



PRESS RELEASE

ONE HUNDRED RETAIL ASSISTANTS TRAINED TO DELIVER BETTER SERVICE TO ELDERLY AND DEMENTIA PATIENTS

Singapore, 13 Nov 2015 – One hundred retail assistants have been trained in the first-in-market programme, (Serving Senior Customers) to equip service and retail workers with age-friendly skills, so that they can provide better service to elderly customers, especially those afflicted with dementia. This programme is jointly developed by NTUC LearningHub, Centre for Seniors and Dr Oon Chiew Seng Trust.

NTUC FairPrice is the first organisation to send its frontline staff for this interactive training experience. Mr Tan Kian Chew, Chairman of Centre For Seniors and Group Chief Executive Officer of NTUC FairPrice, said, “Earlier this year, the Centre did a dipstick survey with NTUC FairPrice’s frontline staff. The findings suggested that while they generally had no issues interacting with older persons, they noticed a fair number of them were frail, or seemed to be exhibiting signs of dementia. This inspired us to work with our partners to develop this programme that will help our staff cater to our long-time customers. We expect more of our staff trained in the next two years.”

Agreeing, Dr Oon Chiew Seng, founder and chairman of Dr Oon Chiew Seng Trust, who has been involved in work in the dementia field for over two decades, said, “With a little more knowledge, patience, and kindness, it is possible to make a difference to the lives of those dealing with this disease.”

One of the first staff to be trained, Ms Sree Devi, Retail Assistant, NTUC FairPrice Bukit Merah outlet said, “This course helped us to understand how to help and communicate with seniors by role-playing various scenarios. Although I have assisted senior shoppers in the past, now I feel more adequately prepared to help them according to their particular needs”.

The programme aims to help participants understand and anticipate the needs of senior customers; recognise the signs of dementia and other difficulties the customer may encounter so they can communicate and respond better to their needs.

Mr Kwek Kok Kwong, Chief Executive Officer of NTUC LearningHub, said, “Our senior citizens want to stay independent and active for as long as possible but we know that ageing comes with limitations ultimately. We are therefore very pleased to be working with partners steeped



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in the knowledge of gerontology to deliver a programme that not only meets the needs of elderly customers, but also workers in the service and retail sectors”.

Mr Lim Boon Heng, Patron of Centre For Seniors and Guest of Honour for the event, agreed wholeheartedly with Dr Oon, saying “We must continue to encourage more such programmes to be created and facilities to be built to support our seniors. We as a society today, still do not fully recognise these issues. We do not raise enough awareness of these issues, so that people can understand and in turn be a little more tolerant of our neighbours. Everyone wants to have a happier, more harmonious community, and to do that we all have to make the effort to understand these afflictions which affect a significant number of people, especially seniors.”

The partners organised a launch event for invited guests on the 13th November 2015 to commemorate the partnership between LHUB, CFS and DOCS Trust at NTUC FairPrice’s Bukit Merah Central outlet and awarded certificates to representatives from the first batches of NTUC FairPrice staff trained for this programme. Mr Lim Boon Heng, Chairman of NTUC Enterprise and Patron of Centre for Seniors, graced the event as the Guest-of-Honour.

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About NTUC LEARNINGHUB

NTUC LearningHub Private Limited was corporatised in 2004 with the vision of transforming the lifelong employability of working people. We work with both corporate and individual clients particularly in the areas of Infocomm Technology, Soft Skills & Literacy, Workplace Safety & Health, and Customer Service Training.

To date, we have helped 13,700 organizations, and trained 1.8 million workers in Singapore across 380 courses, with a pool of 1,300 trainers. We seek to continually innovate and enhance our training content and methods via technology, in order to be relevant to industry and provide engaging, meaningful training for learners. <http://www.ntuclearninghub.com>

About Centre for Seniors

Founded in 2006, the Centre for Seniors (CFS) is a non-profit, Voluntary Welfare Organisation (VWO) that is committed to promoting the total well-being of older persons in Singapore, specifically their vocational, financial and psycho-social health. CFS manages programmes, activities, and projects that help promote an active ageing culture in Singapore.

A key aspect of the current services offered includes the various training programmes to encourage and prepare older persons to remain employable for as long as possible. CFS also focuses strongly on research and advocacy regarding seniors, including the areas of physical and mental needs, and workplace issues. <http://www.centreforseniors.org.sg>

About Dr Oon Chiew Seng Trust

Dr Oon Chiew Seng Trust Limited is an Institution of Public Character that was set up in 2013 to work on the relief, treatment, support, counselling, education and care of persons afflicted with dementia, as well as their caregivers. Dr Oon Chiew Seng Trust seeks to achieve these objectives through, inter alia, supporting education or training programmes that help members of the public, medical personnel and caregivers to better recognise and live with dementia in their families, workplaces, and the wider community. We hope to be able to set up quality and compassionate care-giving facilities in the near future.