

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alzheimer's Disease Association develops 3P Partnerships to help improve the lives of caregivers of persons with dementia

Singapore, 20 July 2019 – Singapore's leading charity and Social Service Agency (SSA) in specialised dementia care, the Alzheimer's Disease Association (ADA), announced the development of new and improved initiatives to strengthen their key partnerships in the public and private sectors in order to provide more support for caregivers and to fight stigma.

Care for caregivers is vital in today's world, with the increasing demands of round-the-clock caregiving. Over the past few months, Singapore has also witnessed increasing reports of caregiver stress and burnout. Thus, ADA hopes to ramp up efforts to service the physical and emotional needs of caregivers so that they may lead a more balanced life and go on to provide quality care for their charges. The announcement was made on Saturday afternoon, 20 July, at ADA's most recent fundraising gala, the Star Charity Luncheon.

ADA has also launched a new public awareness campaign titled #DespiteDementia to further fight stigma. This was after ADA and the Singapore Management University (SMU) jointly conducted Singapore's first nationwide survey on dementia, where survey results revealed Singapore's high social stigma against the condition, as well as a clear call to action that more needed to be done to affect change. #DespiteDementia aims to drive more public education and awareness about dementia in Singapore and hopes to highlight that the condition does not define the person living with dementia.

The Star Charity Luncheon was attended by Guest-of-Honour Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development, as well as corporate and individual donors, board members, persons with dementia, caregivers, staff, and various stakeholders. Also in attendance was Special Guest Mr Henry Kwek, Member of Parliament of Nee Soon GRC (Kebun Baru).

"As Singapore's population continues to age rapidly, we realise that it is important for different sectors to work together towards the same cause. ADA is optimistic and excited to fortify all our partnerships so that we can continue to help persons with dementia and their caregivers," said Dr Ang Peng Chye, President of the Alzheimer's Disease Association.

Public – Community Awareness

Memories Café is a programme in the community for persons with dementia and their caregivers, conducted at local cafés and restaurants. The two-hour session held on Saturdays consists of engagement activities such as sing-alongs, drumming and drama activities led by community artists, volunteers and staff. The session is then concluded by drinks and meals provided by the café, encouraging social interaction among persons with dementia and caregivers.

The fresh change of environment is a welcome one for caregivers who may have long been attending support groups held in more formal settings. It also gives caregivers an opportunity for respite and allows them to build confidence in their caregiving skills by sharing their experiences with other caregivers. In fact, the cafés and restaurants are not closed to the public during these sessions, so customers can interact with persons with dementia in the hope of reducing stigma.

Funds raised from the Star Charity Luncheon will go towards subsidising the annual costs of Memories Café, such as food, recruitment of artistes and performers, transport for persons with dementia, rental of the venue, and other such planning and logistic expenses.

Private – Corporate and F&B Partners

To further support caregivers of persons with dementia, ADA strives to maintain lasting and impactful partnerships with those in the retail and F&B industry, and other corporates. This is especially important to continue running Memories Café, which is conducted at external café and restaurant partners' premises, such as Food For Thought, Crossings Café and Soup Restaurant.

Currently, ADA is partnered with 24 cafés and restaurants throughout Singapore. ADA hopes to increase this number in the next few years, and to invite more F&B establishments to join the fight against dementia by hosting the Memories Café programme.

ADA is also dedicated to creating meaningful experiences for companies by offering tailored activities as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). These include awareness talks on dementia to their staff, volunteering sessions at ADA's centres and organising outings for persons with dementia.

Woh Hup (Private) Limited, a leading construction company in Singapore, partnered with ADA in April 2019 to do their part for the dementia community. They started with a visit to one of ADA's dementia day care centres – New Horizon Centre at Jurong Point. Since then, they have committed to doing long-term centre-based volunteering over the next six months and have also pledged their support at the Star Charity Luncheon.

People – Persons with Dementia and Caregivers

ADA looks forward to working closer with the Government to provide better support for caregivers.

Delivering an address at the Star Charity Luncheon, Minister Lee shared that the Government will be making it more convenient for citizens to make a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA): "From 1 August, we will shorten the mandatory waiting period before an LPA can be registered from six weeks to three. This reduces the overall time required to make an LPA, while ensuring

sufficient time for relevant parties to be informed, and to withdraw the LPA application if necessary.”

He also shared that the Committee to Review and Enhance Reforms in the Family Justice System (RERF Committee) will be proposing some recommendations on providing greater support to deputies and prospective deputies. He said, “This includes simplifying the deputyship application process to reduce time and resources needed by caregivers. The Committee also proposes to increase the accessibility of support services for deputies, such as training, to help them discharge their responsibilities more confidently. We will be providing details of the recommendations, accompanied by a public consultation exercise in the coming months. We invite Singaporeans to share your thoughts and suggestions as we work together to improve support for caregivers.”

“We recognise the importance of the LPA for our clients and we hope that with the implementation of the new LPA framework, this will help increase the take up of this important legal document, so that it may offer stability and peace of mind to all parties involved,” said Mr Jason Foo, Chief Executive Officer of the Alzheimer’s Disease Association.

“We are excited to strengthen our relationship with MSF to better the lives of persons with dementia and their families,” Mr Foo added.

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About 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. 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 its 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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