

SPH initiative offers easy access to news at 60 active ageing centres

4 sharing sessions on topics like scams will also be held at heartland venues

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Seniors at 60 active ageing centres (AACs) across Singapore will soon have easy access to news, curated content and sharing sessions on topics such as financial literacy and scam awareness.

The new initiative by SPH Media and SPH Foundation, called "Let's Talk News", will give them access to multilingual print and digital e-papers — including The Straits Times, Lianhe Zaobao, Shin Min Daily News, Berita Harian and The New Paper.

Seniors will get curated digital content on topics relevant to their daily lives, such as media literacy, health and wellness, said Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth Barry Tan Kang on Oct 26, at the launch of the initiative.

He was speaking to some 200 seniors who attended the event at Our Tampines Hub.

"Seniors at the AACs will be encouraged to step forward and lead news-sharing sessions with their peers, fostering stronger bonds while learning together," said Mr Bay, who is also Minister of State for Transport.

"With all hands on deck, seniors in our community will continue to stay engaged and empowered to age actively and contribute to the wider society."

Seniors will also receive monthly news content packages featuring current affairs, insights and recommended resources from the National Library Board (NLB), SPH Media said.

Under the year-long initiative,



Klokoetin, from left) Retiree Harry Perera, Sunny Teo and Lijah Ihsan at the launch of the 'Let's Talk News' initiative by SPH Media and SPH Foundation at Our Tampines Hub on Oct 26. Seniors at The Straits Times spoke to said reading the news remains important even in their age, although some struggle with discerning between fake and real news. ST PHOTO: IRENE CHAN

four sharing sessions will be held at heartland venues such as Our Tampines Hub and the SPH Media News Centre in Braddell.

At these events, seniors can learn about topics from financial literacy and scam awareness to health, wellness and media literacy.

The first session was held on Oct 25 at Our Tampines Hub, where 200 seniors attended.

Seniors where ST spoke to said reading news reports remains im-

portant even as they age, although some struggle with discerning between fake and real news. The small font can be a challenge too.

Business Sunny Teo, 76, and Harry Perera, 74, from Leong Heart AAC in Jurong East, meet regularly at coffee shops. "We meet to discuss the news — for example, what's happening in America — because it is good for us to stay updated," said Mr Teo, who mostly monitors developments on his phone. "It is good that the elderly

can be informed, but sometimes it is hard to differentiate between the right and wrong news."

Mr Perera finds summarised, bite-size news updates helpful — similar to the curated content under the new initiative — as they help him keep up without information overload.

"I find it more useful and less messy than taking news from many different sources," he said, adding that this will help him to get information from only trusted

sources.

For Madam Saliah Ismail, 64, a retiree and volunteer at Cedar Tree AAC in Tampines, the news is a bridge to connect with seniors in her neighbourhood.

She visits seniors who live alone, inviting them to join centre activities — often starting with a simple chat about what is in the headlines, or other topics they are interested in.

"Given our age, we don't know much about digital things, and this

is something we have to learn," Madam Saliah said, especially in the age of scams. "It can be difficult for seniors because we don't know much, but by reading the news, we can know whether what people tell us is true or not."

She added that discussing familiar topics that often appear in the news, such as those linked to the Central Provident Fund, helps her build trust with isolated seniors. Once they feel comfortable, they are more willing to attend events organised by the AAC, she noted.

Mr Bay said one of Singapore's greatest strengths is its spirit of "collective responsibility and mutual support". "We must continue to look out for one another so that no one is left behind," he added.

"By building across-communities of care in our neighbourhoods, we can stay close to one another for social and emotional support."

"Let's Talk News" pulls in different parts of society to work together to care for seniors, added Mr Bay. The support resources include students from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) who will connect with seniors, volunteers from SG Care Volunteer Centre, and online training materials from SPH Media.

Together with SPH Media and SPH Foundation, the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, the Agency for Integrated Care, NLC, NTU and community care organisations are working together to broaden the range of content and deepen outreach.

Health supplement company Holistic Way and The Association of Banks in Singapore are also contributing resources and activities for seniors.

Mr Chan Yeng Kit, chief executive of SPH Media, said: "This initiative reflects our commitment to not just delivering trusted news, but also giving back to the community."

"It goes beyond giving seniors access to trusted and carefully curated stories that resonate with them. It is also about sharing content to keep them informed, and sparking conversations that connect them with one another and the community."

SPH Media said the initiative will be assessed to see if it will be continued after a year.

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