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**REMARKS BY MR LIM BOON HENG,
MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE,
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE THIRD GRANT CALL
OF THE SILVER COMMUNITY TEST BED PROGRAMME
ON THURSDAY 15 JULY 2010, 10.00 AM,
MCYS, COMMUNITY HALL, LEVEL 17**

Professor Lui Pao Chuen, Chairman of the Silver Community Test Bed

Programme Evaluation Panel

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

1. Over the last two years, the Silver Community Test Bed Programme has provided the platform for companies to test-bed and refine their solutions to better meet the needs of our seniors. We supported 12 companies over the last two years, and already one company has gone on to commercialize its product. The others are making good progress.

2. Some 200 seniors volunteered and participated in the first two calls. Feedback has been very positive and seniors have reflected that they were

glad to have tried out these innovative technologies and solutions. For one participant, the technology actually saved her life! She had a fall one day, and hit her head on the floor and her head was bleeding profusely. But luckily she had an emergency pendant provided by one of the test-bedding companies. She activated it and got help in time. Indeed, this case shows that a well designed solution can greatly improve the quality of life, safety and independence of the elderly.

Launch of the 3rd Grant Call

3. I am pleased today to launch the 3rd Grant Call of the Silver Community Test Bed Programme. The 3rd Grant Call will be a significant step forward for the Programme and underscores the Government's commitment to engender innovation and development of new products and services for the silver community. Let me explain why.

\$10m Funding for the Silver Community Test Bed Programme

4. First, the Singapore Government is more than tripling the funding support to \$10 million over the next two years. Why? It is to respond to the rapid ageing we will face. First, in Singapore, the number of elderly over 60 years will nearly double from around 500,000 today to close to 900,000 by 2020. Second, Asia will dominate world population ageing. The United

Nations projected that by 2020 the number of people aged 60 and above in our region will increase by 50% to 600 million people¹. Hence, we want to facilitate the development of technologies, products and services to meet the needs of the silver community in Singapore. At the same time, we see an economic opportunity, to meet the global and regional demand for senior-friendly solutions.

Collaboration between MCYS and EDB-MOH HWPO

5. The 3rd call is also significant because MCYS and EDB-MOH Health and Wellness Programme Office are jointly collaborating for the first time. This is a key step in Singapore's whole of government approach to develop innovative healthcare technologies, products and services for the silver community. Commercial partners can fully leverage on Singapore's infrastructure and capabilities to testbed health and wellness solutions across the health and social care continuum. As Singapore presents a microcosm of Asia, we believe healthcare solutions developed in Singapore, with its world-class healthcare system, can subsequently be extended to other Asia markets to address unmet or under-served healthcare needs.

¹ Source: World Population Ageing 1950-2050 (United Nations publication).

Solutions for Asian Ageing

6. So, what kind of solutions does Singapore need?

7. We need to develop solutions that are custom-fitted to our seniors' culture, habits, and lifestyles and to the issues that Singapore face in terms of health and wellness.

8. As an example, let me elaborate on chronic illness management. In Singapore, the National Survey of Senior Citizens in 2005 found that over 50% of seniors suffered from diabetes or high blood pressure. We hope to see solutions so that seniors can better manage chronic conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension, on their own and enjoy access to care and wellness services from within their homes and community.

9. Today, Singapore has established an optimised healthcare system that seeks to ensure sufficient resources are deployed to address the needs of patients with chronic diseases while providing sufficient care for patients undergoing longer rehabilitation and convalescence. Our system comprises acute-care hospitals, community hospitals, polyclinics and home-care services to address the full continuum of care. This continuum extends into

the social and community space, just as a person may have a chronic disease and still remain very well among friends and family in the community.

10. To ensure seamless care for our population in regional clusters all over the island, we are leveraging our advanced IT infrastructure to implement an electronic healthcare record system. At the same time, we actively seek to partner companies to develop new technologies that can further enhance the quality of care in the healthcare system and in the community. Today's launch of the third grant call for the Silver Community Test-Bed Programme is a case in point.

Conclusion

11. As an advanced urbanised, ageing nation in Asia that has achieved world-class healthcare excellence, Singapore presents a sophisticated lead market that enables companies to fast-track their innovation process to develop future solutions that can address Asia's fast-growing healthcare needs. We are committed to work with companies to co-develop innovative solutions for Singaporeans and the region at large. The Silver Community Test-Bed Programme is one key platform. Your innovations will bring about change and benefits to many Asian seniors. To all those who are keen, I

welcome you to come forward with your best ideas, and make use of the Programme to transform them into reality.

Thank you.