

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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#### **JOB CLUB LAUNCHED – ONE-STOP RESOURCE CENTRE TO HELP INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS SUCCEED AT WORK**

1. Job Club, a ONE-STOP vocational rehabilitation service that helps persons with mental illness to select, secure and keep a job, was officially launched today by Madam Halimah Yacob, Member of Parliament for Jurong GRC and Assistant Secretary-General of NTUC.
2. Job Club is a programme under the National Mental Health Blueprint and is spearheaded by the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). Research has shown that employment and community integration are key factors to boost self-esteem, which in turn keep patients independent in the community. Although IMH has provided job training and placement services to its patients since 1972, Job Club was set up to provide a more holistic approach to these services.
3. Staffed by Occupational Therapists, Medical Social Workers, and Job Placement Officers, the one-stop resource centre provides comprehensive services that include individualised vocational counselling, psychosocial and vocational readiness assessment, job placement and coaching, and job-site follow-up.
4. Using a client-centred approach, Job Club helps clients to identify their interests and strengths, so that they can be matched to a suitable job. Clients are equipped with critical job-seeking skills such as resume-writing, personal grooming, and interview techniques through educational group sessions.
5. As part of preparation to returning to the workforce, clients also learn skills for work in various sectors through vocational training programmes offered at IMH by its Occupational Therapy department. The sectors include retail, services (e.g. car wash), clerical, food-and-beverage, and cleaning. Clients who need to pick up these skills may be referred to these programmes for job training before they progress to look for jobs in the open market.

6. Upon assisting a client to secure a job, staff of Job Club follow through to provide on-site support and practical help during the initial phase, so that clients are able to settle down in their new employment.
7. Clients who have just begun vocational rehabilitation or who have successfully sustained employment in the open market can also benefit from peer support groups, facilitated by Job Club. The sessions provide them with support and encouragement in dealing with the challenges they meet at the workplace. Successful clients become role models for those who are contemplating employment.
8. Staff of Job Club also network with prospective employers or organisations to create and expand employment opportunities for individuals with psychiatric conditions. It works with employers to help them understand issues the clients may have in adapting to a new work environment, and also helps employers to better understand the client's psychiatric condition, as well as the need for continual treatment.
9. Friends and family members of the clients are also encouraged to work with staff of the Job Club to help the clients to sustain a job.
10. All in all, Job Club prepares clients for employment in a comprehensive manner. The number of jobs placed since Job Club started operations in April 2008, is 379 (as at September 2009).
11. There are currently 59 employers registered with Job Club. These employers come from a variety of industries including food and beverage (F & B), housekeeping, and retail.
12. Horsburgh Engineering (F.E.) Private Limited, a company which specialises in minor construction projects and housekeeping assignments, has offered employment opportunities to IMH's patients since 2002. Its Project Director, Ms Sharon Kee commented, "Over the years, the staff had proven to me that they are focused and have a "can do" attitude. They have shown a willingness to go the extra mile to learn new skills and have also contributed towards a high team spirit in the work environment."
13. Ms Devi (not her real name), an IMH outpatient, was diagnosed with schizophrenia and depression in April 2008. "Because of my illness, I was jobless for about 1 year and I felt really hopeless. My doctor introduced me to Job Club, through which I got a job placement

in a bubble tea shop. However, I lost the job shortly as I was inexperienced and worked at a slower pace. Knowing this, Job Club staff encouraged me to gain more experience by attending the F & B Vocational Training Programme with Secret Recipe. Picking up skills in food preparation boosted my confidence greatly and I am grateful to Job Club for guiding and supporting me throughout.” Ms Devi has since gone on to secure a job on her own and now works as an assistant teacher at an enrichment centre.

14. More information on Job Club can be found online at [www.jobclub.sg](http://www.jobclub.sg).

**For media interviews and queries, please contact:**

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**About the Institute of Mental Health**

The Institute of Mental Health/Woodbridge Hospital (IMH/WH) is the only tertiary mental health centre in Singapore, located on the sprawling 25-hectare campus of Buangkok Green Medical Park. It offers a multi-faceted and comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and counseling service is offered to meet the needs of three groups of patients – children and adolescents, adults and the elderly. IMH also runs mental health education programmes for the general public. These programmes aim to promote mental wellness and raise awareness of the importance and benefits of prevention, early detection and treatment of mental disorders.

**APPENDIX: ENGLISH-CHINESE GLOSSARY**

Institute of Mental Health	心理卫生学院
Job Club	职业中心
Medical Social Work Department	医药社工部
Occupational Therapy Department	职业治疗部
Medical Social Worker	医疗社会工作者
Occupational Therapist	职能治疗师
Job Placement Officer	就业辅导员