

**Embargoed until 19 March 2019, 1:00pm**

## **Alzheimer's Disease Association Introduces First Virtual Reality Application in Asia that offers Users First-hand Experience on Dementia**

- Have you wondered what the world looks like through the eyes of a person living with dementia?
- Alzheimer's Disease Association ("ADA") is the first in Asia to introduce Educational Dementia Immersive Experience ("EDIE"), a virtual reality application developed by Dementia Australia
- Through its 360-degree immersive experience and sensory nature of the virtual reality experience, it allows users to experience what a person with dementia goes through everyday

**Singapore, 19 March 2019** – Some 30 people comprising of industry partners and professional care staff, were invited to see through the lens of a person living with dementia at the "Enabling EDIE™" workshop held at ADA Academy.

Aimed at training professional care staff, industry partners and social services, this workshop hopes to enhance their knowledge of the impact of dementia and adopt enablement approaches that will improve the quality of life for persons living with dementia.

Conducted in two separate 3-hour workshops by four ADA trainers, participants were introduced to EDIE™ (*pronounced 'Eddie'*), a person with dementia who faces challenges with everyday tasks such as heading to the bathroom in his own home. After the virtual reality experience, participants shared the challenges they faced as a person living with dementia and learnt how to develop a support plan in partnership with the person with dementia and care partner with the goal of enablement.

“With EDIE™, dementia care training conducted by ADA Academy is enhanced. EDIE™ takes into consideration the sensory perceptual changes faced by the person with dementia, while putting the participant through a highly immersive experience. The technology provides the bridge to the community involved, including health practitioners, and those influencing the care environments such as administrators of nursing homes and senior care facilities, and even architects, to truly put themselves in the shoes of the person living with dementia,” shares Head of ADA Academy, Ms Koh Hwan Jing.

The Association is also thrilled to be tapping onto technologies and innovation to educate care staff and enable persons with dementia. The technology is very much portable, and it can be brought to healthcare professionals or even a caregiver.

Besides training, ADA plans to bring EDIE™ to communities to help the public understand more about this condition in the hope of reducing stigma. As dementia becomes more prevalent, there is still much to be done in terms of addressing the stigma. Based on the Well-being of the Singapore Elderly (WiSE) study by Institute of Mental Health in 2015, 1 in 10 persons aged 60 and above in Singapore may have dementia and that translates to almost 82,000 people in 2018.

“Currently, many people think that dementia is only memory loss and forgetfulness. That is not true as there are other symptoms, such as loss of sensory and visual perception, resulting in them having difficulties identifying objects in familiar environments. We hope that with EDIE™, this virtual reality platform will present a more effective way to help someone see through the eyes of a person with dementia, reduce the stigma, design and create care environments that are enabling and better support the wellbeing of persons with dementia living in the community,” elaborates ADA Chief Executive Officer, Mr Jason Foo.

#### **About the Enabling EDIE™ Workshop at ADA Academy**

Enabling EDIE™ is a 3-hour workshop that will be conducted at ADA Academy from May 2019 onwards. More information will be available on [ADA's website](#) from April 2019.

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### **About Alzheimer's Disease Association**

Alzheimer's Disease Association ("ADA") was formed in 1990 because of a growing concern for the needs of persons living with dementia and their caregivers. Through our work, the Association hopes to reduce stigma by increasing awareness and understanding of dementia; enabling and involving persons living with dementia to be integrated and accepted in the community; and leading in the quality of dementia care services for persons living with dementia and their families.

Striving towards a dementia inclusive society through our four strategic service pillars; Centre-Based Care, Caregiver Support, Academy and Community Enabling, ADA aims to advocate and inspire the society to regard and respect persons living with dementia as individuals who can still lead purposeful and meaningful lives. For more information, visit <http://alz.org.sg/>

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