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**SPEECH BY FOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND
TRANSPORT ASSOC PROF MUHAMMAD FAISHAL IBRAHIM AT THE ILTC
QUALITY FESTIVAL 2014 ON 10 OCTOBER 2014, FRIDAY, 9AM AT
SINGAPORE EXPO MAX ATRIA**

Distinguished colleagues and guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Good morning, it gives me great pleasure to join you at the fourth Intermediate and Long-Term Care (ILTC) Quality Festival. This annual Quality Festival brings together ILTC organisations to share and also pick up improvement initiatives to build a strong culture of quality improvement (QI) and to promote patient safety. This is also the first time that the ILTC Quality Festival is organised back-to-back with the inaugural National Seminar on Productivity in Healthcare.

2. I am heartened to see so many distinguished speakers, guests, and participants today. This year's combined event has attracted over 1,000 attendees! This attests to the growing interest in QI and productivity across the ILTC community.

Importance of a Quality Improvement culture

3. It is apt that the theme for this year's event is "Enhancing Care through Quality and Productivity". Progressing from the themes of "sparking a culture of change" and "making quality our way of life" in the ILTC sector over the past two years, we must continue to achieve better care outcomes for our clients through quality and innovation.

4. The ILTC sector is growing in significance, given our rapidly ageing population and their evolving needs. With the increasing prevalence of chronic conditions, our seniors will require more ILTC services as they age. As we ramp up the capacity of our ILTC services to meet this need, we must also pay attention to maintaining holistic and safe care for our seniors. This is especially so as our future seniors will be more well-educated and well-travelled, and have higher expectations for the care they receive.

5. We will need to do this amidst an environment of manpower challenges. It has therefore become imperative for the sector to boost productivity by using innovation

to optimise resources. And by combining innovation with improvement efforts, I am confident that even better care outcomes can be achieved for our elderly clients. These can mean more patient-centred care, ensuring patient safety and dignity.

6. On the government's part, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has taken steps to ensure consistent and better quality of intermediate and long-term care. MOH worked with the ILTC sector to develop the Enhanced Nursing Home Standards (ENHS) which will be introduced in 2015. We have also partnered the sector in drafting guidelines for home and centre-based care to clearly set out the standard of care that providers should aspire to achieve. We are committed to supporting the sector to achieve better care outcomes through these standards and guidelines. Within the ILTC Quality Festival, we have introduced a new track under the breakout sessions, which includes psychosocial and mental health and dignity of care, to raise awareness on the importance of the social aspect of care for our seniors.

A Quality culture taking root

7. I am pleased to also see that many ILTC organisations are actively enhancing their quality of care. The positive response to the annual ILTC Quality Festival Poster Competition is one such indication. To date, a total of over 200 posters from 32 organisations, showcasing their QI initiatives, have been submitted since the poster competition started two years ago. In fact, I understand from AIC that this year's Competition has seen a 75 per cent increase in submissions, with a total of 93 abstracts received from 17 organisations.

8. We have also seen three community hospitals join the Singapore Healthcare Improvement Network, SHINe. This network was formed in 2012 by 23 founding members with the objective to achieve the Triple Aim - better care, better health and lower costs. St Andrew's Community Hospital, Ren Ci Hospital and Ang Mo Kio-Thye Hua Kwan Hospital have been welcomed as the newest network members, and invited to participate in SHINe's large scale initiative focused on reducing harm.

Inaugural ILTC Excellence Awards 2014

9. Providing good, holistic care to our seniors cannot be achieved without skilled and dedicated healthcare workers. To encourage the efforts by the ILTC sector and professionals to improve the quality of care, I am pleased to launch the ILTC Excellence Awards. It is the first award that is devoted to recognising exemplary staff and excellent care practices in the ILTC sector.

10. There are three categories in the ILTC Excellence Awards. They are Service Quality; Good Suggestion (individual-level); and Good Practices in the areas of clinical, service quality, innovation and productivity.

11. These awards celebrate the contributions of individuals and project teams who have demonstrated excellence and made significant contributions in the areas of clinical and service quality. They have embraced productivity and innovation in the course of their work. I am pleased that more than 200 recipients are recognised this year.

- i. One of the recipients today is Ms Lai Mee Horng, a Nurse Clinician from Assisi Hospice. Having served palliative patients for over 17 years, she understands the pain they have to go through and goes out of her way to fulfil their last wishes. This included arranging for a critically ill patient to return to his birthplace overseas, and securing both medication and household appliances for a patient whose home was damaged by fire. Her can-do attitude, thirst for improvement in her nursing knowledge, and willingness to share her experience makes her a role model for other nurses. Her commitment to her patients and the sector was recognised with the Healthcare Humanity Award and Assisi Outstanding Hospice Nurse Award.
- ii. Another recipient is Mr Min Min Aung from Ren Ci Hospital, who will receive the Good Suggestion Award. Mr Min's suggestion helped Ren Ci Hospital to track key performance data systematically across departments using new IT software. He also improved data extraction which helps teams to better care for their clients.
- iii. For the Good Practice Award, under the Clinical Quality Improvement category, the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) has demonstrated how education and training on dialysis treatment for patients and the development of emergency kits have helped both staff and patients to be prepared in managing post dialysis site bleeding. As a result of effective self-management, there has been a significant reduction of post site bleeding in 80 per cent of patients.
- iv. Saint Andrew's Community Hospital (SACH) will receive the Good Practice Award for Service Quality Improvement. SACH has improved patient satisfaction at the Outpatient Clinic by reducing the average patient waiting time by more than 50 per cent. By electronically accessing patients' data and test results, medication can be prescribed at a faster rate. SACH's nurses were also trained to conduct certain specialised tests, rather than making patients wait for the doctors to do so.
- v. Under the Productivity and Innovation category for the Good Practice Award, TOUCH Caregivers Support has raised productivity for their helpline on care services by using the call management system and templates for commonly requested services. These have allowed TOUCH to provide timely

information and quality services with shorter calls. TOUCH is also now handling 38 per cent more calls and has expanded its client membership pool.

Closing

12. I congratulate the award recipients and also commend the poster competition participants. I hope each of you will continue to champion QI in the healthcare sector, for the benefit of our seniors.

13. Improvement and innovation should be an integral part of work for every healthcare organisation and care provider. I hope that ILTC Quality Festival 2014 will inspire each of you to build such a culture in your organisations.

14. Thank you.