

Brief on Ageing Population in Singapore

Background

1. The trend towards population ageing is an urgent problem in Singapore today. As of 2008, there are more than 300,000 persons who are aged 65 years and above in Singapore. The number of persons aged 65 years and above will escalate from 8.7%¹ in 2008 to about 19% of our population in 2030.
2. For a generic overview of Singapore's population, please refer to the Population in Brief 2009 report prepared by the National Population Secretariat, at <http://www.nps.gov.sg/files/news/Population%20in%20Brief%202009.pdf>.

Government's Efforts

3. In 2004, the **Committee on Ageing Issues (CAI)** was formed to propose policy recommendations to prepare the nation for an ageing society. The CAI was a forum with representation from the people, private and government sectors, in recognition of the fact that ageing issues are multifaceted and dynamic in nature. In 2006, the CAI released its Report on the Ageing Population, detailing its recommendations. The report can be found at http://www.mcys.gov.sg/successful_ageing/Report.html.
4. The recommendations are now being implemented and subsumed under the agenda of the **Ministerial Committee on Ageing (MCA)**, established in March 2007. Comprising several key ministers and led by Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Mr Lim Boon Heng. The latest report prepared by MCA can be found at <http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/Portals/0/Summary/pressroom/03-2008.pdf>. MCA has the vision of achieving "Successful Ageing for Singapore", through pursuing a whole-of-government response to ageing along the following four strategic thrusts:
 - Enhance Employability and Financial Security;
 - Provide Holistic and Affordable Healthcare and Eldercare;
 - Enable Ageing-in-Place; and
 - Promote Active Ageing.
5. A number of studies have been commissioned and carried out to evaluate the impact of ageing on Singapore which are useful in identifying the needs and challenges of the senior citizens.
 - The latest **National Survey of Senior Citizens 2005** provided key information on the physical and mental health of senior citizens. Please

¹ Singapore Department of Statistics, Population Trend 2009,
<http://www.singstat.gov.sg/stats/themes/people/popnindicators.pdf>

- refer to <http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/portals/0/Summary/publication/NSSC-2005.pdf> for the full report. This survey was also conducted in 1995 and the report of **National Survey of Senior Citizens 1995** is available at http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/portals/0/Summary/research/Materials_SC_NationalSurvey1995.pdf
- The study on **Public Perception and Attitudes towards Ageing and Seniors 2008** aimed to identify areas to improve senior citizens' overall engagement in society and well-being. The report is available http://www.c3a.org.sg/images/pdf/PubPerceptAttTowardsAgeSnrs_08_Report.pdf while the data slides can be found at http://www.c3a.org.sg/images/pdf/PubPerceptAttTowardsAgeSnrs_08_Data.pdf.
 - **The Report on the State of the Elderly 2009** provides a comprehensive review on the current state of Singapore's elderly population. For downloading of the full report, please refer to this website <http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/ResearchRoom/ResearchStatistics/ReportontheStateoftheElderlyR2009.aspx>

Supporting Agencies

6. Besides formulating government policies to address the issues of ageing, it is essential to leverage on the strength and networks of the supporting agencies to achieve the vision of “Successful Ageing for Singapore” via the four strategic thrusts.

7. In line with *providing holistic and affordable healthcare and eldercare*, **Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)** was formed as an independent corporate entity in 2009 to be the primary body to advise and guide patients and their families on the use of appropriate healthcare services. It also looks into the enhancement and integration of Intermediate and Long-Term Care (also known as step-down care) sector. More information can be found at <http://www.aic.sg/>.

8. **Centre for Enabled Living (CEL)** also helps to drive the strategic thrust of *providing holistic and affordable healthcare and eldercare*. It is a one stop centre for seniors who need eldercare and supportive services via its partnership with service providers. More information can be found at its official website <http://www.cel.sg/>.

9. In line with the strategic thrust of *promoting active ageing*, the **Council for Third Age (C3A)** was set up in 2007. C3A provides funding for pilot projects supporting the outcomes of active ageing and serves to educate the public on ageing, through events and exhibitions. For more information on C3A, please refer to <http://www.c3a.org.sg/>.

Silver Industry

10. There are opportunities arising from a silver industry and potential for Singapore to be a centre of innovation and knowledge on ageing. In 2006, the Silver Industry Committee (SIC) was set up to recommend policies and to promote the development of the silver industry in Singapore. Please refer to <http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/Portals/0/Summary/pressroom/16-20071.pdf> for some background information on SIC. During its term, it successfully organised the Silver Industry Conference and Exhibition (SICEX) in 2008, which comprised an industry conference and consumer exhibition to fuel interest in the silver industry. The press release of SICEX 2008 can be found at <http://www.mcys.gov.sg/MCDSFiles/Press/Articles/60-2007.pdf>

11. It is important to harness innovative commercial solutions to address the challenges of an ageing population. One such initiative is the Silver Community Test Bed Programme (SCTBP) which started in 2008. Under the programme, companies are funded to test bed solutions in a real-life elderly living setting. The first two SCTBP grant calls focused on “Home Monitoring Systems” and “Design-driven Products”. Information on the current third grant call focusing on “Enabling Community Healthcare and Wellness” can be found at <http://app1.mcys.gov.sg/PressRoom/GovtTriplesFundingSupportSilverCommTestBed.aspx>.