



**TEMASEK
FOUNDATION**



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FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND PLACE-BASED PROGRAMME UPSKILLS VOLUNTEERS TO CONDUCT HEALTH SCREENINGS AND STRENGTHEN FOLLOW-UP INTERVENTIONS FOR SENIORS

Many health conditions faced by seniors aged 65 and above can be prevented, reversed, or delayed in the early stages and managed in the later stages through timely detection and intervention. Improving the take-up rates by seniors for health screenings and follow-ups, especially among those with low health literacy and who need help dealing with concerns like apathy, anxiety, and fear of potential negative outcomes, can help raise the overall well-being of our seniors.

To better provide at-risk seniors with appropriate health information and interventions on falls, mobility, and other health issues in a timely manner, **Teck Ghee Grassroots Organisations**, and the **National Healthcare Group (NHG)**, in partnership with **Temasek Foundation**, have piloted a first-of-its-kind community-based health screening programme - **Temasek Foundation GO CHEK** – for seniors in Singapore. It seeks to build up a network of volunteer care groups who can support and encourage seniors in their help-seeking behaviour. Teck Ghee constituency, whose residents are under the regional health management of NHG, was selected as the pilot community as it is one of the top three planning areas in Singapore with the highest number and proportion of elderly residents aged 65 and above.¹

This pilot programme equips place-based volunteers with health-related knowledge and resources, and trains them to serve as key health touchpoints for seniors in their community. Volunteers in Teck Ghee constituency were trained by NHG on managing common issues faced by seniors, such as reducing the risks of falls, identifying areas within their home that could pose high fall risks, and increasing their physical activity and enhancing mobility. They were also trained by the Silver Generation Office (SGO) on national programmes, schemes and grants available for seniors to tap on. To-date, more than 50 volunteers have been trained.

These volunteer buddies will be able to conduct falls-risk screenings for seniors; triage screened participants into different risk groups (low, moderate, and high); and recommend appropriate post-screening interventions to the participants. Through regular outreach and engagement, the volunteer buddies will also help ensure that seniors go for their necessary post-screening follow-ups, which may include community programmes comprising balance and strength training exercises and coaching on nutrition or fall prevention by nurses from NHG Community Health Teams. This ensures that seniors who are at-risk receive the appropriate interventions in a timely manner.

¹ Statistics Singapore Newsletter 2011 ([Link](#))

Six screening sessions helmed by the volunteer buddies are being organised over three weekends in April as part of the **Temasek Foundation GO CHEK @ Teck Ghee** community event. The final two sessions will take place on 26 and 27 April, 9am to 5pm. The health screenings are expected to benefit about 600 residents. More sessions will be scheduled at other locations throughout Singapore at a later date.

Ms Woon Saet Nyoon, Head, Community Networks and Partnerships, Temasek Foundation said, “We hope through the Temasek Foundation Go CHEK project, the trained volunteers in their neighbourhood will provide a supportive environment for seniors to get a health screening and post-screening health intervention when needed. We encourage seniors to “Go CHEK” your health with your *kawan* or *kaki*, and hope for more take-ups in health screening and follow-ups to keep healthy.”

Ms Woon added, “The outcome of this pilot project can help inform NHG and other healthcare clusters on the feasibility of leveraging place-based volunteers in subsequent health screening initiatives.”

Teck Ghee grassroots volunteers have this to say about why they decided to become volunteer buddies: Mdm Sa’deah Bte Jantan, 64, said, “I want to encourage the seniors in my neighbourhood to take part in health screenings regularly. This will help them to know more about how they are doing in terms of their overall health. Being involved in their health journey allows me to address any concerns they may have on screenings or post-screening follow-ups.”

Mdm Soh Lee Choo, 75, said, “Health is wealth. I hope we can create a healthier and happier ageing community. My purpose of joining the programme is to encourage seniors to take responsibility for their own health through awareness and action.”

Dr Joyce Yap, Consultant Geriatrician, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH), which is part of NHG, shared, “Many seniors prefer to grow old where they live and remain connected with their friends and family. This pilot is a novel way of integrating health and social care, where we work together with our residents, community partners and agencies to build caring communities right where our seniors live and empower them to take greater ownership of their health. It is our hope that these networks of support will better enable our seniors to age well in their homes and communities, and continue to remain active, healthy and socially connected.”

The programme is also supported by the Agency for Integrated Care’s SGO as well as partners from the public, people and private sectors. They include 1doc, Allkin Singapore Ltd, Healthier SG, Health Promotion Board, Housing & Development Board, the Infocomm Media Development Authority, SBSTransit, and Singapore Red Cross Society. As part of their corporate social responsibility initiative, Sunnystep donated more than 500 pairs of shoes for the *Temasek Foundation GO CHEK @ Teck Ghee* health screening participants.

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Glossary of Chinese Terms

Woon Saet Nyoon Head, Community Networks & Partnerships, Temasek Foundation	温雪银 淡马锡基金会社区联系与合作总裁
Teck Ghee Grassroots Organisations Mdm Soh Lee Choo, PBM	德义基层组织 苏丽珠, PBM
Dr Joyce Yap Consultant Geriatrician Tan Tock Seng Hospital	叶贵蓉医生 老人醫學專科 陈笃生医院

About Temasek Foundation

Temasek Foundation supports a diverse range of programmes that uplift lives and communities in Singapore and Asia. Temasek Foundation's programmes are made possible through philanthropic endowments gifted by Temasek, as well as gifts and other contributions from other donors. These programmes strive to deliver positive outcomes for individuals and communities now, and for generations to come. Collectively, Temasek Foundation's programmes strengthen social resilience; foster international exchange and catalyse regional capabilities; advance science; and protect the planet.

For more information, visit www.temasekfoundation.org.sg.

About the National Healthcare Group

The National Healthcare Group (NHG) is a leader in public healthcare in Singapore recognised for delivering high value patient care. Our clinical services are provided through an integrated system of primary care polyclinics, acute care tertiary hospitals, community hospitals, national specialty centres, and community-based ambulatory care centres. Together, we provide comprehensive, holistic and innovative healthcare to address the needs of our patients and the population we serve. As a learning organisation, we are establishing ourselves as an academic health system to drive clinical excellence, raise research intensity and grow our academic partnerships so as to continually improve the way we deliver care to our patients.

As the Regional Health Manager for 1.5 million residents in Central and North Singapore, NHG collaborates with private general practices, public and community health and social care providers to keep residents well and healthy.

With more than 20,000 healthcare professionals in NHG, we are committed towards building healthier and resilient communities, and Adding Years of Healthy Life to the people we serve.

More information is available at www.nhg.com.sg.

About People's Association

The People's Association (PA) is a statutory board established on 1 July 1960 to promote racial harmony and social cohesion, and to act as a bridge between the Government and the people. We offer a wide range of community programmes and volunteering opportunities for Singaporeans from all walks of life. Our network includes close to 2,000 Grassroots Organisations (GROs), over 100 Community Clubs, five Community Development Councils, National Community Leadership Institute, and PAssion Wave. More information at www.pa.gov.sg.