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MEDIA RELEASE

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COMMUNITY CHEST CELEBRATES SPIRIT OF GIVING AT THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS ON A GREAT STREET LIGHT-UP WITH INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS

- *Community Chest-supported programmes promoting inclusive hiring in FY2017 enabled more than 850 social service users to be employed and achieve independence*

SINGAPORE, 10 NOVEMBER 2018 – Together with inclusive employers and their employees with disabilities, Guest-of-Honour President Halimah Yacob and Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development, ushered in the season of cheer this evening at the Community Chest Christmas on *A Great Street* Light-up Ceremony at Plaza Singapura.

This year's Community Chest Christmas on *A Great Street* Light-up Ceremony raised close to \$1.7 million which will go towards some 80 social service organisations supported by Community Chest, including those that provide vocational training and employment assistance for persons with disabilities or persons with mental health conditions, such as Autism Resource Centre, Metta School, APSN Delta Senior School, Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS) and Singapore Anglican Community Services (SACS).

In FY2017¹, Community Chest supported 33 programmes that promoted inclusive hiring, which enabled more than 850 social service users including persons with disabilities and persons with mental health conditions to be employed and achieve independence. Based on the Quality of Life Study completed by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) in 2016, persons with disabilities and persons with mental health conditions who were employed were found to experience a significantly higher quality of life, psychological well-being and level of independence as compared to those who were not.

¹ FY 2017 refers to 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Said President Halimah Yacob: “Community Chest has been a great source of support for social service organisations to enhance the employment and employability of persons with disabilities and mental health conditions in Singapore. We hope that more companies will step forward to give them equal job opportunities so that collectively, we can progress towards a more inclusive and caring nation.”

Many service users who are employed at these inclusive workplaces graduated from special education schools supported by Community Chest. One of them is Lim Han Ming, a graduate from APSN Delta Senior School. After training under the Community Chest-supported programmes offered at APSN Delta School, Han Ming was able to learn how to better assimilate into a working environment and become gainfully employed at McDonald’s Singapore, where he has worked as a service crew member since 2016.

Across Singapore, there has also been a growing number of employers who have taken the lead to embrace inclusive practices at the workplace, including key names such as Hotel Jen Orchardgateway by Shangri-La, McDonald’s Singapore and United Overseas Bank (UOB) Limited. Today, UOB employs 25 people with differing abilities at the UOB Scan Hub, the Bank’s nerve centre for the checking, digitalisation and archiving of paper documents.

Ms Susan Hwee, Head of Group Technology and Operations, UOB, said, “The UOB Scan Hub is an example of how the Bank’s inclusive hiring and equal opportunity approach is making a positive difference. With a focus on empowering people with different strengths and abilities, combined with modifications to the office environment and work processes, we have been able to create meaningful employment opportunities for those with autism or a hearing impairment.”

The light-up ceremony also celebrated different abilities and demonstrated inclusivity in various forms. Children from the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) under the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS) put up dance performances for the guests, and partners such as the Hitachi Group of Companies in Singapore co-created artwork designs with social service users from Bizlink Centre which are adapted to make 60,000 hand fans to be distributed to the general public at the Hitachi’s Santa House within the Great Christmas Village, while CapitaLand worked with Mr Jovan Neo, a special needs artist with The Art Faculty, to design

carnival-themed Christmas gift wrappers which will be made available for shoppers at Plaza Singapura and other CapitaLand malls.

The Community Chest Christmas on *A Great Street* Light-Up Ceremony is co-organised by Community Chest and Orchard Road Business Association, along with main sponsor, Hitachi Group of Companies in Singapore.

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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.

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

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**Community Chest Christmas On *A Great Street* Light-Up Ceremony 2018
@ Plaza Singapura, Front Plaza**

PROGRAMME

Time	Details
6.00pm	Media Registration
6.30pm	Token Presentation to Logistic Partners
6:55pm	Arrival of Host, Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development
7.00pm	Arrival of Guest-of-Honour, President Halimah Yacob Patron-in-Chief, National Council of Social Service
7.05pm	Welcome speech by Mr Chris Chong , Chairman of the Community Chest Christmas On <i>A Great Street</i> Light-Up Organising Committee
	Dance performances by children from the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) under the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS)
7.30pm	Cheque And Token Presentation To Partners and Donors
7.45pm	Light-Up Ceremony
8.20pm	HiPPO Bus Tour for Guests
9.30pm	End of Programme