

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Increase in ComCare LTA and SMTA

#### 1. What are the enhancements to the LTA scheme with effect from 1 July 2019?

With effect from 1 July 2019, there will be an increase in the monthly cash assistance rates for all LTA beneficiaries. The LTA rate for a 1-person household will increase from \$500 to \$600. For a 2-person household, where both are LTA beneficiaries, the rate will increase from \$870 to \$1,000. Larger household types will similarly receive higher amounts.

For reference on new LTA rates:

Household Type	Existing Rates	New Rates (from 1 July 2019)
1-person LTA household	\$500	\$600
2-person LTA household	\$870	\$1,000
3-person LTA household	\$1,130	\$1,400
4-person LTA household	\$1,450	\$1,750

#### 2. What is the extent of increase in cash assistance for SMTA?

Unlike the LTA cash assistance, which is a fixed monthly rate, the SMTA cash assistance is intended to provide temporary support and varies according to the household's needs and income. The amount of assistance each household receives differs. For example, low-income households with existing income from work or rent may need less assistance. For some households, part of the assistance may be credited directly to relevant agencies to offset their household bills, rather than disbursed in the form of cash.

As the needs, profile, and size of each household are different, the amount of assistance they require varies across households. The increase in cash assistance will also vary for different households. The following examples illustrate the possible increase in the total SMTA quantum that families in different circumstances may receive:

- Example 1. A 4-person household living in a 2-room HDB public rental flat, with two adults temporarily unable to work due to medical reasons and two children in primary school, currently receives about \$1,350 in cash

assistance for daily living expenses and assistance with household bills such as public rental, utilities, and Service and Conservancy Charges. The household can expect an increase of about \$420 in their ComCare assistance.

- Example 2. A 2-person household living in a 1-room HDB public rental flat, with one adult working part-time and drawing a monthly salary of \$500, and the other adult seeking employment assistance through Workforce Singapore, currently receives about \$360 to supplement their existing income. This includes cash assistance for daily living expenses and assistance with household bills such as public rental, utilities and Service and Conservancy Charges. The household can expect an increase of about \$200 in their ComCare assistance.

The above examples are based on the assumption that the household circumstances are unchanged. If there are changes, e.g. if a family member gains or loses employment, and the household continues to be unable to cope with basic living expenses, they can inform the SSO about these changes to review their ComCare assistance. SSOs will assess their applications based on their current needs and resources, and the quanta of assistance may differ from that mentioned in the examples above.

In addition to cash assistance and assistance with household bills, these families can continue to receive other Government and community assistance, such as assistance with their medical bills through MediFund and CHAS, subsidised rental housing, financial assistance for school fees through MOE Financial Assistance Scheme, MSF's Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA), GST-Vouchers, S&CC rebates and Workfare Income Supplement.

### **Community Link**

#### **3. When can we expect programmes to start in each identified sites?**

Programmes can begin in the second half of this year once we have established a clear view of the community's needs, sized up the demand, and identified agencies to run these programmes. The Community Link programme space at Jalan Kukoh is ready for use. For the other sites, we will tap on our community partners' activity spaces to run programmes before the Community Link spaces are set up.

#### **4. Who can take part in the programmes under Community Link?**

Families living in rental flats will be prioritised for the programmes under Community Link. However, other residents with similar needs can also participate.

#### **5. How does MSF decide on the sites for Community Link?**

We chose the four sites as they have a sizeable number of families with children living in rental flats. We also wanted to establish sites in different parts of the island – North, East, West and Central.

**6. Are there plans to set up Community Link at other areas?**

MSF will work with MND 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 more details when ready.

**Streamlined assessment for childcare subsidy and financial assistance**

**7. What support are families with childcare needs getting from this streamlined assessment?**

Currently, low-income families need to apply for ComCare assistance at SSOs, and submit the same set of supporting documents when they apply for infant/child care subsidy and financial assistance at the infant/childcare centres. We recognise that these application processes can be taxing for families who are already facing multiple stresses.

We will revise our processes to make it more convenient for these families to get the help they need. When rolled out in the second half of 2019, it means that families who have already been assessed by the SSO can apply for infant/child care subsidy and financial assistance without needing to resubmit the same documents that they had furnished to the SSOs. With consent from the family, the SSOs will share the necessary information backend with ECDA and MSF to facilitate assessment of the family's application for child care subsidy and financial assistance.

**Streamlined assessment for additional financial assistance for school-going children**

**8. How has this initiative with MOE benefitted families with school-going children who are also receiving ComCare assistance?**

Previously, families on ComCare assistance were required to separately apply for MOE's financial assistance schemes, and be assessed by the respective educational institutions. They also needed to provide the same documents that they had submitted to the SSOs when applying for ComCare assistance.

With the shared assessment, families with school-going children who qualify for ComCare assistance are concurrently assessed for MOE's financial assistance schemes without the need for a separate application to be made. This is made possible through backend information-sharing between SSOs and the respective educational institutions under MOE, with the consent of the applicant.

## **Video-conferencing and co-location of services**

### **9. Does MSF have plans to work with more community partners to establish video-conferencing links?**

We plan to work with more community partners to provide more services via video-conferencing at the SSOs. We are monitoring the results and feedback on the current video-conferencing links with agencies, which will guide our plans to scale up to include more community partners.

### **10. What other kinds of integrated service delivery models is MSF looking at?**

Our SSOs at Woodlands, Geylang Serai, Tampines, Toa Payoh, and Jurong East are co-located with or near WSG's Careers Connect or NTUC's e2i centres, which offer career matching services.

The SSOs at Taman Jurong, Kreta Ayer, Yishun, Chua Chu Kang, and Jalan Besar are piloting the integrated delivery of social and employment assistance by the same SSO officer. Of these, two SSOs (Taman Jurong and Kreta Ayer) also have VWO-run family services co-located within the same premises, under the integrated family services model.

MSF consults community partners regularly to find new and better ways to deliver services and make help more accessible for clients, especially those who have complex needs requiring coordinated assistance from multiple agencies.

## **Guidelines for Case Master Action Planning (Case MAP)**

### **11. What are the implementation plans for the Guidelines for Case MAP?**

The Guidelines will be implemented in 2 phases. Phase 1 (Jan 2019 to Nov 2019), will be rolled out to 7 locales – Sembawang, Woodlands, Kreta Ayer, Jurong East, Jurong West, Bedok and Punggol. Social service agencies within these 7 locales have undergone training and are strongly encouraged to adopt the principles of the Guidelines in their case coordination efforts. MSF will be consolidating feedback on the Guidelines during Phase 1, and further refining the Guidelines before island-wide roll-out in Phase 2 from Dec 2019.

### **12. What will be different between how agencies are working together now, and in future?**

With the implementation of the Guidelines for Case MAP, we hope to establish a common understanding among Government and community help agencies on how they should work together to support a complex case. The Guidelines articulate the need for and roles of a lead agency, and elements required for effective management of complex cases. With the Guidelines for Case MAP, all agencies would adopt a common mindset and approach when faced with any complex case.

## **Equipping Frontline Agencies**

### **13. Who are the frontline officers being trained, and why were they chosen?**

The frontline officers undergoing training include counter service staff at Government agencies (e.g. counter staff at HDB's Rental Housing Department, PA Community Clubs), and officers who work within the community (e.g. SPF's Community Policing Units and SGO Programme Coordinators). As part of their daily core work, they are likely to interact with or encounter residents in need, and can help connect such residents to the help that they need.