

MEDIA RELEASE

NEW BEYOND THE LABEL CONCEPT TRAIN INSPIRES COMMUNITY TO *GO BEYOND* AND UNITE AGAINST STIGMA TOWARDS PERSONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

SINGAPORE, 25 OCTOBER 2022 – The Beyond the Label (BTL) movement, an initiative of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), unveiled a BTL concept train with the message to “Go Beyond”. Following the launch of BTL 2.0 and the announcement of the BTL Collective led by TOUCH Community Services, the objective of the BTL concept train is to encourage the public, as they go about their daily commute, to “Go Beyond” the stigma and better support and include persons with mental health conditions in schools, workplaces and in the community.

2 Guest-of-Honour, Mr Alvin Tan, Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth & Trade and Industry, launched the BTL concept train at the Bishan MRT station today. Scheduled to run for 19 hours daily for four weeks, the train will reach out to an estimated 504,000 commuters travelling between Jurong East and Marina South Pier, on the 27-station North South Line.

Launch of Concept Train brings the message of ‘Go Beyond’ closer to the Community

3 This initiative is part of ongoing national efforts to create an environment that encourages conversations around mental health and help-seeking behaviour. The concept train will feature BTL’s visual icon ‘*BRAVE*’, which mirrors the experiences of persons with mental health conditions, their journey of recovery and of peer support at homes, in schools and at workplaces.

4 The public can also learn ways to interact with and support persons with mental health conditions, as well as connect with mental health services in the community when needed.

5 Ms Tan Li San, Chief Executive Officer, NCSS, “With the BTL concept train, we hope to encourage everyone to be speak up on mental health issues, which will affect everyone at some point in their lives. Each of us can play a part in being alert to our family, friends or colleagues who may be feeling down or need professional help. Our actions, no matter how big or small, can make a difference to their mental wellness, make them feel supported, and give them courage to seek professional help if they need it.”

Mental Health-Friendly Neighbourhoods

6 In support of BTL, TOUCH has worked with like-minded partners and government agencies to equip communities through Mental Health-Friendly Neighbourhoods. At these neighbourhoods, residents will be trained to identify signs so that help can be rendered to

those who need them early. There will also be a Pebble Walk carrying encouraging messages in support of persons with mental health conditions, and signposts carrying mental health resources and services.

7 Following the completion of the first Pebble Walk installation in Queenstown, two more Pebble Walk installations will be unveiled at Tiong Bahru and Moulmein-Cairnhill in the last quarter of 2022, along with mobile exhibitions in schools and the neighbourhoods. Social service agencies like CARE Singapore, Samaritans of Singapore and AMKFSC Community Services are consolidating training efforts in mental health befriending, first responders and peer support.

8 Mr James Tan, Chief Executive Officer, TOUCH Community Services, said “Many of the community initiatives represent the journey of support for persons with mental health conditions and their caregivers. We want to equip more in the community to promote help-seeking, guide people on healthy coping strategies and strengthen peer support. All of us have a role to play in building a more caring community.”

9 These Mental Health-Friendly Neighbourhoods complement efforts by the SG Mental Well-Being Network (Network), a national platform that brings partners and citizens together to take action to strengthen mental health and well-being outcomes for our society, as well as the Well Being Circles under the Network¹.

10 MOS Alvin Tan said, “It will take time to destigmatise mental health issues and empower our people to look after themselves and others. Together, we can help move this along a little faster. BTL and our SG Mental Well-Being Network are important efforts that bring partners together to support this cause. The SG Mental Well-Being Network has piloted four Well-Being Circles in the community since we launched it in July 2022. We look forward to working with even more closely with our partners to expand these efforts.”

11 For updates on BTL movement and activations from the BTL Collective, follow the BTL Facebook and Instagram page (@beyondthelabelsg). For mental health resources and services, visit Belle, the BTL Helpbot (<https://go.gov.sg/belle-helpbot>).

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¹ Please refer to the Factsheet on SG Mental Well-Being Network and Well-Being Circles for more details.

About National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service agencies in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest is the fundraising and engagement arm of NCSS and Social Service Institute (SSI) is the human capital development arm of NCSS.

About TOUCH Community Services

Since 1992, TOUCH Community Services has served people of all ages, races and religions to see sustainable change and transformation in their lives. It believes in the worth and potential of every child, youth at-risk, family in need, senior and person with special or healthcare needs to grow, participate and contribute in the community. The heartbeat of TOUCH is to activate potential, build independence, connect people, and deliver impact by developing sustainable solutions in society. For more information on TOUCH, please visit www.touch.org.sg