



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**  
SINGAPORE

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**SPEECH BY DR AMY KHOR, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE (HEALTH),  
AT THE ILTC MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AWARDS CEREMONY,  
MND AUDITORIUM, ANNEXE A ON 22 OCT 2013, 2.50 PM**

Dr Jennifer Lee, AIC Chairman,  
Dr Jason Cheah, AIC CEO,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Introduction**

1. Good afternoon. I am delighted to join you at AIC's first ILTC Manpower Development Awards.

**Manpower Development Critical to ILTC**

2. The development of the intermediate and long term care sector is a priority for MOH under our Healthcare 2020 Masterplan. Given a rapidly ageing population, we need to urgently ramp up our ILTC services by 2020.

3. In parallel, we are working with the sector to define and enhance the standards of care within nursing homes, eldercare centres and home care. We also need to catalyze new services, such as home care, dementia care, and caregiver support, to provide more holistic support for seniors and their families.

4. Manpower development underpins our development of the ILTC sector and is critical to its success. We need to recruit enough care staff to support the expansion of



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services and to deliver care to a growing population of elderly patients. We need to develop new skills in our workforce to support new care models and to achieve higher care standards.

5. We also need to develop a larger pool of leaders who can pioneer new services and collectively lead the sector to greater heights.

### **ILTC Manpower Development Awards**

6. Since 2002, the government has invested more than \$15 million in advanced training for the ILTC sector. One of the most popular schemes is the Social & Health Manpower Development Programme-ILTC (SHMDP-ILTC) award, previously known as the Health Manpower Development Programme-ILTC (HMDP-ILTC) award, which enables ILTC professionals to upgrade their skills through local and overseas attachments. Another key scheme is the ILTC-Upgrading Programme or ILTC-“UP” award which supports ILTC healthcare professionals to pursue professional degrees in nursing and allied health disciplines.

7. With the integration of both social and healthcare functions of aged care under the Ministry of Health (MOH) this year, we have extended the coverage of our funding schemes for training and productivity to 24 social care providers, in addition to the 118 healthcare providers who are already covered today. With the expansion of SHMDP-ILTC and ILTC-UP to cover social aged care providers, more professionals will be able to benefit from the upgrading opportunities provided by these schemes.

### **Lifelong Learning**

8. To provide care for patients with increasingly complex conditions in the community and meet rising expectations of the quality of care, it is critical to build up a base of well-qualified ILTC professionals who continually seek to deepen their skills and knowledge.



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9. There is a Chinese proverb: *Learning is like rowing upstream: not to advance is to drop back* (学如逆水行舟，不进则退). Lifelong learning is a habit that can be cultivated. Let me share with you the inspiring story of two of our award recipients, Mr Jimi Tan and Ms Marsha Tan, who are here with us today.

10. Mr Jimi Tan and Ms Marsha Tan are father and daughter who are both healthcare professionals at the Peacehaven Nursing Home. Jimi has been working as a supervisor at the home for the past 11 years, while Marsha has been a nutritionist there for the past two years.

11. Prior to joining Peacehaven Nursing Home, Jimi regularly volunteered at St Andrews' Community Hospital (SACH). It was there that his passion for helping the sick elderly began. Jimi also used to bring Marsha along when he volunteered at the community hospital. He believes that through volunteer work, he was able to teach his children the value of giving back to the community. In fact, it was Jimi's passion and dedication to helping the elderly which inspired Marsha to pursue a career in the ILTC sector.

12. Jimi and Marsha have both been awarded the SHMDP-ILTC award this year and will be able to upgrade their skills together. Jimi will be pursuing a two-year Master of Guidance and Counselling programme at James Cook University in Singapore while Marsha will be pursuing her Master of Dietetics at Deakin University in Australia. Both of them show that you are never too young or too old to learn.

### **Mid-Term Scholarship for Medical Social Work (MTS MSW)**

13. For the first time, this ceremony will also be honouring the recipients of the Mid-Term Scholarship for Medical Social Work and the Temasek Cares-Study Award.

14. The **Mid-Term Scholarship for Medical Social Work (MTS MSW)** for the ILTC sector is a mid-term scholarship funded by the Ministry of Health. A total of four



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professionals will be receiving this scholarship, which will fully fund their tuition fees and provide each of them with a monthly allowance for the entire scholarship period.

15. These MTS MSW scholars will have the opportunity to be posted to an ILTC institution where they will undergo training to acquire core social work competencies. They will also be rotated to different care settings, including the public acute care sector, for greater exposure and professional development.

16. Ms Yvonne Loo is one of this year's MTS MSW scholarship recipients. She was a Medical Technologist before she stopped work to care for her children. When her children grew older, Yvonne had more time on her hands and through volunteer work, she realised that more can be done to help those in need and decided to pursue a degree in Social Work at SIM University.

17. Today, Yvonne aspires to equip herself with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively help the old and needy. She will be working at Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital after she completes her studies.

### **Temasek Cares-Study Award (TC-SA)**

18. The other award being presented today is the **Temasek Cares-Study Award (TC-SA)**, which will be given to seven students this year. Since 2010, a total of 15 awards have been presented.

19. We are grateful to have corporate sponsors like Temasek Cares, who have been generous in their support of students and professionals in their quest to upgrade their skills and better serve the community. Take the example of Mr Shakir Bin Rahmat, who is one of this year's recipients.

20. He is a first-year polytechnic student who is currently pursuing a Diploma in Physiotherapy at Nanyang Polytechnic. Shakir's interest in physiotherapy was sparked by his personal experiences.



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21. He had previously torn a muscle ligament in his leg while playing soccer. During his recovery period, he realised the importance of physiotherapy rehabilitation.

22. After his 'A' levels, he chose to pursue a diploma in physiotherapy to fulfil his aspiration to serve as a Physiotherapist in the community care sector. Now, he is able to do so with the support of a training scholarship.

23. With Temasek Cares' continued support, I am happy to announce that the Temasek Cares-Study Award will be enhanced this year.

24. Besides the NITEC nursing courses and diploma courses in nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy at Nanyang Polytechnic and Ngee Ann Polytechnic, the Award will now also provide funding support for students to pursue a diploma in Healthcare Administration from Republic Polytechnic.

25. Additionally, award recipients will also be given opportunities to further hone their skills through local and overseas conferences, attachments and training during their studies.

26. The stories of our award recipients today are deeply inspiring to all of us who serve in the ILTC sector. I also hope that our award recipients' experiences will cultivate in all of us a culture of continuous upgrading and lifelong learning, which we can pursue through the wide range of schemes and initiatives available.

### **Launch of ILTC Career Portal**

27. The success of the ILTC sector rests in large part on its ability to attract and retain the right people, with the skills and passion needed to excel at their jobs.

28. Besides enhancing the skills upgrading and training landscape to support the growth of the sector, I am pleased to launch "ILTCareers", a one-stop portal for



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information on ILTC careers and scholarships in Singapore. Aspiring entrants to the sector can use the portal to find information about the diverse job opportunities available in the sector as well as scholarships to enter training to become nurses and allied health professionals.

29. By tapping on the Internet, job matching can be done round-the-clock at the convenience of both applicants and employers. Already, there are 45 different ILTC institutions featured on the portal.

30. I welcome school-leavers, back-to-work mothers, retirees, and anyone with a passion to serve our elderly to visit the career portal and discover for themselves the many challenging and fulfilling career opportunities that await them.

## Closing

31. To the award recipients, congratulations once again, and I wish you all the best for your upcoming journey of learning and growth.



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