we are exploring new infrastructural designs and programmes such as communal spaces like dining and recreation rooms to further encourage social interaction amongst these seniors, so that they too can age in a community of care and mutual support.

16. MND, MOH and HDB will be consulting the public through focus group discussions (FGD) this year to seek views on the proposed concept to develop a model that will meet the needs of seniors in Singapore. The FGD participants will include seniors, caregivers and eldercare professionals. More details will be released later this year.

### ***Moments of Life App (Active Ageing)***

17. MOH will tap on technology to reach out to our seniors, starting with Merdeka Generation (MG) seniors who are more IT literate. In partnership with Smart Nation and Digital Government Office, and the Public Service Division, MOH will expand the existing Moments of Life app to support seniors in active ageing. In future, MG seniors can directly benefit from this app as it can be used to access personalised information, including active ageing programmes near their home and government benefits such as the MG Package and GSTV Voucher Scheme.

18. The app will be piloted later this year and will complement our Silver Generation Ambassadors' face-to-face outreach to MG seniors. Over time, we will progressively expand the app to benefit Pioneer Generation and other seniors aged 60 and above.