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Media Release

For immediate release

NTUC HEALTH'S FIRST SENIOR WELLNESS CENTRE BRINGS TOGETHER PARTNERS WITH SERVICES TO ENABLE SUCCESSFUL AGING IN PLACE

SilverCOVE to reach out to 200 seniors in the Marsiling area

- 1 SilverCOVE, NTUC Health's first Senior Wellness Centre, has gathered a line-up of community and corporate partners with services to enable seniors in Marsiling to age in place healthily and happily. These partners are specialists in areas such as healthcare, life-long learning, financial advisory, and design. With their support, SilverCOVE aims to serve the needs of some 200 seniors by the end of 2016.
- 2 This was shared today at the official opening of SilverCOVE, which was graced by Mdm Halimah Yacob, Speaker of Parliament and MP for Marsiling-Yew Tee GRC (Marsiling).

MEETING NEEDS HOLISTICALLY

- 3 A Ministry of Social and Family Development initiative, the new SilverCOVE senior wellness centre supports seniors living in serviced apartments at blocks 180A and 180B Marsiling Road, with an Alert Alarm System in every unit, and the wider community with a range of services focusing on their social, physical and mental well-being.

- 4 Said Mr Leon Luai, Head of Clinical Services and Wellness at NTUC Health, “The needs of seniors are multi-faceted and complex. In order to serve them well, we need to look at these needs in a holistic way, and draw from many areas of expertise.”

Healthcare

- 5 With health issues a key concern of seniors, SilverCOVE partnered with **Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH)** to provide community nursing services where nurses are stationed twice a week for basic medical consults and health checks.
- 6 In addition, as some seniors prefer Traditional Chinese Medicine services, the facility has also tied-up with **Eu Yan Sang** to offer TCM consultation and treatment options. Seniors can also have their dental health checked at NTUC Health’s **Unity Denticare** clinic.
- 7 NTUC Health’s **Care@home** further supports frail seniors with home personal care and home healthcare services; allowing them to remain in the community and delaying the need for transfer to a medical/ nursing institution.
- 8 Organic and natural health foods under NTUC Health’s **Origins Healthcare** are also available for purchase at SilverCOVE to encourage healthy eating.

Nurturing the mind and soul

- 9 SilverCOVE partnered the **National Library Board** for a regular supply of books to be placed at the centre's cozy Reading Corner. And with support from the **National Parks Board**, SilverCOVE seniors can also take up gardening as a hobby. They can each adopt a pot of plant at the centre and be responsible for taking care of it every day.

Fitness for life

- 10 While many may imagine the gym as a facility frequented primarily by the young, they will be surprised to find that the seniors at SilverCOVE are regular users of the senior friendly gym. Under the watchful eye of a personal trainer as well as interns from **Republic Polytechnic's** Sports and Exercise Sciences diploma programme, the seniors set their own fitness goals and are encouraged to achieve these with the right exercises.

Designing for well-being

- 11 Based on resident's inputs, design agency **COLOURS** provided pro bono consultancy services to plan and design the space at SilverCOVE. While senior activity centres are commonly utilitarian spaces, the final outcome for SilverCOVE was an open and inviting communal space which promotes social interaction and with in-built versatility to accommodate a range of services and activities.

DOING MORE AS A GROUP OF NTUC SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

- 12 SilverCOVE leveraged the services of the group of NTUC social enterprises to do even more for seniors. For convenience and cost savings, SilverCOVE seniors can be assisted with online order of groceries from **NTUC FairPrice** at discounted rates. These purchases will then be delivered free to the centre for easy pick-up. **NTUC's My First Skool** brings pre-schoolers to SilverCOVE every other week for inter-generational bonding activities such as terrarium-making, group exercises, festive celebrations and art-and-craft sessions with the seniors.
- 13 SilverCOVE also works with **NTUC Income** and **NTUC LearningHub** to run talks and courses on financial planning and computer literacy. NTUC

LearningHub will also introduce games which promote mental agility and creative thinking such as Bee Bot and Strawbees to the seniors at SilverCOVE; their first partnership in this regard with a senior wellness facility.

- 14 Said Ms Thian Ai Ling, Deputy General Manager of My First Skool, "Singapore is facing an ageing population, hence the opportunities for interactions between the young and old will allow our young children in My First Skool to develop a positive and healthy attitude towards the elderly. We believe that *"every generation has something to offer to the others"*. Through sharing experiences, seniors and children can understand each other better, have fun and develop meaningful relationships. It also helps children develop the ability to relate to adults outside of their family. On the other hand, such interaction enhances the mental and social well-being of the elderly."
- 15 On the development of SilverCOVE, NTUC Secretary-General Chan Chun Sing said: "Care for our ageing population is one of the key focuses of NTUC Social Enterprises. We want to create ecosystems where our elders can age in their own homes and communities."
- 16 He continued, "In the case of SilverCOVE, NTUC Social Enterprises have come together to offer an integrated suite of services for our seniors living in Marsiling. Our seniors will be able to use the gym, have health checks; embark on lifelong learning journeys through courses and games; plan their finances to see them through their retirement; and even have groceries delivered to them. Pre-schoolers will also have the chance to interact with our seniors at SilverCOVE and bring cheer to them. Our working Singaporeans can have peace of mind knowing their elderly parents or grandparents are well taken care of, and are leading independent and meaningful lives."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SENIORS' LIVES

- 17 Seniors such as 64-year-old Mdm Salmah Binte Nasir have benefitted from the range of services at SilverCOVE. Apart from the exercise programmes which have improved her knee condition, Mdm Salmah has also picked up new interests such as crocheting. More importantly, she has made new friends in the neighbourhood. “When I just moved here, I couldn’t walk because of my knee operation, and I had to use a *tongkat* (walking stick) to move around. I also did not know the neighbourhood well, so I stayed at home most of the time, with no friends and nothing to do at home. After I started doing the exercises, now I don’t need my *tongkat* anymore. I can walk faster, and can bend down to pick things. I need not worry so much about being on my own when my daughter is at work. Twice a week, I and my friends (at SilverCOVE) will visit each other’s homes. Sometimes I will cook rice, or laksa,” shared Mdm Salmah.
- 18 Added 75-year-old Mr Rengasamy s/o Sinniah, 75, who has lived in Marsiling all his life, “SilverCOVE is the first senior wellness centre I have ever attended. I come here every day to exercise and use the gym as the doctor says this is good for my Parkinson’s disease. All the people here are my friends. I help them to water their plants and add fertilisers because some of them don’t have time to come in every day. Last year in November, they also celebrated my birthday for me and we do that every month for the rest. I’m happier after joining SilverCOVE, and I try to encourage my friends to join too.”

MORE SERVICES FOR SENIORS IN MARSILING

- 19 Apart from SilverCOVE, Marsiling residents are also served by NTUC Health’s Silver Circle Senior Care Centre. More recently, NTUC Health was appointed provider of the Community Befriending programme to support vulnerable



seniors in Marsiling after a successful pilot in Bukit Batok and Taman Jurong constituencies.

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About NTUC Health Co-operative Limited

NTUC Health is an NTUC social enterprise that provides quality and affordable health and eldercare services. Building on more than four decades of experience and expertise, it provides an integrated suite of services to meet the growing needs of families and their dependents. It operates day / senior care centres, home care services, nursing homes, a family medicine clinic, dental clinics, pharmacy retail outlets, a sheltered / senior group home and senior activity and wellness centres. Its team of dedicated doctors, dentists, pharmacists and care professionals supports more than 300,000 people in our community every month.

About NTUC Health's SilverCOVE Senior Wellness Centre

SilverCOVE is an integrated senior wellness facility located at Marsiling Heights. An initiative by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, SilverCOVE was developed to provide a range of facilities, services and activities, both basic and chargeable, to the residents living in the studio apartment blocks in Marsiling Heights as well as other residents around the area. SilverCOVE's vision is to be a forerunner in helping seniors age in place healthily and happily.