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# Media Release



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24 July 2019

News Editor

## **A LEG UP TO LEVEL UP: SOUTH WEST CDC REINFORCES SOCIAL SAFETY NET WITH RENEWED FOCUS ON SOCIAL MOBILITY**

- **WeCare PLUS @ South West's local schemes and programmes enhanced to give vulnerable residents a leg up in social mobility — \$3 million will benefit as many as 18,000 residents every year**
- **South West District reports increase in corporate giving, with close to 30% increase in number of corporate partners**

At the South West District Meeting 2019 this coming Thursday, 25 July 2019, the South West Community Development Council (CDC) will be unveiling its enhanced local assistance initiative, WeCare PLUS @ South West, which will give vulnerable residents a leg up in social mobility.

### **Enhancing Social Support with Holistic and Sustainable Help**

2 The WeCare @ South West initiative has taken care of the needs of close to 14,000 beneficiaries on a yearly basis. Its array of some 20 local assistance schemes and programmes span across education, emergency and healthcare etc, to complement national schemes and ensure that no one in the community falls through the cracks.

3 To make social assistance more comprehensive and help residents on a sustainable basis, the enhanced **WeCare PLUS @ South West** initiative will encompass a renewed Social Mobility pillar, focused on equipping vulnerable residents with tools and targeted assistance to move up the socioeconomic ladder. The Social Mobility pillar includes the new South West Learn on the Job Programme<sup>1</sup> and the South West Transport for Training (SWT4T) Scheme to bridge gaps between training and employment.

4 The **South West Transport for Training (SWT4T) Scheme** was conceived in response to emerging needs stemming from the changing landscapes, such as the need to stay relevant and employable through continual learning and upskilling. Recognising that bread-and-butter issues often eclipse the desire and means to pursue upskilling opportunities among lower-income residents, the South West CDC established the need for such a scheme after an environmental scan revealed a gap<sup>2</sup> in employment or training-related transport subsidies, and ground sensing echoed demand.

5 Mr David Foong, BBM, Vice Chairman of Clementi CCC, shares, ““Over past years, we have been approached by our residents, who are unemployed, having financial difficulty and may have enrolled in courses to upgrade their skills for their new jobs. These residents who may be unemployed and has no income at current moment, were facing challenges to even attend the courses or job interviews. In view of such cases, these transport vouchers (and other vouchers such as utilities and water vouchers, eyewear vouchers) have been beneficial in helping our residents to defray their transport cost for the interim period.”

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<sup>1</sup> South West Learn on the Job Programme was recently launched at SkillsFuture Festival @ South West 2019 on 20 July 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Other transport subsidies are mainly for general commuting, for students, and for the less mobile going for medical appointments. The Ministry of Social and Family Development's Taxi Subsidy Scheme provides subsidy for schooling, employment and training-related transport but caters only to persons with disabilities that are completely reliant on taxi transport.

6 Other initiatives under the Social Mobility pillar involve SkillsFuture Advice @ South West<sup>3</sup> to include vulnerable residents on board the SkillsFuture movement, as well as upstream intervention programmes<sup>4</sup> to equip vulnerable families with key capabilities to strive for upward social mobility. Recent additions to the local assistance initiative also include Caregiver Support Fund @ South West and Huggies Singapore Diaper Bank @ South West. The enhanced WeCare PLUS @ South West initiative will benefit as many as 18,000 residents every year.

7 Mayor of South West District Ms Low Yen Ling says, “Our residents are always at the heart of what we do. In a time of growing economic uncertainties, we are doubling up our efforts to enable and empower the vulnerable residents in our midst. The enhanced \$3m WeCare Plus initiative will empower and equip them with tools and skills to take on good jobs, which enables them to become self-sufficient in the long run. Together with the support of our community and corporate partners, we seek to further strengthen the social safety net and improve social mobility so that no one gets left behind.”

### **Increase in Corporate and Community Giving**

8 In FY2018/2019, the South West CDC reported an increase in both corporate and community giving. This echoes the national trend of increased volunteerism<sup>5</sup>: According to the World Giving Index 2018 by British charity Charities Aid Foundation, Singapore was ranked seventh among 146 countries around the world in giving of time, money and in terms of helping a stranger, a rise from 30<sup>th</sup> place in 2017.

9 In the South West District, more individuals are coming forward to give back to the community, with volunteer-initiated projects comprising more than half<sup>6</sup> the total

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<sup>3</sup> For example, South West SkillsFuture Advice to raise awareness and guide residents in lifelong learning and career planning, and South West SkillsFuture Advice & Career Roadshows and the annual SkillsFuture Festival @ South West where residents can gain exposure to various growth industries and the job and training opportunities in the sectors.

<sup>4</sup> Such as reading programmes for the young, including Shining Star Reads @ South West.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/spore-makes-top-10-most-generous-countries-list-for-first-time>

<sup>6</sup> 570 volunteer-initiated activities were rolled out, out of some 800 activities in total.

number of activities in the Financial Year and amounting to more than 25,700 volunteer hours. Corporate partners are also rising to the CDC's rally for volunteerism and philanthropy, with close to 30% more corporate partners, and who are also giving more in terms of time, effort and donations. The South West CDC also saw more Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) coming forward to serve the community in ways they can, showing that giving back is about willingness and not about ability.

10 One such SME is Galmon (S) Pte Ltd, which bagged the first-ever South West Caring Corporate Award (SME category) this year for their contributions to the community. These include staff volunteers getting hands-on to deliver meals, recycle old clothes and e-waste in exchange for rice packs, as well as prepare household essential packs for the beneficiaries in the South West District under various programmes such as Meals Service @ South West, Food Connect @ South West and Adopt @ South West.

11 Mr Desmond Ong, Chief Executive Officer at Galmon (S) Pte Ltd, says, "As an SME, Galmon has come a long way since our humble beginnings with just 3 employees and a small fleet of 6 machines in 1982. Today, we are Singapore's largest MEWP provider and a market leader in the region. We believe strongly in contributing back to society which is why we have partnered South West CDC since 2012. We look forward to continuing our commitment to reach out to more vulnerable residents in the district."

12 Details of the event are as follows:

Event : South West District Meeting 2019  
Date : Thursday, 25 July 2019  
Time : 6.30 pm to 9.15 pm **(Media is invited at 6.30 pm)**  
Venue : Ng Teng Fong General Hospital  
Auditorium, Tower A, Level 1  
1 Jurong East Street 21  
Singapore 609606

Special : Mr Ang Wei Neng  
Guest Vice Chairman of South West CDC  
Host : Ms Low Yen Ling  
Mayor of South West District

13 We would like to invite your reporter and photographer/TV crew to **South West District Meeting 2019**. Interviews can be arranged upon request. Please contact our media liaison officer for queries. We look forward to receiving you and your crew/photographer.

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### Media Liaison Officers

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### About the South West Community Development Council (CDC)

The South West Community Development Council (CDC) was formed on 24 November 2001, with the mission to Assist the Needy, Bond the People and Connect the Community.

Through local help programmes, the South West CDC provides assistance to help the less fortunate in our community. The CDC also organises projects and programmes to promote community bonding and social cohesion. The South West CDC adopts the "Many Helping Hands" approach to encourage community ownership among residents, community partners and corporations to realise its vision of "Owning Your Community".

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## Programme

Time	Programme
6.45 pm	Arrival of Host Ms Low Yen Ling Mayor of South West District  <i>*Media interview (6.45 to 7.15 pm) can be arranged upon request</i>
7.00 pm	Arrival of Special Guest  Mr Ang Wei Neng Vice Chairman of South West CDC
7.30 pm	Commencement of South West District Meeting 2019  Opening Act and Video Presentation of South West CDC Annual Report for FY2018/2019
7.50 pm	Speech by Mayor Low
8.00 pm	Launch of WeCare PLUS @ South West
8.15 pm	Commencement of The South West Conversation
9.15 pm	Closing by Mayor Low
9.25 pm	End of Programme