



Media Release

CARA Commemorates its Second Anniversary Affirming Recent Milestones and Enhancements to its Mobile App

[16 March 2024] – Held at Gardens by the Bay’s Active Garden on 16 March, Dementia Singapore marked the second-year anniversary of its CARA membership programme with an activity-filled celebration, from 9am to 1pm, that was packed with insight into the programme’s latest milestones and enhancements.

The morning began with an aptly relaxing session of Hatha yoga for pre-registered members that boasted a mix of caregivers of persons living with dementia and members of the public. It was also a fitting way to kick off the planned activities, aimed at offering its members – persons living with dementia (PLWDs) and their families – a better understanding of the various products and services supporting the programme, whether their interest is in the latest tablet computer for seniors, dementia-related insurance plans, or supplements to improve focus and memory.

Aside from helping connect PLWDs and caregivers to an ecosystem of solutions via a mobile application, the primary aim of CARA – which stands for Community, Assurance, Rewards and Acceptance – is to nurture an inclusive and supportive society. So, it’s no surprise that one of the highlights shared was the fact that its subscription base had surpassed its recent target, boasting a current total of over 7,600 members. “This is a testament to the growing support for our dementia community, and an increase in awareness among members of the public,” said Dementia Singapore’s CEO Jason Foo.

Making a Difference

Foo also shared about the two-year-old app’s other milestones, which included the success of its Report Missing Person feature. Launched in November 2022, this enables caregivers to independently notify the community should their loved one with dementia go missing. Since then, CARA has received an average of one report per month. And not only were all reported missing persons reunited with their families, but each case was resolved with astonishing efficiency – within just eight hours.

It was also noted that the steady increase in members was not the only factor driving the effectiveness of the feature. Since February 2023, the Municipal Services Office’s OneService app has been jointly broadcasting the notifications to its community of around 500,000 registered users, increasing the chances of a quicker reunion.

“It (comforts) me as a caregiver to know that there is a community of people on the lookout for our loved ones should they go missing,” echoed Wong Lai Quen, whose husband, Steven Lau, has dementia. The couple have been CARA members since its inception.

Wong also acknowledged how the programme not only helps promote awareness but also assures people with dementia and their families that they are not alone on their care journey. “There are many people who are in the same boat as us,” she asserted, adding how the larger the community, the greater the opportunity for engagement. She emphasised the varied ways the programme supports the dementia community – from the growing solutions and benefits it connects members with, to the “inclusive and caring community” it continues to advocate.

Recent enhancements, Foo then noted, included the CARA app’s new mandarin user interface. Soft launched in November last year, it allows members who are more comfortable in mandarin to file a more accurate and detailed missing person report.

“Given that we are a bilingual society and that some of our elderly/loved ones are more comfortable with Mandarin, it is definitely a good idea,” shared Michelle Ong who has been caregiver to her father, Thomas Ong, since he was diagnosed with dementia in 2019. They have also been members of the CARA membership programme from the start.

She agreed that increasing awareness among the masses remains important, and that having an empathetic and supportive community makes a difference in the lives of PLWDs, remarking as well how “many a times, PLWDs and their care partners may feel isolated”. Equally important, she stressed, is the opportunity to give back to that community.

Growing Together

In line with its aim to better engage a wider community, the CARA app is constantly being improved and made more accessible. While no date of completion has been confirmed, Dementia Singapore’s Director of Advocacy & Communications, Bernard Lim, reaffirmed plans to eventually make the app available in Malay and Tamil as well.

Other upcoming enhancements include the app’s new Care Circle – My Memories feature. This will enable families to create a personalised repository of activity content for their loved ones with dementia. These activities can be shared with new members of the circle to ensure meaningful engagement throughout their care journey.

Dementia Singapore is also constantly mindful of the need for strategic collaborations. And a fine example is found in the CARA app’s Dementia-friendly Facilities Locator that is currently being implemented. There are currently over 650 Dementia Go-To points islandwide and this new feature will help users locate the closest or most convenient option. Notably, this integration brings together a variety of nationwide dementia-friendly efforts aimed at facilitating easier navigation for those with dementia and their families.

Images of the event can be found [here](#).

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About Dementia Singapore

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; and empower the community through capability-building, knowledge, and consultancy; as well as deliver quality person-centred care innovations. For more information, visit www.dementia.org.sg.

About CARA

CARA – which stands for Community, Assurance, Rewards and Acceptance – is a membership programme that serves as a lifestyle and community platform, connecting persons living with dementia and caregivers to an ecosystem of solutions via a mobile application. It aims to provide tailored support, linking users up with benefits and resources related to their care journey. For more information, visit cara.sg.