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MORE THAN 2,000 VOLUNTEERS SHARE FESTIVE WARMTH WITH OVER 6,000 UNDERPRIVILEGED SENIORS AND FAMILIES

- *First large-scale volunteering event by Community Chest and ground-up group Heartwarmers, in support of SG Cares in 2018*

SINGAPORE, 2 February 2018 – As the first large-scale volunteering event for Community Chest in support of SG Cares in 2018, Community Chest Fú Dài 2018 will see over 2,000 corporate volunteers and community groups coming together to deliver more than 6,000 Fú Dài to underprivileged seniors and families island-wide, in celebration of the upcoming Lunar New Year festivities.

Held at Big Box Singapore over 2 days, Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development, will lead the packing and delivery of Fú Dài to families in need on 2 February, while Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, will spend time preparing a reunion meal with vulnerable seniors on 3 February.

This year's Fú Dài, is co-organised by Community Chest and the Heartwarmers, a ground-up volunteering group that has taken it upon themselves to look out for disadvantaged groups. Each year through their efforts, more than 3,000 volunteers join forces to give back to over 10,000 beneficiaries island-wide.

Community Chest and Heartwarmers worked together with the local constituency and social service organisations to identify the underprivileged groups that require help, and roped in partners such as A Group of Philanthropists, Standard Chartered Bank, SMRT Corporation Ltd and Singapore Airlines to contribute their time and resources – some donated items for the Fú Dài, some contributed their time to pack and deliver the Fú Dài, and some provided logistics support.

“Volunteerism in Singapore has evolved since Heartwarmers was set up a decade ago. In the past we largely relied on word of mouth and the goodwill of neighbours and friends. Everyone from all walks of life gave what they could, in their own ways, to help those in need. Community Chest Fú Dài has always been about keeping this kampong spirit alive in the community, by combining the efforts of many to help the disadvantaged. With the launch of the SG Cares app, it is exciting to see how we can leverage new technology to help us in our volunteering efforts,” said Mr Chee Tuck Hong, Vice Chairman, Heartwarmers Goodie Bag Subcommittee.

With the recently launched SG Cares mobile application, volunteers will now find it easier to identify the needs and source for volunteering opportunities. **There are currently more than 20,000 volunteer openings offered by over 400 organisations available on the SG Cares application.** Among these are regular volunteering opportunities curated jointly by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and its member social service organisations, where some roles have been re-designed to enable more volunteers to meet actual needs in the social service sector.

Minister Desmond Lee, who joined volunteers on the first day of the two-day Fú Dài 2018 initiative, said, “While NCSS will continue to match corporate partners and volunteers to meet the needs of the social service organisations, more innovative solutions are required to sustain such efforts. By creating a common platform to connect all segments of the community, we hope to make giving more sustainable, and empower volunteers to take a more pro-active role, to create a more caring and inclusive society.”

The **second day of the Fú Dài on 3 February 2018 will be led by Minister Grace Fu.** She will be joined by corporate partners and volunteers to celebrate the upcoming Lunar New Year with an early reunion meal. Accompanied by Chef Anna Phua, Minister Fu together with the volunteers and senior social service users of Dorcas Home Care Service, will prepare and enjoy a reunion meal together, as part of the traditional observance of the Lunar New Year.

Eight volunteer bus captains from SMRT Corporation Ltd, Singapore’s largest bus and rail operator, have stepped forward to ferry the volunteers around for their delivery. SMRT will also donate 2,500 ez-link cards to Fú Dài 2018 for distribution to vulnerable seniors, a majority of whom stay alone. The Quality of Life (QoL) study conducted by the National Council of Social Service in 2016, found that social participation of these vulnerable seniors in community activities is key to improving their quality of life. Yet, 1 in 10 seniors in Singapore are not satisfied with their existing opportunities to participate in community activities.

“A simple act of care can go a long way. I am glad that during this Lunar New Year, our social service organisations and a number of corporate partners have come together for a meaningful cause to improve the lives of vulnerable seniors. The Fú Dài event exemplifies SG Cares, a national movement to inspire all Singaporeans to look out for one another, and ensure that no one is left behind,” said Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth.

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About Community Chest

This year marks 35 years since Community Chest first set out to empower lives with care and unite the community in trust, to serve those in need. With the aim to enable every individual to live with dignity within a caring and inclusive society, Community Chest supports about 80 social service organisations to meet underserved, critical social needs. As Community Chest's fundraising and operating costs are covered mainly by Tote Board Group, 100% of your contributions goes towards empowering the lives of:

- Children with special needs and youth-at-risk
- Adults with disabilities
- Families in need
- Vulnerable seniors
- Persons with mental health issues

Find out more at comchest.sg.

National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest is the fundraising and engagement arm of NCSS and Social Service Institute (SSI) is the human capital development arm of NCSS.

About SG Cares

SG Cares is a national movement dedicated to building a more caring and inclusive home for all. The movement invites all who live in Singapore to put values into action through active volunteerism, ground-up efforts and everyday acts of care. It also aims to build capability across various sectors and organisations to grow opportunities for volunteering. By inspiring and supporting one another, we can show the world that we are a nation with a big heart.

www.sgcares.sg