

SPEECH BY MR MASAGOS ZULKIFLI, SECOND MINISTER FOR HEALTH, AT SREE NARAYANA MISSION (SNM) BEDOK SENIOR CARE CENTRE OPENING, 10 NOVEMBER 2023

Anil Sarasijakshan, President of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)

SNM's Board of Trustees

SNM's Executive Committee

Distinguished guests

1. Good morning. It is very nice to see all of you here today to celebrate the opening of Sree Narayana Mission's Third Senior Care Centre (SNM CareLight SCC).
2. I would like to share two important things today. Firstly, to share the good work that SNM is doing in Singapore. This organisation was first formed in 1948, and has been serving the community, regardless of race. SNM not only provides services for seniors, it also offer programmes and financial assistance for single mothers. This is your 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I would like to congratulate SNM and thank SNM staff and supporters for this milestone.
3. SNM started healthcare services in 1981, with the opening of SNM Nursing Home @ Chong Pang, and so they have been caring for our seniors for over 40 years. It is not just about bringing people together, SNM also ensures that the holistic needs of our seniors are met.

4. SNM currently operates two SCCs for the elderly, with one co-located within the Nursing Home and the other located at Woodlands. The opening of SNM Carelight SCC will add 45 day places and 15 rehabilitation sessions.

## **HEALTHCARE NEEDS OF AN AGEING POPULATION**

5. Like many developed countries, our population is ageing rapidly. People are living longer, and the demand for healthcare is increasing. With this, the number of seniors with growing care needs has also increased.

6. To meet the growing demand for healthcare, we have to do three things. Firstly, provide more facilities like this. We will have Active Ageing Centres (AACs), and will provide specialised care and respite care for caregivers. This care is not just for seniors. The people who take care of seniors must also be helped. In addition, seniors must not be lonely; they must see people and friends. At home, they might have no one to talk to, but in the SCC, they will have friends to do things together with them.

7. We also have Healthier SG to improve the health of our younger seniors. We must take care of ourselves and make the hospital the last place we want to go. Many in Singapore have three problems: diabetes, hypertension, or high blood cholesterol. We must eat in moderation and exercise too.

8. Please go for regular health screenings at your doctor. Go early and do not wait until you feel that something is wrong before seeing your doctor. Go to your doctor not because you are sick, but to find out if you are sick. If we do this, we will be healthy for a long time. In addition, keep your friends close because social networks are important.

9. These are some of the things that the government is doing, but the government cannot do it alone together. We work with organisations such as SNM, grassroots, and you and your family. Everyone must work together. Let's make this SCC the model centre for everyone. Thank you very much.