

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## NCSS TO HAND OVER SECTOR ADMINISTRATOR ROLE TO CHARITIES UNIT

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**SINGAPORE, OCTOBER 29, 2009** – From 1 January 2010, the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) is poised to be the central enabler and advocate for Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) here. Appointed in 2006 as one of the six Sector Administrators to oversee charities and Institutions of a Public Character (IPCs) in the social service sector, NCSS will relinquish the regulatory role to the Charities Unit under the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

### **Relinquishment of Sector Administrator role**

The move is supported by the Ministry for Community Development, Youth and Sports. Addressing stakeholders in the social service sector at the 8<sup>th</sup> NCSS Members' Conference this morning, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports noted that the move would allow NCSS to achieve economies of scale and provide promotional and training opportunities to the staff of VWOs. "NCSS wants to further prepare the sector to increase the reach of services to the target groups, improve the quality of service and enhance the certainty of services meeting needs. In doing so, the Council will continue to strengthen its representation and involvement in policy deliberations and reviews of service delivery. This will stand the NCSS in good stead as it meets new social challenges," he added.

From 1 January 2010, more than 300 charities and 200 IPCs currently under the purview of the Council, will report directly to the Charities Unit for matters related to charity/IPC status and the Code of Governance.

Under NCSS, seminars, briefing sessions and Board Governance training courses were organised for its charities and IPCs through its training academy, the Social Service Training Institute (SSTI). This will continue as part of its enabling function to raise standard in the sector. NCSS also worked closely with the Charities Unit to help agencies strengthen governance structures and helped many VWOs towards better compliance with the Code of Governance. NCSS will continue to help its member organisations but will do so not as a regulator but as bringing expertise and resources to build internal capability.

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE**

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The Council has also worked with many professional bodies and corporate partners, such as the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Singapore, the Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation, and Allen & Gledhill, to jointly conduct briefing sessions and seminars aimed at raising awareness and building VWO capabilities in the areas of governance and financial management standards.

### **NCSS as enabler and advocate**

RADM Kwek Siew Jin, President of NCSS, said, “In trying to juggle between both roles as an enabler and a regulator, it was difficult to separate the two roles, and certainly it must have been very confusing to our members. Although we will no longer be the Sector Administrator, good governance of social service organisations has and always will be an important objective for NCSS. Moving forward, we will concentrate on our role as a members’ organisation to help and enable members to provide even better service to their clients.”

NCSS will further prepare the sector to increase the reach of services to the target groups, improve the quality of service and enhance the certainty of services meeting needs. In doing so, the Council will continue to strengthen its representation and involvement in policy deliberations and reviews of service delivery.

In the past three years, NCSS has regularly engaged VWOs through field visits, Board retreats, staff retreats, consultations and a membership survey, working closely with VWOs to improve its services for the less fortunate. Some of these include supporting the implementation of their pilot services through the VWOs-Charities Capability Fund (VCF), helping VWOs to tap on existing schemes and training grants, and raising their challenges to key partners, such as MCYS, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Land Transport Authority and others, for their attention and assistance.

### **Enhanced NCSS membership privileges**

NCSS is also an umbrella body for about 400 VWOs. Beginning January next year, VWO staff can look forward to joining the Civil Service Club (CSC) as Associate members for as low as \$10 per month and have access to facilities such as swimming pools, bowling and karaoke rooms at its three clubs. This membership package, which is usually charged at a rate of \$25 per month, has been specially tailored for the sector. This is the first of a set of enhanced benefits and privileges that NCSS will be rolling out to member VWOs.

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**National Council of Social Service**

NCSS is the umbrella body for about 400 member VWOs in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in social services, to enhance the capabilities of social service organisations, and to promote strategic partnerships for social services. In FY2008, \$178 million was disbursed to 602 programmes in the social service sector.

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