



## MEDIA RELEASE

5 APRIL 2024 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### AIC launches new national volunteerism programme

***It aims to place 2,400 Silver Guardians at Active Ageing Centres island-wide by 2028***

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) has introduced a national programme to develop a volunteer pool that supports Active Ageing Centres (AACs) as they expand their roles and activities within the community. Under the new Silver Guardian programme, volunteers will be trained by AIC and placed at AACs located near their residence or workplace.

2. This programme also aims to foster senior volunteerism by encouraging seniors to support their peers and giving back towards a meaningful cause. This is in line with the Ministry of Health's call for more seniors to volunteer at suitable opportunities, in order to remain purposefully engaged and socially connected. By matching the volunteers to a conveniently located AAC, this programme hopes to rally the community to contribute to the eldercare sector.

3. The launch of this new national programme took place this afternoon at Presbyterian Community Services' Esther AAC, with Minister for Health, Mr Ong Ye Kung, as the Guest-of-Honour. At the event, AIC also expressed its appreciation to volunteers and the other AAC service providers that participated in the programme's pilot as part of the afternoon's proceedings.

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AAC service providers from the programme pilot were recognised for their support at the event by, AIC CEO, Mr Dinesh Vasu Dash, and Minister for Health, Mr Ong Ye Kung.

### **Equipping volunteers with key knowledge**

4. Under the Silver Guardian programme, learning institutes appointed by AIC will provide training to help volunteers understand the eldercare landscape, as well as learn how to communicate and engage with seniors effectively. Such training builds up the confidence of volunteers to interact with seniors at the AACs.

5. With a wide range of volunteering opportunities at the AACs, volunteers can choose to serve based on their skills and interest. They will also have the option to be trained in specialised skills such as community befriending and how to design active ageing programmes for the AAC.

### **Expansion from success of pilot programme**

6. A pilot programme was conducted by AIC from April to December 2023 to understand the support that AACs needed, and how volunteers can contribute and help bolster their programming. There were 200 volunteers under the pilot who were deployed to 12 AACs. These volunteers facilitated activities and programmes such as communal cooking and craft activities for seniors in the AACs. The volunteers were also involved in befriending seniors at risk of social isolation and reaching out to seniors living in the vicinity to connect them with the AAC.

7. Through the pilot, AACs were able to resource more interesting activities for seniors. Many of the volunteers were seniors themselves who found joy in sharing their interests with others and spending their time purposefully. With the success of this pilot, efforts to recruit, train, and match volunteers have been scaled up to reach a goal of having 2,400 Silver Guardians by 2028.

8. Mr Dinesh Vasu Dash, AIC's Chief Executive Officer, said, "With this new Silver Guardian programme, we can further support AACs in the good work that they do. We also believe that volunteerism is an important enabler to age well in the community. It becomes even more powerful if seniors join us to contribute to fellow seniors; not only will they create a meaningful impact to the lives of those around them, they can also find fulfilment and expand their social connections."

9. Interested volunteer applicants may indicate their preferences on the form available at [www.aic.sg/silver-guardian](http://www.aic.sg/silver-guardian).

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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>