

**ADDRESS BY MR HSIEH FU HUA, PRESIDENT
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
AT SSI OFFICIAL OPENING
ON WEDNESDAY, 12 APRIL 2017**

A very good morning and warm welcome to:

Guest-of-Honour, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, Minister for Social and Family Development

Distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Introduction

- 1 I am glad that all of you, our partners are here today for the official opening of SSI's new premises.

Launch of SSTI (2003)

- 2 When Social Service Training Institute, or SSTI for short, was launched in 2003 to respond to the training needs in the sector, we had only 2 classrooms at our NCSS Ghim Moh office. It was just then a department under the HR team of NCSS.
- 3 It was not until 2004 that the then SSTI became a division by itself and grew to about 20 staff. With only 2 training rooms, the calendar was packed back to back and classrooms were filled to the brim. Thankfully, in 2007, we were able to expand to 5 training rooms.

From SSTI to SSI

- 4 As the need for skilled professionals continue to increase along with the sector, NCSS realised that we needed to expand our role beyond that of a training provider. Along the physical move from Ulu Pandan Community Building to Somerset in 2013, “Social Service Training Institute” was renamed “Social Service Institute”, in short, SSI, to reflect our enhanced vision to go beyond training to become a one-stop centre for human capital needs for the sector. The transformation was critical and timely to address manpower shortage and professionalisation as social needs in Singapore evolve.
- 5 The appointment of SSI as a Continuing Education & Training Centre or CET centre in short, by the then Workforce Development Agency, now known as SkillsFuture Singapore, was a significant milestone which reinforced the nexus between training and manpower development outcomes for the sector.
- 6 Today, beyond training, NCSS has championed initiatives that build human capability and capacity in the sector such as branding efforts, recruitment through our career centre, and the provision of scholarships.
- 7 After 3 good years in the middle of town, it is imperative that NCSS continue to remain in the heart of town and capitalise on our space to have the human capital needs met with ease. Our relocation to Tiong Bahru Central Plaza enabled us to remain well connected with our member organisations. We also saw this as an opportune moment to introduce the use of technology in two ways. Firstly, to make our learning more interactive. You will see this as you tour

around the place later. Secondly, to expand our reach to more and new groups of audience. By 2020, 40% of SSI's 15,000 training places will be through online and blended learning which would also be made available to volunteers, caregivers and Board Members, beyond social service professionals.

Concluding Remarks

- 8 We have come a long way from where we were 14 years ago. Today, our facility has 14 classrooms providing more than 15,000 training places last year. Every change gave us the opportunity to re-invent and to challenge us to think beyond what we were currently doing, to discover new ways that we could serve the sector better. The efforts behind working towards this journey has had a lot of support from social service organisations and public agencies, with everyone coming together to achieve the common goal of improving the quality of service within the sector.
- 9 I would like to sincerely thank our partners, in particular, Singapore Totalisator Board, SkillsFuture Singapore, Workforce Singapore and MSF, for their support. I would also like to thank Minister for your presence this morning too.