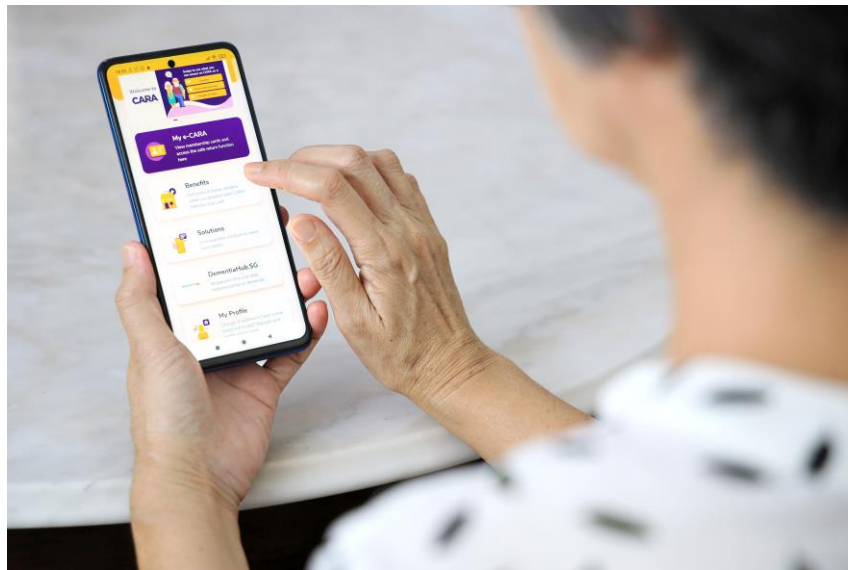


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Dementia Singapore Launches Mobile App For Pioneering Dementia Membership Programme**

*As the first-of-its-kind in the world, CARA provides a safe-return function, curated care solutions, resources and lifestyle rewards for persons with dementia and caregivers in Singapore*



**SINGAPORE (23 November 2021)** – Dementia Singapore, the nation’s leader in specialised dementia care, launches a pioneering dementia membership programme that provides personalised support across the journey of living with and caring for dementia.

Called **CARA** (an acronym for Community, Assurance, Rewards, Acceptance – the four main functions of the membership programme), the mobile application is a digital lifestyle and community platform that provides low-barrier access for persons living with dementia and their caregivers to connect to an ecosystem of solutions and support.

CARA is the first dementia membership programme of its kind in the world, and is available on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Download is free.

Prior to CARA, caregivers of persons with dementia could apply for the Safe Return Card, initiated by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) in 2008, as a form of identification for their loved ones with dementia and some assurance of safe return. With CARA, the Safe Return Card initiative by the NCSS will be decommissioned.

The key features of the CARA mobile application include:

- **Safe Return**  
CARA serves as a unique identifier for persons with dementia, providing assurance that members can continue to move freely and independently within a safe community, giving caregivers greater peace of mind.
- **Connected Care Circle**  
With CARA, multiple family members in the care circle can link their CARA accounts to their loved ones living with dementia and receive Safe Return notifications.
- **Tailored Rewards**  
CARA members can enjoy benefits suited to their care journey such as discounts and priority privileges from our carefully selected partners.
- **Ecosystem of Solutions**  
Members can access a curated list of solution providers relevant to their needs. They can navigate options at their fingertips and tap on the community platform for further support and resources throughout their dementia journey.

Singapore residents who are living with dementia or are caregivers of a person living with dementia are eligible for the full CARA membership. Members of the public who want to support the dementia community can also join the membership programme, albeit with limited access to certain CARA features.

## **COMMITMENT IN DEMENTIA CARE INNOVATIONS**

Dementia Singapore CEO Jason Foo said CARA represents the organisation's steadfast commitment in delivering the most innovative care solutions to the dementia community.

Mr Foo added: "With CARA, we aim to provide the best community care platform for persons living with dementia and their caregivers, now and into the future. What sets CARA apart from any dementia membership programmes in the world is the utilisation of technology to facilitate the safe return of a person living with dementia swiftly back to his or her family when things go wrong."

## **A TRANSITION FROM THE SAFE RETURN CARD TO CARA**

CARA's Safe Return function is developed in collaboration with NCSS to provide continued assurance to caregivers. Building upon the original Safe Return Card initiative that was developed by NCSS in 2008, CARA takes into consideration the feedback provided by users over the years to provide more comprehensive support and greater access to resources.

Through CARA, when a person with dementia gets lost or wanders from his home or family members, members of the public who find him or her can scan the QR code on the CARA membership card and submit a report. The CARA app will then notify all the caregivers tagged to the person that he or she has been found.

In addition, there is also a call function for members of the public to call the caregiver directly, thus facilitating the safe return of their loved one with dementia.

The safe return function of CARA hopes to provide independence to persons living with dementia while giving peace of mind to their caregivers. In addition, to not overly rely on just one caregiver, the care circle allows for multiple caregivers to be contacted in times of need, alleviating the pressure on the primary caregiver.

“NCSS has enjoyed strong partnership with Dementia Singapore since the Safe Return Card was implemented in 2008. With CARA, caregivers and persons living with dementia will continue to enjoy peace of mind while enjoying access to stronger support and a wider range of resources and services enabled by technology. We have been working closely with Dementia Singapore to ensure a seamless transition to CARA, and we encourage more people to sign up as CARA members. Congratulations to Dementia Singapore for this important initiative!” said NCSS Chief Executive Officer, Ms Tan Li San.

“We are pleased to support Dementia Singapore in launching the innovative national dementia membership programme. CARA is in line with Agency for Integrated Care’s (AIC) mission to support our seniors, including persons living with dementia and their caregivers, to live and age well in the community. CARA can empower those affected by dementia to feel included, involved and supported. It also provides opportunities for Community Care providers, community partners and corporates who wish to contribute to be part of this journey in promoting a dementia-inclusive society. This technology enabler would definitely help in building Singapore as a dementia-friendly nation,” said Mr Tan Kwang Cheak, AIC’s Chief Executive Officer.

## **BUILDING AN ECO-SYSTEM OF SUPPORT**

CARA members can also access specially curated dementia care solutions, lifestyle benefits and resources on the platform. CARA also incorporates Dementia Singapore’s one-stop dementia resource portal, DementiaHub.SG in the app.

Mr Steven Lau, 65, is living with young onset dementia. He appreciates CARA for enabling him to navigate independently and is thankful for the support from the partners.

“I like CARA as it is a way for me to seek help should I get lost and need support from members of the public. I also appreciate the understanding and support that the benefit and solution partners have given us through free or discounted activities. It really encourages those with dementia to be physically and mentally active,” Mr Lau added.

Caregivers, like Mrs Kimhong Hazra, who is caring for her father with dementia, joined CARA because they identify with what the holistic platform has to offer.

“Other than the safe return function, I also agree with the other objectives of CARA - one of which is to build a dementia-inclusive community. This needs constant and meaningful public education, and maximising of all possible mass communication platforms,” Mrs Hazra added.

Ms Serene Seow, Managing Director of homegrown healthcare brand Eu Yan Sang Singapore, one of the partners of CARA, said the company is delighted to partner CARA and Dementia Singapore to provide benefits to the dementia community.

“Eu Yan Sang Singapore supports Dementia Singapore’s efforts to increase awareness about dementia and its increasing prevalence. We are delighted to partner Dementia Singapore and CARA to provide benefits to the dementia community. As a partner of the CARA platform, we hope to support people with dementia and their caregivers to enjoy the best quality of life through accessible health and wellness care based on the best of TCM wisdom and science,” said Ms Seow.

Another partner of Dementia Singapore is Gardens by the Bay, which will be supporting the programme by providing CARA members complimentary admission to its popular attractions – the Flower Dome, Cloud Forest and Floral Fantasy.

“Spending time in nature can have a therapeutic effect on our health and well-being. Since our Gift of Gardens community outreach initiative began in 2012, it has enabled more than 100,000 beneficiaries from over 200 charities the opportunity to experience the wonders of nature at Gardens by the Bay. We are glad to extend the initiative to people living with dementia and their caregivers, and look forward to welcoming them to the Gardens,” said Ms Chua Yen Ling, Senior Director of Programming and Events at Gardens by the Bay.

Future development of the CARA app includes a membership tier for professional caregivers, as well as a function to notify members of the public to look out for persons living with dementia who have been reported lost.

“We believe CARA will be a useful digital companion for the dementia community,” said Mr Stanley Ho, Dementia Singapore’s Director of Advocacy & Communications, whose team is leading the development of the CARA app.

Mr Ho added: “With CARA providing a key touchpoint that caters to their various dementia care needs, we hope people impacted by dementia can benefit from using this app and continue to lead fulfilling and enriching lives.”

CARA is supported by NCSS and AIC.

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### **ABOUT DEMENTIA SINGAPORE (<https://dementia.org.sg/>)**

Dementia Singapore was formed in 1990 as Alzheimer's Disease Association to better serve Singapore's growing dementia community, increase awareness about dementia, and reduce the stigma surrounding the condition. As Singapore's leading Social Service Agency in specialised dementia care, Dementia Singapore aims to advocate for the needs of people living with dementia and their families; empower the community through capability-building, knowledge and consultancy; and deliver quality, person-centred care innovations.

### **ABOUT NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE (NCSS) (<https://www.ncss.gov.sg/>)**

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest is the fundraising and engagement arm of NCSS and Social Service Institute (SSI) is the human capital development arm of NCSS.

### **ABOUT AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED CARE (AIC) (<https://www.aic.sg/>)**

AIC aims to create a vibrant care community for people to live well and age gracefully. AIC coordinates and supports efforts in integrating care to achieve the best care outcomes for our clients. We reach out to caregivers and seniors with information on staying active and ageing well, and connect people to services they need. We support stakeholders in their efforts to raise the quality of care, and also work with health and social care partners to provide services for the ageing population. Our work in the community brings care services and information closer to those in need.