

Speech by DPM Tharman Shanmugaratnam

Care & Share Thank-You Show

28 April 2016

Mr Phillip Tan, Chairman of Community Chest and Care & Share Movement Steering Committee and his fellow members,

My Cabinet colleagues, Minister Heng Swee Keat, Chan Chun Sing and Tan Chuan-Jin,

Everyone who has been part of the Care and Share Movement.

1. We gather this evening, a few thousand of us in this hall, as people who are grateful to be tied together as Singaporeans. That's 4000 of us tonight, but it is also about the 275,000 individuals who have volunteered over the last two years, helping their fellow Singaporeans and grateful to be tied together as Singaporeans.

2. The Care & Share Movement has exceeded itself. We **started off wanting to raise \$500 million**, including \$250 million in matching grants. The government then raised its matching grant to up to \$500 million, and we hoped that with additional private donations we would reach a total of

\$1 billion. What we instead **reached was \$1.3 billion.** (This amount comprises over \$800 million in donations raised by the 241 charities during the Movement and \$500 million in matching grants by the Government and Tote Board.) And that does not include the matching grants from the Community Silver Trust, for donations to VWOs helping the elderly with long-term care needs.

Our Unique Approach

3. What we have seen through the Care & Share Movement is also the unique way we go about developing the charity sector in Singapore - **a unique partnership between Government, business and community.**

- The Government encourages private donations to charitable causes, through our matching grants and tax incentives for private donations - the scale of matching support from Government is in fact most unusual by any international standard.
- And private donors, big and small, contribute more, knowing that the Government will also contribute more.

So we leverage off each other. And **the big benefit in all of this: our VWOs are growing and spreading their services.**

4. It is **far better this way**, this partnership between Government, business and community, than if we left it to volunteers to raise money on their own, without Government support. And far better than if the Government were to contribute more to the VWOs without private individuals, foundations and businesses also stepping up and playing a more active role.

5. I say it is far better this way, not only because of the additional money we raise this way, or the money our charities are able to spend. It is **fundamentally not about the money, but about the spirit of community we are developing in Singapore**: people living purposeful lives by taking an active part in the community, making life better for their fellowmen, and helping every Singaporean live a life of dignity.

6. Care & Share has enabled our VWOs to reach out to more people, and to meet **underserved needs**. Some are complex needs. A good example concerns the needs of **caregivers of persons with mental illnesses**. We know how caregivers want to help their loved ones faced

with mental illnesses, but we also know how tough it can be, psychologically and emotionally, on them as spouses or family members.

7. One of the VWOs that has benefited from Care & Share - CAL (Caregivers Alliance Limited) - is indeed reaching out to these caregivers. CAL is a young VWO, led by Dr Sally Thio, who has had many years in the field. They began services in 2012, with the aim of supporting, training and empowering caregivers of persons with mental illnesses. They are already working actively with IMH and other government and community stakeholders, and doing good work. **CAL and JurongHealth now intend to collaborate with each other so as to expand its services in the western region.**

Investing in VWOs' people and capabilities

8. We will do all we can to support and strengthen our VWOs, as we grow our social service sector. We are investing in their people and capabilities. For example, the Social Service Institute (SSI) plans to train up to 16,000 people by 2020, through a range of programmes, from leadership to specialised social service skills. It will be extending its training from its current focus on training professionals to those in the community such as volunteers and caregivers. SSI will also be using a

range of innovations in learning - including social or interactive learning where professionals or volunteers discuss real-life issues that they face.

9. We will also invest in social service professionals through SkillsFuture. I'm glad we have already awarded several (18) SkillsFuture Study Awards for the social service sector since we launched this in October 2015. We plan on **awarding 60 SkillsFuture Study Awards this year** (FY2016).

Conclusion

10. Finally, a big thank you once again to everyone who has contributed to what we have achieved together as Singaporeans in the Care & Share movement. We are coming together, strengthening our partnerships, and together, building a more inclusive and caring Singapore.