



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

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**SPEECH BY DR AMY KHOR, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH,
AT TZU CHI FOUNDATION (SINGAPORE)'S LAUNCH OF HOME CARE SERVICES,
TZU CHI REDHILL CLINIC, ON 5 NOV 2014**

Mr Low Swee Seh, Chief Executive Officer of Tzu Chi Foundation (Singapore)

Dr Jennifer Lee, Chairman of Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Introduction

Let me first say a few words in chinese.

大家下午好。很高兴今天能参加慈济居家护理的推介仪式。源自台湾的慈济自1987年就为红山和裕廊东居民免费提供体检和医疗服务。如今慈济扩大服务，登门为居民提供医疗、护理和治疗服务，护理人员 and 义工的爱心和服务精神，实在值得鼓励。我代表这里的居民，向他们说声“谢谢！”，并希望他们能继续协助这里的年长者原地养老。

1. Good afternoon. I am delighted to be here today to officially launch Tzu Chi's home care services.

2. Tzu Chi Foundation has a long history of helping the needy. It was founded in Taiwan in 1966 and now does good work in more than 45 countries. Since 1987, it has been helping Singaporeans in need by providing free health screenings, house calls and medical consultations at its free clinics here in Redhill and in Jurong East. Today's launch represents Tzu Chi's commitment to continuing this rich tradition.



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3. With support from the Tote Board Community Healthcare Fund, Tzu Chi has now expanded its services in terms of both scope and reach. Tzu Chi is not only commencing home medical care, home nursing and home therapy services, but is also bringing its services to new areas, including Bukit Batok and Clementi. I am glad to hear that Tzu Chi aims to benefit 300 seniors through the programme, and that some have already started to enjoy the benefits.

4. Two such Singaporeans are Mdm Lee, an 88-year-old Pioneer, and her son Mr Wong. Mdm Lee has been bedbound since suffering a stroke in 2004. Mr Wong left his job after the stroke to take care of her daily needs, but the demands of caregiving adversely affected his health. When Mr Wong visited this Redhill clinic in 2012 for hypertension, Tzu Chi recognized that his poor health was partly a result of the strain of caregiving, and went the extra mile to offer him support in caring for his mother. Today, the care team regularly visits Mdm Lee at home to provide medical care and therapy. She is well taken care of, and Mr Wong is less stressed and better able to look after his own health.

5. I am sure there are many more testimonies of how Singaporeans are benefitting from Tzu Chi's services. Even more will do so with Tzu Chi's expansion. I would like to thank Tzu Chi for their contributions to the local community.

Ramping up capacity

6. Tzu Chi's launch of home care services is timely given the growing demand for community-based care. In recent months, the Government conducted a series of discussions with the public to chart out aspirations and strategies for successful ageing. Many who took part shared that they prefer to age-in-place and continue living independently within a supportive community among friends and family. In this regard, the Ministry of Health and the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) has been working on expanding home care so that seniors have easier access to such services. We are on track to creating a target capacity for 10,000 patients in home-based healthcare services and 7,500 patients in home-based personal care services by 2020.



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Delivering Comprehensive and Holistic Services

7. Beyond increasing capacity, it is just as important to ensure that we meet the diverse needs of seniors. MOH has been working with providers to develop a more comprehensive suite of services so that our seniors can be cared for at home. For example, MOH started funding home therapy services from April this year. Tzu Chi's provision of caregiver training, help with housekeeping and hygiene education is in line with this focus.

Delivering Quality Care in the Community

8. MOH is also working to enhance the quality of services so that our seniors can receive better care. We convened sector-led committees to draft guidelines for home care, and have just completed a series of consultation sessions to seek public and industry views before we finalize them by next year. Meanwhile, the AIC is developing an interpretation guidebook and training roadmaps to help providers develop capabilities in the areas articulated in the guidelines.

Conclusion

9. Home care will play an increasingly important role in supporting our seniors to age in place. We are doing our utmost to work with providers like Tzu Chi to increase the accessibility and quality of home care for our seniors. I would like to congratulate Tzu Chi once again on the launch of its home care services, and look forward to more seniors achieving their aspirations to grow old in the community.

10. Thank you.



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