



MEDIA RELEASE

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BRINGING THE RECOVERY MESSAGE TO RESIDENTS IN THE NORTH EAST NATIONAL ADDICTIONS AWARENESS DAY 2018

1. To escape an unhappy home which was lacking in warmth and care, 13-year-old Joel* sought solace in glue sniffing. He moved on to use ketamine, cannabis and ice when he was about 15-16 years old. From taking the drugs once every few months, he went on to use them daily, descending into the abyss of addiction. He lied to his parents that he had lent money to his school mates so that he could get more pocket money to feed his habit. His addiction continued for the next 10 years. Joel simply could not function a day without drugs.
2. Joel's story is not an isolated one. It is a story that is often repeated among the young. The latest report issued by the Central Narcotics Bureau shows that 40 per cent of drug abusers arrested in 2017 were new abusers. Among them, about 64 per cent were young abusers below the age of 30 years. Drug abuse, Internet and gaming addiction, as well as problem drinking, are the three most common addictions among youths seen at the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS).
3. In its continuous effort to create more public awareness of addictions, NAMS is jointly organising this year's National Addictions Awareness Day (NAAD) with the North East Community Development Council (NECDC). The theme for this year's NAAD is "*Add Life to Your Years*" and it aims to bring the message of hope and recovery to the community. It will be held on Saturday, 10 March, at Our Tampines Hub, Festive Plaza. Guest of Honour Mr Amrin Amin, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health will grace the event together with Mr Shamsul Kamar, Vice Chairman of NECDC and Adviser to Kaki Bukit GROs.
4. This is the 4th NAAD since the event was first initiated in 2013. Through the series of NAAD, NAMS had earlier reached out to the communities in south-west, south-east and north-west Singapore.
5. Besides the NAAD 2018, NAMS and NECDC will be co-organising a series of talks on addictions related topics for residents. . Some of these topics include problem gambling and the hidden costs; the hazards and dangers of substance abuse; cyber addiction and excessive online usage; smoking cessation; and managing stress, anger and insomnia. NAMS will also be bringing a series of talks and roadshows to the schools in the north east region to educate students about various addiction issues that commonly affect youths.
6. A/Prof Lee Cheng, Vice-Chairman Medical Board (Clinical), Institute of Mental Health and NAMS Programme Director said: "Since NAMS was established 10 years ago, we have continuously explored new platforms to extend our services and programmes beyond our campus to make them more accessible to the community. The NAAD is one of our key outreach programmes.

Behind closed doors, many are still struggling with addiction issues in silence. Sometimes, the stigma prevents them from seeking help. Together with NECDC, we hope to reach out to and support more persons and families affected by addictions. ”

7. Mr Shamsul Kamar, Vice Chairman of North East CDC and Adviser to Kaki Bukit GROs said, “The negative consequences of addiction extend far beyond the person with addiction problems. It affects the family members, colleagues, neighbours - the entire community. North East CDC values this partnership with NAMS where we can strengthen the actions already in place, by bringing the awareness closer to the residents, so affected persons and their families can seek the right help.”

NAAD Event Highlights

8. The NAAD will feature a range of activities to raise awareness and bring home the message that addictions can be treated and that recovery is possible.
9. To mark NAMS’s 10th anniversary, a book on inspiring stories of recovery will be launched at the event. Written by the NAMS team, the stories capture the grit, tenacity and perseverance of those with addictions and their families as they climbed their way out of their addictions. Parliamentary Secretary Mr Amrin has penned a personal message of encouragement in the book and limited copies of the book will be distributed free to members of the public at the event.
10. There will also be a panel discussion with local celebrities and a NAMS counsellor. Ms Irene Ang, actress and founder of FLY Entertainment and local artiste Mr Rafaat Hamzah will share their personal encounters with substance abuse while NAMS Senior Counsellor William Teo will talk about his own recovery from drug addiction and how he is using his experience to help others.
11. Talented singing duo Jack and Rai will be performing the official NAAD song “It’s Not Too Late”, that they have specially composed to encourage persons with addictions to take the first step towards recovery, while local celebrity Nat Ho and social media influencer Mong Chin will show their support for addictions recovery and awareness on their Instagram pages.
12. There are interactive and informative booths providing a comprehensive range of resources to engage the community and acquaint them to the services and programmes available for those seeking help for various addiction issues. The booths are managed by community partners such as Alcoholics Anonymous Singapore, Central Narcotics Bureau, Credit Counselling Singapore, Industrial & Services Co-operative Society, MeToYou, Narcotics Anonymous, National Council on Problem Gambling, Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association, TOUCH Community Services, and WeCare Community Services.
13. As for Joel, he has managed to stay clean for the past two years after seeking treatment and joining a support group. Now in his mid-20s and holding down a full-time job, he felt he has been given a second chance in life and is actively using his lived experience to reach out to others like him. His advice to young persons: “Find something you’re passionate about and do what you love. Don’t ever try experimenting with drugs as once you’ve tried it, it’s a long slippery slope downhill into addiction.” (Joel is available for media interviews)

- END -

For media queries, please contact:

NAMS

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About National Addictions Management Service (NAMS)

The National Addictions Management Service (NAMS) was incorporated in 2008 to provide treatment for a broad range of addictions, including addiction to gambling, drugs, alcohol, sex, and the internet, and gaming.

At NAMS, a multi-disciplinary team which includes psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors, nurses, and medical social workers provides an integrated treatment approach for patients. Individual, group and family therapy programmes are available for both patients and their family members.

Located at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), NAMS runs an outpatient clinic and an inpatient ward (Serenity Centre) which provides residential detoxification and rehabilitation services. NAMS also provides treatment services at the IMH's satellite Community Wellness Clinics (CWCs) in Queenstown Polyclinic and Geylang Polyclinic on alternate Fridays.

About North East Community Development Council (North East CDC)

Set up in 1997, North East Community Development Council (CDC) serves a population of over 860,000 residents in three Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs) and two Single Member Constituencies (SMCs). They are Aljunied, Pasir Ris – Punggol, Tampines GRCs, Hougang and Punggol East SMCs.

North East CDC administers various local assistance programmes to help our residents. In addition, we also work closely with community and corporate partners to promote bonding and social cohesion. Since 27 May 2017, North East CDC is headed by Mayor Desmond Choo.

For more information, visit www.cdc.org.sg/northeast.

Dr Lee Cheng Vice Chairman, Medical Board (Clinical), Institute of Mental Health and Programme Director, National Addictions Management Service	李清医生 医疗委员会副主席(临床) 心理卫生学院 国立成瘾治疗服务项目总监
Mr Shamsul Kamar Vice Chairman of North East CDC and Adviser to Kaki Bukit GROs	山水.卡玛尔先生 副主席, 东北社区发展理事会 阿裕尼集选区基层组织顾问
North East Community Development Council (NECDC)	东北社区发展理事会



#ADDLIFE to your years!

ADDITIONS

With support and treatment, recovery from addictions is possible. There's always **HOPE!**

Event Highlights:



Up close and personal with **Irene Ang**, Founder and CEO of FLY Entertainment, as she shares her story on her success, overcoming the struggles of growing up with substance abuse from a daughter's perspective.

Photo by Calibre Pictures and Ideas



Hear local artiste **Rafaal Hamzah** talk about his own recovery from addiction issues and the struggles he faced.



Catch **Nat Ho** as he joins the community to spread the message of hope and recovery from addictions.



Be the first to hear the official NAAD song specially composed by the talented singing duo, **Jack and Rai**.



Have fun in this **Team Music** activity and create music together as one big community band.

National Addictions Awareness Day 2018

Join us for a fun and informative session and learn more about the types of addictions and where persons with addiction issues and their families can seek help and support. Let's choose an addiction-free life today!

Date: 10 March 2018, Saturday
Time: 10am - 3pm
Venue: Our Tampines Hub
 Festive Plaza
 1 Tampines Walk, S528523

Guest of Honour:
Mr Amrin Amin
 Parliamentary Secretary for
 Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health

Hosted by:
Mr Shamsul Kamar
 Vice Chairman of North East
 Community Development Council

Emcee:
Ross Sarpani

NAAD 2018 is jointly organised by:



and supported by our community partners.

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