Media Release

To: News Editor

Changi General Hospital and South East CDC Unveiled 'Circle of Care @ South East' – Expanding Community Care Support in South East District

Singapore, 22 February 2025 – In light of evolving demographics and changing community needs, Changi General Hospital (CGH) and South East Community Development Council (South East CDC) are expanding their joint community care network under the Neighbours for Active Living Programme (Neighbours). Today, CGH and SECDC unveiled the expanded volunteer befriending programme, now known as '*Circle of Care @ South East*', to drive health literacy and help more residents to get well, keep well, and age well within their communities.

New logo for Circle of Care @ South East

Expanding the reach of care

2   Circle of Care @ South East builds on the success of the Neighbours programme pioneered by CGH and SECDC, which has supported seniors with complex health-social

needs since 2013. This was achieved through a holistic, person-centred approach that integrates healthcare and social support services to improve health outcomes, reduce hospital readmissions and enhance the quality of life for seniors.

3   With the launch of Circle of Care @ South East, the expanded programme aims to build a more activated and empowered community for residents to take ownership of their health and wellness by:

- Extending support beyond seniors to more residents

- Expanding volunteer training beyond befriending to equip them as Community Health Champions

- Fostering deeper community collaborations to create more skill-based volunteering opportunities

- Leveraging the Kampung Eunos Network (KEN) to enhance care collaborations

4   To serve a wider range of beneficiaries, CGH and South East CDC have strengthened their partnership with an enhanced scope for volunteers. CGH plans to scale up volunteer training through a "train-the-trainer" approach that will enable knowledge transfer and create a multiplier effect in driving health literacy in the community. In activating and empowering volunteers as 'Community Health Champions', they will be equipped with essential knowledge in areas such as diet and nutrition, exercise, and mental wellness to better support residents' health journeys and help them keep well at home.

5   "Over the past decade, Neighbours has provided personalised and placed-based care to more than 14,000 seniors in 18 communities in eastern Singapore through an innovative and integrated care model and strong collaborations with 70 community partners, a testament to CGH's longstanding legacy of trusted care for our patients and our community. CGH will continue to strengthen efforts together with South East CDC and more partners, and enhance health literacy to activate and empower more residents and volunteers to take charge of their health and wellbeing for a healthier Singapore," Clinical Professor Ng Kee Chong, Chief Executive Officer, Changi General Hospital.

6   There will be opportunities for volunteers to contribute their area of knowledge and skills, in addition to befriending. For example, volunteers can support community outreach efforts through the organisation of health initiatives and events and contribute towards health education. This sustainable model fosters long-term community engagement,

ensuring that vital health knowledge is shared, practised, and sustained within neighbourhoods—ultimately building a more informed and health-conscious society, enhancing the overall impact of Circle of Care @ South East.

7   "Circle of Care @ South East embodies what South East CDC has always strived to build, a caring and connected community," said Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Mayor of South East District. "As we expand the volunteer programme, we are leveraging the Kampung Eunos Network (KEN) to deepen community involvement and support by streamlining volunteer management and activation. KEN will onboard additional social service agencies to collaborate in serving the seniors and other beneficiaries, ensuring they live healthily and age gracefully."

Honouring volunteers' impact

8   To celebrate the programme's volunteers and their impact, Mayor Fahmi Aliman also hosted this year's Appreciation Day, themed 'Wind Beneath My Wings'. Over 900 volunteers have been trained in the last 13 years to provide companionship, monitor health, and assist with essential tasks.

9   One of the seniors who have benefited from this programme is Mdm Mahhizon, who was frequently admitted to the hospital and had multiple chronic medical conditions in addition to living alone. The Neighbours Wellbeing Coordinators (WBCs) linked her with a volunteer, Mdm Salmiah.

10   Mdm Salmiah was inspired by the dedication of the WBCs and the volunteer in taking care of her late husband. Wanting to help others in need, she joined the programme in 2016. "Being a volunteer with the programme has been an incredibly rewarding journey," said Mdm Salmiah. "While helping Mdm Mahhizon with her health and wellbeing for eight years, we have forged a friendship between us. From checking in on her regularly, reminding her on her medications and medical appointments to providing emotional support and companionship, we are helping seniors like Mdm Mahhizon to live a healthier and more fulfilling life. Mdm Mahhizon has become a companion to me, and I am thankful that Circle of Care @ South East has brought us together through a meaningful cause."

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About the Neighbours for Active Living Programme

Pioneered by Changi General Hospital (CGH) and the South East Community Development Council (South East CDC) in 2013, the Neighbours for Active Living (Neighbours) was created to address the social determinants of health by empowering seniors to get well, keep well, and age well within their own communities. With a holistic, person-centred approach, Neighbours integrates healthcare and social support services to improve the quality of life for residents, especially those who live alone or lack adequate support. The programme leverages a robust network of healthcare professionals, volunteers, and community partners to provide proactive, place-based care that enhances social connectedness, prevents hospital readmissions, and promotes long-term well-being.

About Changi General Hospital

Delivering trusted care since 1935, Changi General Hospital (CGH) is an academic healthcare campus that consistently delivers positive patient and population health outcomes. A tertiary referral centre with over 1,000 beds, CGH receives some 1 million patient visits in Singapore each year. Helmed by a multi-disciplinary, dedicated team of healthcare professionals, CGH is committed to medical research and education, clinical innovation and care for patients through a comprehensive range of medical specialties and services. CGH has been ranked among the World's Best Smart Hospitals (2021-2025); World's Best Specialised Hospitals (2022-2025); World's Best Hospitals (Singapore) (2019-2024) and Best Specialised Hospitals Asia Pacific (2023-2024) by Newsweek and data firm Statista. The hospital is also ranked among Singapore's Best Employers (2023-2024) by The Straits Times and Statista.

For more information, visit www.cgh.com.sg.

About South East Community Development Council

South East Community Development Council (South East CDC), established on 24 November 2001, oversees the Marine Parade Group Representative Constituency (GRC), East Coast GRC, Mountbatten Single Member Constituency (SMC) and MacPherson SMC, serving a population of about half a million residents. At the helm of South East CDC is Mayor Fahmi Aliman, who leads the team in fulfilling the CDC's mission – an Aggregator of Needs and Resources, Builder of Capability and Capacity in Partners and Networks and Connector of Communities. South East CDC initiates and manages programmes in collaboration with both community and corporate partners to nurture a vibrant and self-reliant community.

More information on South East CDC can be found at southeast.cdc.gov.sg, its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/secdc or its Instagram at www.instagram.com/southeastcdc.