



## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

### **NEE SOON'S NEXT UPGRADE WILL MAKE THE TOWN PHYSICALLY DEMENTIA-FRIENDLIER**

*Yishun Dementia-Friendly Community the first to embark on improvements to the built environment*

**Singapore, 8 October 2019** - Nee Soon South and Chong Pang residents can look forward to surroundings that are easier and safer to move around, especially for seniors and persons with dementia. Er. Dr. Lee Bee Wah, Adviser to Nee Soon South Grassroots Organisations and Member of Parliament for Nee Soon Group Representation Constituency, unveiled the plans of the upgrading works, which are expected to start by February 2020. This is part of Yishun Dementia-Friendly Community's (DFC) ongoing efforts to support residents with dementia and their families.

2 Er. Dr. Lee Bee Wah said, "We want to make Nee Soon a community where persons with dementia can still go downstairs for coffee with friends or to take part in social activities. One of their fears is that they will lose their way in the town centre. As such, I asked experts to recommend enhancements to the infrastructure that will help them. I am very glad that Yishun is the first DFC in Singapore to adopt dementia-friendly infrastructure, and I hope our pilot will inspire more communities to join us." Yishun DFC is one of the eight DFCs in Singapore.

3 Planning started in April 2019, in collaboration with Nee Soon South Grassroots Organisations, Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), Nee Soon Town Council, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH) and Montfort Care's Goodlife!@Yishun. After several rounds of site audits and discussions, the team decided to focus on the high traffic area around Khatib Plaza including Nee Soon South Community Club, and Chong Pang City.

4 Enhancements include new signages around Khatib Plaza and shop corridors so people can find their way around better. Housing blocks painted in similar colours tend to confuse persons with dementia. For easier identification, lift shafts will be painted in distinctive colours. Block numbers will also be made bigger and painted in contrasting shades. In addition, new benches will be installed for seniors to rest while moving around. These seats will be integrated with wayfinding signs and include arm rests so users can sit and get up easily.

5 “Persons with dementia have difficulties with way-finding due to their cognitive deficits and hence risk getting lost. This can be attributed to problems with memory, spatial orientation and recognition of key landmarks. In addition, they may become stressed and anxious, which aggravates their disorientation and also increases the risk of falls and accidents. Clearer signages, orientation cues and strategic design features to facilitate way finding can make a difference,” shared A/Prof Philip Yap, Senior Consultant, Department of Geriatric Medicine, KTPH.

6 “AIC works closely with our DFC partners on efforts to support persons with dementia and their families in living and ageing well within their communities. Communities with dementia-friendly features and infrastructure can enable persons with dementia and seniors to move around on their own confidently and continue with daily routines that are important to them,” shared AIC’s Chief Executive Officer Mr Tan Kwang Cheak.

7 Yishun DFC, which was established in 2016, has been raising awareness on dementia through outreach efforts and has reached over 10,000 people. The DFC has also been expanding community resources to support persons with dementia and their caregivers. There are currently 30 Go-To Points in the DFC acting as resource centres for residents and caregivers as well as safe return points for persons with dementia who are lost. To better support those caring for loved ones with dementia, Montfort Care’s Goodlife!@Yishun has set up a caregiver support network which focuses on self-care and peer support. Their monthly sessions include activities such as aromatherapy hand massages, tea appreciation, a *popiah* party and outings.

8 The launch took place in conjunction with Nee Soon South's monthly litter-picking event, attended by approximately 150 residents and community members. The plans for Nee Soon South will be exhibited at Khatib Plaza for a week from 13 to 20 October 2019. Residents can leave their comments in a suggestion box at the exhibition, or contact Nee Soon Town Council at 6758 0129 or email [feedback@nstc.org.sg](mailto:feedback@nstc.org.sg). The plans for Chong Pang will be exhibited at a later date in Chong Pang City.

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### **About the People's Association**

The People's Association, through its Community Clubs' courses and activities, offers opportunities for people to make new friends, share common interests and help foster a strong cohesive community. More information available at [www.pa.gov.sg](http://www.pa.gov.sg) and [www.OurCommunity.sg](http://www.OurCommunity.sg).

### **About Nee Soon Town Council**

Nee Soon Town Council serves the residents of Nee Soon Town in areas such as cleanliness, maintenance of common property, providing amenities and so on. It is committed to building a safe, inclusive, sustainable and vibrant Town, in line with its vision of a Home With A Heart.

### **About the Agency for Integrated Care**

The Agency for Integrated Care (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. For more about us, please visit [www.aic.sg](http://www.aic.sg).