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Media Release

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NTUC HEALTH ASSISTS CLOSE TO 700 VULNERABLE SENIORS AT JURONG WEST AND BUKIT MERAH THROUGH CARE MANAGERS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VOLUNTEERS

1 One of the pioneer operators of the government-initiated Cluster Support programme, NTUC Health has assisted 683 seniors in the Jurong West and Bukit Merah zones since the programme was launched in 2012. This was shared at the opening of NTUC Health's Cluster Support office at Taman Jurong this morning, graced by Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies, and Advisor to Jurong GRC Grassroots Organisations.

2 The Cluster Support programme aims to enable vulnerable seniors living alone and with low family support to age-in-place at home and within the community for as long as possible. Through professional case management, Care Managers assess the varied needs of seniors, and connect them with community partners who provide relevant services and resources. (*See Annex A for description of the Cluster Support programme*)

Caring for the mental well-being of seniors

3 Apart from the Cluster Support Programme, NTUC Health also works with the government on other complementary programmes that support seniors. The first of these is CREST (Community Resource Engagement and Support Team) which reaches out to those with or at risk of mental illness. NTUC Health reached out to some 4,000 members of the public through

CREST to educate them on the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions and on how they can better relate with and help loved ones who may be having these conditions. *(See Annex for description of CREST)*

Working with volunteers to care for seniors

4 NTUC Health also recruits and deploys a network of community caregivers under the CAN (Caring Assistance from Neighbours) and Temasek Cares – CAN programmes. These caregivers who are known as CAN Carers, support the work of NTUC Health’s Care Managers by visiting seniors regularly to check on their well-being. Temasek Cares CAN Carers further supervise the seniors’ medication and ensure that they go for their medical appointments. To date, NTUC Health has a team of 77 CAN and Temasek Cares-CAN Carers serving the Jurong West and Bukit Merah zones. *(See Annex for description of the CAN and Temasek Cares-CAN programmes)*

Stronger community partnerships to better serve seniors

5 Case management work as described above, is one of the services managed by Cluster Operators such as NTUC Health. Cluster Operators work closely with Social Service Offices, social service providers, grassroots organisations and other stakeholders within the HDB estates to achieve greater synergy and maximise resources for community outreach. Apart from Jurong West, NTUC Health is also the appointed Cluster Operator for Bukit Merah.

Bringing care to seniors

6 Said 69-year-old Mdm Lau Kang Ngoh who was recently helped by NTUC Health’s Care Managers to resolve a severe bed bug issue at her home, “I am very grateful for the Care Manager who helped to get fumigators to get rid of the bed bugs at home. I and my husband faced many sleepless nights over the last few years because

of the itch from the bites. Now we can finally sleep well at night and are looking forward to the new and clean furniture that will be arriving soon.”

7 75-year-old Mr Sim Huang Chee whose Care Manager arranged regular food rations, a washing machine, and a motorised scooter for him to move about more conveniently said, “I want to thank the Care Manager and my CAN Carer for visiting me regularly. Thank you for assisting me to obtain the necessary services and home furniture so that I can continue to live independently.”

END

ANNEX

About NTUC Health Co-operative Limited

NTUC Health is an NTUC social enterprise that provides quality and affordable eldercare and health services. Bringing together the expertise and experience of NTUC Eldercare and NTUC Unity Healthcare into a single organisation, NTUC Health offers an integrated suite of services to meet the growing needs of families and their dependents. NTUC Health currently operates day/senior care centres, home care services, a nursing home, a family medicine clinic, dental clinics, pharmacy retail outlets, and senior activity and wellness centres.

About NTUC Health Cluster Support

NTUC Health Cluster Support aims to enable vulnerable seniors with no or little family support to age in place in their home and community for as long as possible by connecting them to resources and services for their physical, functional, financial, mental, social, and emotional health. Its Care Managers do this through comprehensive assessments, case management and close monitoring of the seniors to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

About the CAN Programme

The Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) jointly initiated the Caring Assistance from Neighbours (CAN) programme in 2013. It empowers neighbours in the community to assist vulnerable seniors. CAN Carers visit such seniors regularly and help to spot and report signs and symptoms of self-neglect, deterioration of senior's physical/mental health, and provide emotional support by befriending and engaging the seniors in social activities.

About the Temasek Cares - CAN Programme

The Temasek Cares - CAN (Caring Assistance from Neighbours) programme is a pilot programme by Temasek Cares and the Agency for Integrated Care to help the vulnerable elderly better manage their health conditions. Under the programme, trained community caregivers visit the elderly at home to monitor their health and provide assistance on a daily basis. They assist the elderly to understand their illness, remind them to take their medication and measure key health indicators. The daily monitoring will help pick up negative changes in health earlier and result in more timely medical intervention. Such an approach to chronic disease management will strengthen the neighbourhood support system and allow more elderly to age in place. This pilot programme covers two districts in the Taman Jurong and Bukit Merah zones which have a high concentration of elderly.

About CREST

The CREST (Community Resource, Engagement and Support Team) programme, a pilot programme first initiated in 2011 by the Agency for Integrated Care and funded by Temasek Cares, serves as a community safety network for those with, or at risk of mental illness by increasing public awareness and educates on the early detection/recognition of signs and symptoms of mental conditions. CREST also provides basic emotional support to clients and caregivers, and links them to appropriate services to support their mental health needs.