

COS FACTSHEET: BEYOND HEALTHCARE TO HEALTH

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS TO LIVE HEALTHILY

1. The Ministry of Health (MOH) will continue to invest in good health, working closely with individuals, families, and industry and community partners.

Extend Financing Schemes for Better Preventive and Primary Care

Increase of Medisave withdrawal limits for outpatient treatment

2. From June 2018, MOH will raise the withdrawal limit for the Medisave400 scheme by 25 per cent, from \$400 per year to \$500 per year. This can be used for Chronic Disease Management Programme (CDMP) treatments, vaccinations, and health screenings.

3. The age limit for Flexi-Medisave will also be lowered from the second half of the year. Singaporeans aged 60 and above will be able to use up to \$200 of their Medisave a year flexibly, for outpatient medical treatments at public sector specialist outpatient clinics (SOCs), polyclinics, and Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) GPs. These changes will help more patients to defray part of their out-of-pocket expenses, while ensuring that they have sufficient Medisave balances for future needs.

Expansion of CDMP and CHAS

4. Without intervention, one in three individuals with pre-diabetes is likely to develop diabetes within eight years. Through appropriate management and follow-up, progression from pre-diabetes to Type 2 diabetes is preventable. This avoids downstream medical complications, which often result in poorer health outcomes and costlier treatment for the patient.

5. To encourage those with pre-diabetes to seek early intervention, pre-diabetes will be included in the scope of diabetes under CDMP and CHAS from June 2018. The list of conditions under CDMP will also be expanded to cover ischaemic heart disease from 1 June 2018. With this addition, there will now be a total of 20 conditions covered under CDMP.

6. In addition, from June 2018, MOH will extend CDMP to cover diabetes-related consumables for diabetic patients who require insulin injections and need to regularly monitor their blood glucose through purchase of lancets and test strips over an extended period.

Continuing the War on Diabetes

Expansion of the Healthier Ingredient Development Scheme

7. The Health Promotion Board (HPB) is exploring ways to reduce the consumption of added sugars in Singaporeans' diet by 25 per cent by 2020. This includes encouraging both the manufacturing and food & beverage sectors to develop healthier lower-sugar alternatives, by tapping on emerging food technologies and a growing range of potential ingredients, such as novel sugars allulose and isomaltulose.

8. To spur this development, HPB will expand the Healthier Ingredient Development Scheme (HIDS) to support the food industry in developing lower-sugar products – desserts, sauces and beverages – with an additional funding of \$15 million in FY2018 and FY2019. Besides funding, HPB will also connect the novel ingredient suppliers with manufacturers and F&B establishments, as well as provide technical guidance in the reformulation process.

Whole-of-Government Healthier Drinks Policy

9. The whole of government is also leading by example in the War on Diabetes. From May 2018, all pre-packaged beverages sold on government premises will have to meet the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) lower-in-sugar guidelines, while freshly prepared coffee and tea should be served with no added sugar. These include drinks from vending machines, retail stores, food and beverage outlets, and procured by agencies for meetings and staff pantries. The policy applies to government offices, public service areas, government premises which promote health and wellbeing (e.g. parks, sport facilities, community centres) and educational institutions (e.g. polytechnics, ITE, libraries).

Screen for Life and Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool

10. Regular screening is one of the ways in which Singaporeans can take charge of their health and improve early detection of pre-diabetes or Type 2 diabetes. In line with this strategy, MOH had enhanced government subsidies for the Screen for Life (SFL) programme from September 2017 to encourage more Singaporeans to go for screening and post-screening consultation at CHAS clinics. As of February 2018, close to 30,000 Singaporeans have benefitted from the enhanced SFL screening subsidies.

11. HPB also launched the Diabetes Risk Assessment (DRA) tool in September 2017 to encourage adults aged 18 to 39 years to assess their current risk for undiagnosed diabetes. As of February 2018, the DRA tool has been used about 116,000 times by individuals aged 18 to 39 years. About 18 per cent of individuals were assessed to be at higher risk of having diabetes, and they will have access to subsidised cardiovascular risk screening and follow up at all CHAS GPs.

Development of national strategy to reduce lower limb and toe amputations

12. Diabetes is the most common cause of non-traumatic lower extremity amputations (LEAs). Singapore has one of the highest diabetes-related LEA rates in

the world: in 2015, about 180 such amputations were performed for every 100,000 adult Singaporeans with diabetes, compared to the OECD average of 60.

13. MOH will establish a workgroup to develop a national strategy that aims to reduce lower limb and toe amputations in people with diabetes. The workgroup will review the organisation and provision of diabetic foot services at the national level, as well as make recommendations on national care guidelines, and the roles and training needs of healthcare professionals involved in diabetic foot care.

Patient Empowerment for Self-care Framework

14. As part of our efforts to better support individuals with diabetes, MOH is developing a Patient Empowerment for Self-care Framework to help them initiate and sustain lifestyle changes, and improve treatment adherence for better disease management, with the support of their families and caregivers, healthcare professionals, community-based providers, as well as other forms of social support.

15. A key component will be the development of curricula and materials designed for patients, caregivers and the public. These will cover topics such as healthy eating habits and exercise. The first tranche of materials, expected to be available around mid-2018, are designed for use by GPs, nurses and volunteers during their consults or peer visits for patients and caregivers.

Intensifying Tobacco Control Effects

16. Singapore's goal is for a nicotine-free and tobacco-free future. We have enhanced restrictions on tobacco advertising and promotion, such as the point of sale display ban introduced in 2017, as part of a multi-pronged tobacco control strategy.

17. As announced at Budget 2018, we have increased excise duties for all tobacco products by 10 per cent. We have also increased the minimum legal age for the sale, possession, use and purchase of tobacco products from 18 to 21.

18. MOH recently launched a public consultation to gather detailed views on a proposal for the introduction of standardised packaging together with enlarged graphic health warnings. The public consultation paper, which sets out our preliminary assessment of relevant evidence and the details of the proposals may be found on MOH's website. The public consultation will end on 16 March 2018.