



Caregiver support fund, youth career programme launched in Marine Parade

Caregivers living in the cluster can receive support of up to \$6,600 under the fund

Shernaine Ang

Caregivers of elderly sick or disabled family members living in the Marine Parade cluster can now get one-time support of up to \$6,600 in cash, Grab vouchers and reimbursement for respite care with the introduction of a new fund.

Separately, a new career exposure programme will provide youth living in the area with hands-on career exploration and internship opportunities to prepare them for the workforce.

The two schemes were announced by Manpower Minister Tan See Leng and Culture, Community and Youth Minister Edwin Tong, both Marine Parade GRC MPs, on April 6 at an SG60 event for the cluster, held at Kampong Ubi Community Centre.

Prime Minister Lawrence Wong was also at the event. Having grown up in Marine Parade, PM Wong said the area has transformed significantly.

"There is a lot we should be grateful for and cherish. Where things can be better, let us work together to make them better," he said. "And we know there are real concerns on the ground, for example, with cost of living, with other issues, and the Government will try our very best to address these concerns."

He said he was glad to see that national schemes to help with the cost of living, such as CDC vouchers and upcoming SG60 vouchers, are being complemented by local initiatives.

"We know the world is in a very challenging position now. (We) look around us and we know that there are dark clouds over the horizon, but just as we have overcome previous challenges all these last 60 years and more recently, tackling Covid-19 together, let us also draw strength from what we have been through together," PM Wong said.

"So whether it is at the government level, whether it is at the constituency level, let us continue to work together, overcoming our challenges and charting our new way forward."

The Marine Parade cluster consists of Braddell Heights, Geylang Serai, Joo Chiat, Kerbauan-Chai Chee, Marine Parade, MacPherson and Mountbatten.

Up to 2,600 families can benefit from the Caregiver Support Fund, the first such fund for the cluster.

Depending on their household income, they will receive cash relief of up to \$700, up to \$300 in Grab vouchers to cover transport costs incurred as part of medical visits or commuting, and up to \$600 in reimbursement for respite care.

The amount of cash relief, for instance, will be \$700 for blue Card holders, \$500 for orange Card holders, and \$200 for other eligible caregivers.

Respite care offers caregivers a break from their caregiving duties and helps reduce their stress.

Enhancements to a national scheme, the Home Caregiving Grant, will take effect in April 2025. This will give caregivers of individuals with permanent moderate disabilities up to \$600 a month - up from the current \$400 - to help with caregiving expenses, such as care services.

Until then, Marine Parade's Caregiver Support Fund will provide interim support between April 2025 and January 2026.

To qualify for this fund, the caregiver must be looking after a Singaporean family member residing within the Marine Parade cluster and who requires help due to disability, mental illness or chronic illness.

The grant will be disbursed from April 6 till Jan 31, 2026, with applications taking about four weeks to process.

Dr Tan said on April 6: "This takes really into consideration our support and acknowledgement of the very important role played by caregivers. They are our unsung heroes."

He briefed the media on the initiative.

From left: Mountbatten MP Lim Siow Chuan, Speaker of Parliament Seah Kian Peng, potential PAP candidate Goh Sze Kuei, Manpower Minister Tan See Leng, potential PAP candidate Diana Pang, Culture, Community and Youth Minister Edwin Tong, potential PAP candidate Chao Pei Ling, MacPherson MP Tan Pei Ling and Marine Parade GRC MP Mohd Fahmi Aliman addressing the media at the SG60 event.

MAKING THINGS BETTER

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PRIME MINISTER LAWRENCE WONG

Prime Minister Lawrence Wong taking a selfie with attendees at an SG60 event held at Kampong Ubi Community Centre on April 6. ST PHOTO: SHINILATO

initatives on April 6, alongside other incumbent MPs of Marine Parade GRC - Mr Tong (Joo Chiat) and Speaker of Parliament Seah Kian Peng (Braddell Heights).

They were joined by MacPherson MP Tan Pei Ling, an assistant professor with the Singapore Institute of Technology's health and social sciences cluster and second adviser to grassroots organisations in Kerbauan-Chai Chee.

Dr Tan said that while running the constituency's Caregiver Support Network over the past five years, he realised caregivers need more to take their minds off the burden of caring for their loved ones.

He also wanted to provide them with support when an incident happens, such as when a loved one suddenly suffers a stroke.

Cash relief and wheelchair-accessible transport, for instance, will help them continue to follow up at polyclinics and specialist outpatient centres and with physiotherapy, Dr Tan said.

He said the funds are derived mostly from donations by well-wishers.

Meanwhile, the Industry Immersion Programme for young residents aged between 16 and 25 in the Marine Parade cluster will facilitate work placements in different sectors. These internships will range from two weeks to three months.

Mr Tong said he has come across young people on his house visits who do well in school but do not get exposure to jobs and industries.

The programme aims to enable learning beyond school-based skills, give young people a "first-hand feel" of an industry, and allow them to meet mentors to guide them on their career choice, he said.

The 26 partner companies include technology company Huawei, consulting firm Deloitte and social service agency Montfort Care.

Mr Tong said on April 6 that the team is looking to bring more

companies from other industries on board.

Mr Tong also gave the assurance that the two new schemes will continue for Joo Chiat residents after the upcoming general election, when the ward will fall under East Coast GRC.

Meanwhile, two new community gathering spaces are in the pipeline. A new aquatic-themed play space near Marine Terrace MRT station will be ready by the second half of 2027, featuring a water play area, a "flying fox" zip line and a new playground.

A new fitness and event space at Block 54 Marine Terrace will have exercise equipment, outdoor storage and a pavilion for fitness classes.

On March 30, Associate Professor Faizul was spotted at a walkabout at Darius Crescent Market and Food Centre with Marine Parade MPs, speaking speculation that he could be folded in the newly named Marine Parade-Braddell Heights GRC.

A four-term MP, he entered politics in 2006 as part of the team for Marine Parade GRC, before joining New Soon GRC in 2011.

Asked about his involvement in the April 3 briefing, Prof Faizul said that as an adviser to Winesa Geylang Serai, the cultural heritage integrated hub that falls within Marine Parade GRC, he spends considerable time in the area. He said he also works closely with the GRC's MPs, including Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, who oversees the Geylang Serai ward.

"I know many of the residents here, and sometimes, they raise issues (to me)," said Prof Faizul.

"And when minister Tan asked me to come back and see how we can continue to work together to help the residents, I thought it was an opportunity to help."

Another potential new face, business development director Diana Pang, was also spotted at the media briefing on April 3.

Ms Pang, 35, chairs the Pengkalan Waratah Executive Committee and the People's Association Women's Integration Network Council.

Prof Faizul and Ms Pang were also at the April 6 launch of the Marine Parade initiatives.

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