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Joint Media Release with Health Promotion Board, ComfortDelGro, Ramky Cleantech Services Pte Ltd and Singapore Polytechnic

UNIONS WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING HEALTH OF MATURE WORKERS IN TARGETED SECTORS BY TAPPING ON NEW HEALTH PROMOTION GRANT

1 NTUC's U Live Department and the Health Promotion Board (HPB) have collaborated to develop the Union Health Promotion Grant for unions, especially those in sectors with higher proportion of mature workers, to play an active role in improving the health of workers. The grant will also complement efforts to leverage union networks to reach workers in smaller companies.

2 With Singapore's workforce ageing and the challenges brought about by a tight labour market, the Labour Movement believes that it is imperative to keep mature workers healthy, so that they can continue working to help ease the labour crunch and also save more for retirement.

3 NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How said, "One of the Labour Movement's key priorities is the employability and well-being of workers of all levels and industries. Good health is an important enabler of this outcome. With this grant, NTUC and our affiliates will be able to do more with unionised companies in workplace health initiatives, and to do so in a more industry or even occupation-focused way. Healthier workers make for a more productive, cheerful workforce. This will be win-win for both workers and companies."

4 The Union Health Promotion Grant quantum is \$300,000 per year. Each union can apply for one grant at any given time to support health promotion programmes in one of the key health areas below:

- a) Chronic disease, which includes early detection and management
- b) Obesity management, which includes nutrition and physical activity
- c) Mental wellbeing
- d) Smoking cessation

5 The grant is expected to benefit tens of thousands of workers from target sectors with high proportion of mature workers such as transport, retail, cleaning and security in the first year. More details on the Union Health Promotion Grant are at **Annex A**.

6 To help union leaders gain a better understanding of the initiatives that contribute to health promotion, particularly among mature workers in workplaces with rotational shift hours, union leaders from various unions, together with NTUC President Diana Chia and NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say attended a Learning Journey today at two companies – ComfortDelGro and Ramky Cleantech Services at the Singapore Polytechnic – to observe how health promotion programmes can be brought to workers. These initiatives were made possible with the support of unions such as the National Taxi Association (NTA) and the Building Construction and Timber Industries Employees' Union (BATU). Both worked closely with HPB and the two companies to understand the health concerns of these groups of workers, and worked on maximising existing amenities and/or creating new facilities to implement various workplace health efforts.

7 The two sites showcased different approaches to improve the health of workers. In ComfortDelGro, union leaders observed how a centralised location, i.e. the taxi workshop, can serve as a constant touch point to reach out to drivers. At the Singapore Polytechnic, union leaders saw how arrangements were made between Ramky Cleantech and the school to utilise the Singapore Polytechnic Optometry Centre to reach out to the cleaners. More details on the Learning Journey are in Annex B.

8 Mr Yang Ban Seng, ComfortDelGro CEO (Taxi Business) said, "Our cabbies' welfare is of paramount importance. We want them to take better care their health. Together with HPB, ComfortDelGro Taxis has arranged the free health screening and coaching sessions for our taxi drivers during their monthly scheduled vehicle preventive maintenance checks so that it is more convenient for them. We are glad that over 2,000 taxi drivers have taken advantage of this programme."

9 Mr Ivan Lam, head of human resource at Ramky Cleantech Services Pte Ltd said, "Ramky would like to thank BATU, HPB and Singapore Polytechnic in working collaboratively on this health initiative project which will potentially benefit about 180 of our cleaners working in the polytechnic. We believe that this will go a long way in keeping our cleaners healthy, not only for work, but also for their personal wellbeing."

10 Union leaders from NTA and BATU expressed their support for the new union health promotion grant. Both unions have been exploring proposals with HPB on how they could use the new grant to further complement the existing efforts and value-add to more members. Mr Ang Hin Kee, Executive Advisor of NTA said, "We are happy that the first phase of our partnership with HPB since 2012 has led to more taxi drivers becoming more active and informed on the importance of staying healthy through various co-funded workplace health programmes and sporting activities by HPB and the union. The next phase of the partnership would be to explore how to effect behavioural change and make exercise a regular feature in the lives of our taxi drivers."

11 The trip has also excited unions from other industries on the possibilities to have similar programmes. Mr Fang Chin Poh, General Secretary of the National Transport Workers Union (NTWU) said, "For other public transport workers such as bus and train captains, the availability of this grant is good news. Through this Learning Journey, we have gotten some ideas on how to collaborate with HPB to utilise the grant. While details need to be further worked out, I believe that our union, as well as the other unions, is able to start considering how best to work with our respective companies to implement workplace health initiatives for mature workers in the sector, and guide this group of workers towards becoming a healthier and more sought-after group of workers."

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About National Trades Union Congress

The National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) is a national confederation of trade unions in the industrial, service and public sectors in Singapore. NTUC's objectives are to help Singapore stay competitive and workers remain employable for life; to enhance the social status and well-being of workers; and to build a strong, responsible and caring labour movement. NTUC's vision is to be an inclusive labour movement for all collars, ages and nationalities. NTUC is at the heart of the Labour Movement, which comprises 60 affiliated unions, one affiliated taxi association, 11 social enterprises, five related organisations and over 830,000 members. For more details, visit www.ntuc.org.sg.

About the Health Promotion Board

The Health Promotion Board (HPB) was established as a statutory board under the Ministry of Health, Singapore, in 2001 with the vision of building "A Nation of Healthy People". HPB aims to empower the people of Singapore to attain optimal health, increase the quality and years of healthy life and prevent illness, disability and premature death. As the key driver of national health promotion and disease prevention programmes, HPB spearheads health education, promotion and prevention programmes as well as creates a health-supportive environment in Singapore. It develops and organises relevant health promotion and disease prevention programmes, reaching out to the healthy, the at-risk and the unhealthy at all stages of life – children, youths, adults and older Singapore residents. Its health promotion programmes include nutrition, mental health, physical activity, smoking control and communicable disease education. HPB also promotes healthy ageing, integrated health screening, and chronic disease education and management.

About ComfortDelGro

ComfortDelGro is one of the world's largest land transport companies with a total fleet size of more than 46,300 buses, taxis and rental vehicles. Headquartered in Singapore, the Group also has operations in China, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, Vietnam and Malaysia. ComfortDelGro operates about 16,800 Comfort and CityCab taxis in Singapore.

About Ramky Cleantech Services Pte Ltd

Ramky Cleantech Services Pte Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ramky Group - a leading multi-disciplinary regional infrastructure development and environmental management solution provider in India. We focus our resources on what we do best - our core business areas of facilities services which include environmental hygiene services, car park management and training services. For more details, visit www.ramky.com.sg.

About Singapore Polytechnic (www.sp.edu.sg)

Established in 1954, Singapore Polytechnic (SP) is Singapore's first polytechnic. It has 10 schools that offer 49 full-time diploma courses for close to 16,000 students. SP has adopted a proven creative teaching and learning framework and it offers students a holistic, authentic and industry-relevant curriculum, innovative and vibrant learning spaces, and enriching overseas programmes.

The Polytechnic is committed to producing competent and versatile graduates, who are also imbued with sound values, so that they can be work ready, life ready and world-ready. Among the network of more than 178,000 SP alumni are successful entrepreneurs, top executives in multinational and public-listed corporations, and well-known professionals across various industries and leaders in government. SP is the first polytechnic to be awarded the President's Award for the Environment in 2010 and the President's Social Service Award in 2011.

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The Union Health Promotion Grant

Objective

The Union Health Promotion Grant is a funding scheme introduced by HPB, in collaboration with NTUC to support unions in improving health and well-being of their members. It aims to encourage unions, especially those with higher proportion of mature workers, to play an active role in improving health of workers.

Grant Coverage

The grant covers the following health areas:

1. Chronic disease, which includes early detection and management
2. Obesity management, which includes nutrition and physical activity
3. Mental wellbeing
4. Smoking cessation

Unions can apply for funding support in any of the category:

Category	Maximum Quantum	Scope of Coverage	Examples of Fundable Activities
A	\$10,000	Health promotion activities aimed at raising awareness and increasing knowledge on healthier behaviour.	Health talks, workshops and learning journeys.
B	\$50,000	Programmes aimed at encouraging workers to form specific health habits.	Competitions that encourage specific health habits over a period of time (e.g. amount of physical activity engaged over a period of time or amount of consumption of whole grains over a specified period).
C	\$100,000	Comprehensive programmes which include the following components (i) <u>Assessment</u> to evaluate health needs and identify follow-ups (e.g. medical screening, health and lifestyle survey), and (ii) <u>Intervention</u> programme to address the health concerns identified via the assessment.	A structured programme that targets chronic disease can include a health screening and lifestyle survey, which is followed up with interventions in different areas (e.g. physical activity and nutrition) to encourage lifestyle change.

Eligibility Criteria

All NTUC-affiliated unions and associations can apply for the grant. Each union is entitled to only one grant at any given time.

All grant projects should have a maximum project timeframe of 12 months.

The grant is administered on a reimbursement basis. Unions will be fully reimbursed for the activities conducted, subjected to the maximum quantum for each tier of activities.

Contact Details

Unions and associations who are interested in the grant can submit their applications to:

Workplace Health and Outreach Division
Health Promotion Board
Email: [HPB Health At Work@hpb.gov.sg](mailto:HPB_Health_At_Work@hpb.gov.sg)
Tel: 6435 3704/3023

Key Experiences of the Learning Journey

(i) ComfortDelGro's Workplace Health Efforts

During the Learning Journey, union leaders learnt about ComfortDelGro's workplace health efforts to improve the health of their taxi drivers.

As part of the 10-month "One for One: Check Car, Check Body" Health screening and Intervention Programme that started in June 2014, ComfortDelGro prepared a life-sized model of a taxi within the 400 sq feet health check centre to better enable drivers to learn about the ergonomics of driving. During the visit, union leaders were corrected on some of their driving positions. They also received tips on how to drive in a comfortable position. Leaders also sampled a healthier meal at the service centre canteen to debunk the myth that healthier food options may not be tasty.

In addition to receiving tips on ergonomics, taxi drivers could also optimise their time at the service centre by going for a health screening and health coaching while waiting for their vehicles to be serviced. At the health check centre, trained nurses will carry out screening to ascertain the drivers' Body Mass Indexes (BMI), blood glucose, blood cholesterol and blood pressure levels. Drivers will also complete a lifestyle survey as part of the health screening process. Upon receiving their health screening test results, the drivers will undergo one-to-one health coaching sessions with the health coach, who will help them develop health plans with simple goals towards better health outcomes for seven months.

In their subsequent visits to the health check centre, these drivers could then consult with the health coaches who would guide them on how to work towards achieving a healthier lifestyle. At the end of these sessions, drivers will undergo a second health screening test to check if their health has improved.

(ii) Ramky Cleantech Services' Workplace Health Efforts at Singapore Polytechnic

At Singapore Polytechnic, union leaders learnt about the 9-month customised programme for Ramky Cleantech cleaners working in Singapore Polytechnic. The programme covers (i) chronic disease management, (ii) physical activity, (iii) ergonomics, (iv) healthy eating and (v) mental wellness. A small group coaching model is adopted to help cleaners acquire skills and tips to manage their existing health conditions through personalised health goals and action plans.

During the coaching, the coach will continually nudge the cleaners to stay on their health action plan and help the cleaners overcome difficulties in following their plans.

The small group coaching model will allow group dynamics to influence behavioural change. In addition, the model also allows the customisation of the session for language preferences. With support from Singapore Polytechnic, the programme could be

conducted in the polytechnic classrooms and cleaners have access to health facilities such as the Singapore Polytechnic Optometry Centre (SPOC).

As part of the programme, cleaners who are 60 years old and above could also undergo functional screening to detect age-related functional decline in six domains – namely hearing, vision, mood, continence, physical function and oral health. Functional decline, if picked up early, can be well managed and not only improve quality of life, but also enhance their work ability, thus enabling our seniors to remain active and independent through their golden years .

Following the functional screening, cleaners with abnormal results for vision are referred to the SPOC for further comprehensive assessment and management. Union leaders witnessed how the eye checks were carried out at the SPOC during the Learning Journey, which included tests for common ageing-related eye conditions such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration and cataract. Eligible seniors will be referred to the Senior Mobility and Enabling Fund (SMF) to avail them to heavily-subsidised assistive devices like spectacles.