



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

NTU Singapore partners Lions Befrienders for elderly health coaching training, research and course development

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An estimated 83,000 elderly persons will live alone in Singapore by 2030. It is thus crucial that every senior takes ownership of his or her health to live actively and independently in the community.

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and social service agency **Lions Befrienders (LB)** will work together to leverage NTU's expertise in active ageing research and continuing education to develop coaching programmes and courses that help improve and transform the lives of seniors in Singapore. Over 600 staff and volunteers from LB will be trained in health coaching under this new collaboration with NTU.

Leading NTU's efforts in this training and research partnership is its **Ageing Research Institute for Society and Education (ARISE)**. This collaboration, the first of its kind between ARISE and the social service sector, aims to build a pool of trained health coaches within the agency who will be equipped to empower and work with seniors to co-create solutions and guide them towards living a healthier life in various aspects such as nutrition, physical fitness, relationships, and finding purpose in life.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed today by **Professor Tjin Swee Chuan, NTU Associate Provost (Continuing Education) and Chief Executive, Centre for Professional and Continuing Education (PaCE@NTU)**, and **Past District Governor (PDG) Anthony Tay, Chairman of Lions Befrienders' Advisory Board**, in a ceremony at the LB Active Ageing Centre at Ang Mo Kio. The signing was witnessed by **Ms Ng Ling Ling, Member of Parliament for Ang Mo Kio GRC**.

The 2.5-year agreement comprises a training programme for elderly health coaching, and the research and co-development of specially tailored short courses for the elderly. LB's staff and volunteers will undergo the **Health Coaching for Older Adults** course,

which is developed by ARISE and offered through PaCE@NTU, the University's lifelong learning arm.

Professor Tim White, Vice President (International Engagement) and Covering Chair of ARISE, said: "NTU will leverage its expertise in active ageing research and continuing education to develop and offer suitable programmes and courses that allow LB to train their staff and volunteers to meet the needs of the elderly. To date, NTU has trained 182 participants in our Health Coaching for Older Adults course, of which 79 are from LB. This partnership will allow Befrienders to be better equipped with the relevant skills to provide personalised solutions on a wide variety of elderly ailments."

PDG Anthony Tay, Chairman of Lions Befrienders, said: "At LB, we embrace health coaching as part of our DNA to help move seniors out of their sedentary positions and hand them the key to proactively achieve their dreams and goals - healthy and active lives, physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, and spiritually."

Mr Liew Kee Sieng, Senior of Lions Befrienders, said: "I am grateful for the help and advice given by my health coach trainer. By monitoring my diet, rest, mobility, and mental health, he advised me on how best to change my lifestyle to live healthier. I feel assured that someone is tracking my health and guiding me along."

Course development and research

PaCE@NTU, working collaboratively with ARISE and LB, will jointly develop more new courses for elderly health coaching on important and relevant topics such as mental health, dementia, and how artificial intelligence can be used in elder care.

Professor Tjin Swee Chuan said: "The mission of PaCE@NTU is to offer varied opportunities for adults to embrace the lifelong learning paradigm. We are committed to deliver courses with strong andragogical innovations through new instructional designs and learners' feedback. This partnership with LB will test the efficacy of health coaching on the elderly's behavioural changes, and lifestyle choices such as exercise and diet. It will help the research team determine the impact of health coaching on the elderly and the sustainability of care continuum."

Both NTU ARISE and LB will also collaborate on research that examines the efficacy of health coaching for better eldercare. One key research area is the use of artificial intelligence in technology-enabled applications in enhancing the quality of life for seniors. These applications include those that monitor the seniors' diets, games that train their cognitive skills and exercises that build their physical strength.

Professor Theng Yin Leng, ARISE Executive Director and Associate Provost (Faculty Affairs), said: "It is heartening to see how the Health Coaching course has benefitted a wider community of seniors looked after by the LB. Their partnership is invaluable in providing a team of dedicated staff and volunteers that brings forth the

best practices of health coaching to benefit seniors island-wide. We look forward to working closely together with LB on further research on health coaching in order to provide even better and targeted care for the elderly.”

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About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 33,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Engineering, Business, Science, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, and Graduate colleges. It also has a medical school, the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, set up jointly with Imperial College London.

NTU is also home to world-class autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Earth Observatory of Singapore, and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute (NEWRI) and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Ranked amongst the world’s top universities by QS, NTU has also been named the world’s top young university since 2014. The University’s main campus is frequently listed among the Top 15 most beautiful university campuses in the world and it has 57 Green Mark-certified (equivalent to LEED-certified) building projects, of which 95% are certified Green Mark Platinum. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a campus in Singapore’s healthcare district.

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About Lions Befrienders (LB) - Connecting Seniors, Enriching Lives

A Social Service Agency formed in 1995 by the Lions Clubs of Singapore and a Lions District Project, LB has more than 26 years of experience in befriending and caring for seniors in order for them to age in place in the community. Lions Clubs of Singapore is a part of Lions Clubs International, an international non-political service organisation. Around the world, the Lions Clubs are given opportunities to serve and better their communities and express their altruism through kind-hearted services.

Over the years, LB strives to address the varied needs of more than 86,000 seniors by adopting a senior-centric approach in its eldercare services. Leveraging on the support of some 1,000 regular volunteers, we actively engage more than 6,000 at-risk seniors via a spectrum of integrated eldercare service from preventive to intervention through comprehensive programmes, including social, emotional, mental and physical, to improve their quality of life.

Amid the challenges in the eldercare landscape, LB undertakes constant review and adjustment to its programmes and services. Under our Community Outreach arm, we currently operate 10 Active Ageing Centres, 3 Cluster Support, 2 Senior Group Homes and Home Personal Care services. Our Befriending arm extends island-wide befriending services to socially isolated seniors. For its exemplary disclosure and corporate governance practices, LB was conferred the Charity Transparency Award by the Charity Council in 2016 and 2017.

For more information, visit www.lionsbefrienders.org.sg.