

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Community Link

1. How many people have we engaged through the door-to-door surveys and focus groups discussions? How do we intend to sustain outreach efforts in the future?

ComLink aims to provide proactive and integrated support to an estimated 1,000 families living in rental flats across the four sites. We have thus far visited and engaged over 650 families living in rental housing. We will continue to tap on existing touchpoints, such as the Family Service Centre, SSO, schools and Grassroots, to sustain outreach efforts and share with residents about upcoming ComLink programmes and activities.

2. What are the programmes available or planned at ComLink locations?

Current and planned programmes, include:

- Reading and numeracy programmes for young children, conducted by National Library Board and volunteers from SSAs including ReadAble and Bringing Love to Every Single Soul (BLESS).
- Homework café and tuition programmes for school-going children, conducted by SSAs [Thye Hua Kwan (THK) Family Services Centre], Grassroots Organisations (Kembangan-Chai Chee Division Grassroots), and student volunteers from Nanyang Technological University and Nanyang Polytechnic.
- Non-academic enrichment programmes for children and youths, including sports activities by students from Temasek Polytechnic and social enterprises KidsExcel and Glyph; and coding lessons by corporate partners such as Saturday Kids.
- Support and life-skill programmes for parents, conducted by ECDA and SSAs, such as Care Corner Singapore Limited and Presbyterian Community Services; and
- Skills upgrading and job matching services, provided by partners such as WSG and Fast Jobs – a job search portal under Singapore Press Holdings.

3. Who can take part in ComLink programmes, and do they need to pay for the programmes? How can residents find out about and sign up for upcoming programmes?

Families living in rental flats are prioritised for the ComLink programmes. Fellow residents in these estates with similar needs can also participate. Programmes are free. As there is a limited capacity for each programme, residents are encouraged to sign up early.

Residents can find out about the latest programmes through noticeboards placed at common areas (e.g. lift lobbies and Residents' Networks), as well as through letters sent to residents. More information on how to sign up for these programmes can also be found on these notices.

4. If partners are keen to come on-board, how should they go about doing so?

We welcome more community and corporate partners. They can reach out to our Social Service Offices (SSOs) to register their interest to partner us in ComLink.

5. How does MSF decide on the areas in Singapore to implement Community Link? Are there plans to set up Community Link at other areas?

The four sites were selected as they have a sizeable number of families with children living in rental flats. We also wanted to establish sites across Singapore to broaden our outreach – North, East, West and Central.

MSF will work with our partners to assess the effectiveness of this initiative, as well as the needs of the community, before expanding Community Link to other areas. We will provide details when ready.

System enablers

6. When can we expect the two systems to be ready? Which agencies will have access to these systems?

The systems will be rolled out progressively from second half of 2020. In steady state, the systems will support 5,000 frontline officers from Government and community agencies, in delivering coordinated, convenient and comprehensive social assistance.

Video-conferencing

7. How many clients have used video-conferencing services at the SSOs?

Some 550 video-conferencing sessions have been successfully conducted since 2019, where clients accessed housing, employment, family and legal advisory services at SSOs.

8. Does MSF plan to expand the video-conferencing network further to include more agencies?

We have expanded the scope of our video-conferencing services considerably since it was piloted in December 2018. Today, all 24 SSOs offer access to employment and housing services, either through physical co-location of services or via video-conferencing.

We will be expanding our video-conferencing network to provide access to legal advisory services (provided by Legal Aid Bureau) and family services (provided by Family Service Centres) at all 24 SSOs by end 2020. MSF is also exploring video-conferencing with other agencies, particularly in the healthcare sector, to see how we can improve our service delivery even further.

SG Cares Community Network Sessions

9. What are SG Cares Community Network Sessions? How many agencies (and what agencies) have been involved in SG Cares Community Network Sessions in the past?

SG Cares Community Network Sessions are sessions jointly organised by MSF and MCCY to bring together partners in each HDB town, namely government agencies, social service agencies and volunteers. These partners discuss issues in their respective communities and explore areas where they can work together to help resolve them. As the sessions are held at town level, it encourages community partners to come up with local solutions to meet local needs.

The sessions, which started in May 2018, brought together 3,500 participants from 160 government and community help agencies across the social, health and community sectors. We have thus far conducted 21 sessions island-wide, and will continue to organise these sessions annually.

10. What are some projects that materialised from SG Cares Community Network Sessions?

One of the spinoff projects is “Xinmin Cares” that stemmed from a SG Cares Community Network Session in Hougang. Grassroots leaders first mooted the idea of a collaboration with Xinmin Secondary School to provide regular befriending services to the elderly in the community who were at risk of social isolation. SSO@Hougang reached out to Thye Hua Kwan (THK) Nursing Home and NTUC Health’s Day Centre for Seniors (Silver Circle) who readily agreed to participate in this initiative. “Xinmin Cares” is now a fortnightly event, where students visit the seniors in these two organisations or visit seniors who stay alone in Ang Mo Kio and

Other spin-off projects include the Tripartite Network @ Jurong East which strives to improve information sharing across agencies, which would help frontline officers in providing prompt and coordinated support to clients. Under the Project Discover, Empower, Contribute and Kindle (DECK), SSO@Sengkang and community partners come together to conduct joint door-knocking exercises to engage residents and understand their strengths and skills.