

MEDIA RELEASE

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AIC inks agreement with NUS to spur student volunteerism in the Community Care sector

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) has established a new partnership with the National University of Singapore (NUS) to promote a movement of volunteerism within the Community Care sector. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by AIC's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Tan Kwang Cheak, and NUS Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Technology-Enhanced Learning, Professor Peter Ho, this morning. It was witnessed by Minister for Education Mr Chan Chun Sing.



(From L-R: Prof Peter Ho, Minister Chan Chun Sing, and Mr Tan Kwang Cheak, at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between AIC and NUS. Photo credit: National University of Singapore)

Partnership in service-learning

2. Under the MOU, AIC and NUS will work together to encourage a spirit of volunteerism among students through various initiatives and programmes and equip them with the relevant skills in voluntary work. As part of this effort, NUS has partnered with AIC to offer two year-long, service-learning courses – ‘Reconnect SeniorsSG’ and ‘Support Healthy AgeingSG’. Offered under the Communities & Engagement Pillar of the NUS General Education curriculum, students get to engage with seniors through AIC’s Senior Befriending and Silver Generation Ambassador (SGA) programmes. Guided through a structured academic programme overseen by the NUS Department of Social Work, they will also learn empathetic communication, civic consciousness, real-world complexities, and trade-offs.

3. Students taking ‘[Reconnect SeniorsSG](#)’ serve as senior befrienders, meeting regularly with the seniors to build rapport with them, and accompanying them for activities such as for walkabout in their neighbourhood, going to Active Ageing Centres (AACs) for games, running errands such as making a trip to the nearby market or even to the clinic for consultation. The aim is to encourage seniors to maintain their physical mobility and social connectivity to promote healthier ageing. The feedback from these student volunteers will also help refine the programme for future volunteers, with the goal of developing a long-term programme which benefits both students and seniors.

4. Working with AIC’s Silver Generation Office (SGO), students taking ‘[Support Healthy AgeingSG](#)’ engage seniors in their homes to share relevant government schemes and policies, as well as activities and services available to seniors within their communities. These engagements give a better understanding of seniors’ aspirations and needs, serving as a platform to render them the appropriate assistance. Feedback gathered during these engagements are also used to help better understand seniors’ concerns, and in turn, facilitate the formulation of better policies for seniors.

Scaling up of student volunteers

5. In 2023, over 400 NUS students have participated in the befriending activities and more than 500 NUS students have served as SGAs. By 2024, NUS will be scaling up its capacity to support the enrolment of up to 900 students under the ‘Reconnect SeniorsSG’ course, and 1,200 students under the ‘Support Healthy AgeingSG’ course every year.

6. Commenting on the significance of this partnership, Mr Sng Hock Lin, Chief of SGO, said, “With Singapore being one of the world’s fastest-ageing nations, the need for volunteers in the sector, and a comprehensive volunteering curriculum for those who step up to the plate, are increasingly important. Together with NUS, we hope to nurture the seeds of service in the hearts of the next generation of leaders and support the development of soft skills in them. In time to come, we hope to strengthen our volunteer networks and ensure their sustainability, so that we can continue to build a more compassionate society that will better support our seniors in their desire to live well and age gracefully.”

7. “The NUS Communities & Engagement Pillar provides a valuable opportunity for all students to think deeper about societal issues while taking constructive actions to advance social services and community building,” said Ms Ong Mui Hong, Director of NUS Communities & Engagement. “Through this Pillar, the University hopes to harness the power of our students through youth action to advance Singapore’s social services and community development landscape. The service-learning partnership with AIC is part of our wider effort to help build a more caring society in deep collaboration with national agencies and ministries.”

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About the Agency for Integrated Care

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) aims to create a vibrant care community for people to live well and age gracefully. AIC coordinates and supports efforts in integrating care to achieve the best care outcomes for our clients. We reach out to caregivers and seniors with information on staying active and ageing well, and connect people to services they need. We support stakeholders in their efforts to raise the quality of care, and also work with health and social care partners to provide services for the ageing population. Our work in the community brings care services and information closer to those in need. For more about us, please visit <https://www.aic.sg>

About the National University of Singapore (NUS)

The National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore's flagship university, which offers a global approach to education, research and entrepreneurship, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise. We have 16 colleges, faculties and schools across three campuses in Singapore, with more than 40,000 students from 100 countries enriching our vibrant and diverse campus community. We have also established more than 20 NUS Overseas Colleges entrepreneurial hubs around the world.

Our multidisciplinary and real-world approach to education, research and entrepreneurship enables us to work closely with industry, governments and academia to address crucial and complex issues relevant to Asia and the world. Researchers in our faculties, research centres of excellence, corporate labs and more than 30 university-level research institutes focus on themes that include energy; environmental and urban sustainability; treatment and prevention of diseases; active ageing; advanced materials; risk management and resilience of financial systems; Asian studies; and Smart Nation capabilities such as artificial intelligence, data science, operations research and cybersecurity.

For more information on NUS, please visit nus.edu.sg.