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## **Joint Media Release**

*For immediate release*

### **TOUCH Home Care joins hands with AIC and CEL to extend its reach into the Western heartlands**

1. Frail elderly living in the West can soon count on an extra pair of helping hands with TOUCH Home Care providing integrated and cost effective home care services in the region. The home care service provider, a service of not-for-profit charitable organisation TOUCH Community Services, has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) and the Centre for Enabled Living (CEL) to collaborate on a pilot programme to expand its services into the Western region. The collaboration is a first for the parent ministries, the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Community, Youth and Sports (MYCS), signifying a whole-of-government approach towards realising the goal for more elderly to age in place.

2. There are currently 20 home care and home help service providers<sup>1</sup> in Singapore, each offering a variety of healthcare and social services. Each year, AIC refers about 6000 patients to home care service providers. Three-quarters of these are aged 65 years and above, and require assistance in Activities of Daily Living (ADL) such as feeding, toileting, and personal grooming, and may be bed-bound. The number of clients receiving social services from home help providers stand at over 4000 each year.

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<sup>1</sup> Home care here refers to services such as home medical, nursing and therapy, while home help refers to services such as meals-on-wheels, escort and housekeeping services.

3. To meet the rising demand for home care and home help, especially in the Western region where there is currently a lack of such services, AIC and CEL will provide funding support of up to \$700,000 for two years for TOUCH to set up an office base in Jurong, out of which health services as well as social services will be coordinated and provided to residents in Jurong East, Jurong West and Boon Lay.

4 Under the MOU, the funding will also help meet manpower needs to provide holistic care to clients in their homes by a multi-disciplinary team comprising doctors, nurses, therapists, home help assistants and operations staff. TOUCH will also tap on existing community resources such as partnering general practitioners and professional locum staff. This sustainable and flexible manpower structure maximises cost effectiveness, which mirrors TOUCH Home Care's existing offerings at their Toa Payoh headquarters, where healthcare is integrated with social services like meals-on-wheels, house-keeping, transport, and escort services to hospitals for immobile clients.

5 Said Mr Eugene Seow, Executive Director of TOUCH Community Services, "TOUCH has over 16 years of experience specialising in home medical, nursing, rehabilitation and home help services, meeting the needs of the elderly residents and their families in the heartlands. We are very grateful for the funding support of AIC and CEL, which would enable TOUCH to serve even more frail elderly living in the western part of Singapore, by providing cost-effective and holistic home care services."

6. The new operations base is targeted to open by June this year and TOUCH aims to service some 300 residents in the region at the end of two years. It is expected that residents in the West and clients from the National University Hospital and Alexandra Hospital will benefit significantly from TOUCH's expansion.

7. Said Dr Jason Cheah, Chief Executive Officer of AIC, "We are pleased to work with CEL on this initiative to better integrate social and health care services by boosting the capabilities of long-term care providers like TOUCH. Such partnerships will help more elderly with complex problems to age in place in the community where they are most happy to be in. We will continue to collaborate with partners in the long-term care sector to offer more new and innovative care options to help patients achieve their best health outcomes."

8. Said Ms Lee Kwai Sem, Chief Executive of CEL, “TOUCH Home Care’s move into the western region is most timely as it fills an important niche in the sector. CEL supports this programme under our SEED fund since it is designed to enhance the capabilities of service providers like TOUCH. This will also be an ideal platform to work together with relevant partners to expand the suite of home care services to provide a comprehensive model meeting both the health and social needs of the elderly. We firmly believe this collaboration will benefit and improve the lives of clients thus helping them live enabled lives in the community, a vision which is shared with AIC.”

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### **About the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)**

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) is set up by the Ministry of Health (MOH) *to oversee, coordinate and facilitate all efforts in care integration*. Our mission is to achieve best health outcomes for our patients by empowering clients and coordinating access to appropriate care, enable stakeholders to strengthen the primary and community care sectors, and enhancing collaboration to create a well-connected healthcare system. For more information, please visit [www.aic.sg](http://www.aic.sg).

### **About the Centre for Enabled Living (CEL)**

The Centre for Enabled Living Ltd (CEL) was conceived by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports as part of the national care network to coordinate social care for persons needing care (PNCs) and their caregivers. As the national care coordinator, CEL support its clients by matching them to appropriate elderly and disability care programmes and services according to their specific needs, thus enabling them to lead dignified lives. For more information, please visit [www.cel.sg](http://www.cel.sg).

### **About TOUCH Home Care**

TOUCH Home Care (THC), a service of TOUCH Community Services, strives to enable the frail and home-bound elderly to continue functioning within their community with the greatest independence and quality of life. THC provides them with home medical, home nursing, home rehabilitation and home help services. Since 2007, four of THC's staff received the *Healthcare Humanity Award* that is given to outstanding and inspirational healthcare workers who go the extra mile to care for the sick and infirmed. For more information about TOUCH, please visit [www.touch.org.sg](http://www.touch.org.sg).