

**SPEECH FOR HOST MAYOR FAHMI ALIMAN
FOR LAUNCH OF LAW AWARENESS WEEKS @ CDC 2023
ON SATURDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2023
AT MAX ATRIA PERIDOT ROOM 201-202**

Guest-of Honour, Mr Edwin Tong
Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and
Second Minister for Law
Deputy Chairman of People's Association

Chairman Mayor Ms Low Yen Ling,
Mayors Ms Denise Phua and Mr Desmond Choo and Mr Alex Yam

Mr Gregory Vijayendran
Chairman of Pro Bono SG

Mr Jimmy Toh,
Chief Executive Director, People's Association

Distinguished guests,
ladies and gentlemen,

South East CDC is delighted to host the Law Awareness Weeks @
CDC 2023.

Continuous Partnership with Pro Bono SG

2 The Community Legal Clinic was first started in two CDCs – South East and North West, in 2007. With this successful pilot, the Community Legal Clinics@CDCs was then expanded to the other three districts in 2014.

3 This year marks the 9th year of partnership between Pro Bono SG and the five (5) CDCs. I am happy to share that this partnership - the Community Legal Pro Bono Services Network (Community Legal Clinics@CDCs), will be extended for another three (3) more years through the MOU renewal, happening later.

4 Also, I am pleased to share that our three (3) Institute of Higher Learning (IHL) from National University of Singapore (NUS) Faculty of Law, Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) School of Law, Singapore Management University (SMU) School of Law, together with Pro Bono SG, Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA) and newly inducted partner Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW) will be part of this collective collaboration over the next three (3) years.

Collective Impact

5 At National level, we have a trusted legal system such as the Legal Aid Bureau to ensure accessibility to justice for every resident. At local community levels, our aim is for residents to be equipped with basic legal knowledge to protect oneself and to provide basic legal advice to those who encounter issues with matters of the law. However, as issues become more complex, we realised that it often goes beyond legal advice.

6 For example, neighbour disputes. And this neighbour disputes include hoarding issues. I encountered a resident who has a neighbour who exhibited hoarding behaviours. We all are all aware of the complex root cause and the neighbourly issues that usually arise out of such disputes. With the built up stench and pest infestations, family members started to quarrel, frustration and disputes with neighbours arose. In such

circumstances, it requires multi-agency's attention and aligned, dedicated efforts to offer timely and more seamless support to the affected residents.

7 There are occasions where legal advice alone may not be helpful or the most needed solution for residents to resolve the problems they face. For example, in strained family relationships. Such examples further highlighted the importance for us - the agencies, community partners and lawyers to work closely together, to manage and respond to complex issues more effectively and enable closures to the affected individuals and families.

8 This year's theme, "Collective Impact", targets to provide a holistic wraparound care and multi-prong support for residents who might be in need of legal assistance as well as cross-referrals to social services through partners in the community.

9 Through the partner network that we have been building up via Law Awareness Weeks and in the community, I am confident we are able to galvanize our efforts in providing targeted, relevant, and comprehensive support beyond legal means to our residents through closer cooperation and resource sharing.

Equipping the community with basic legal literacy

10 Today's launch of Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC is just the start. After today, a series of online webinars on various legal topics will be presented over six weeks for our residents. Some topics covered are Employment matters, How to spot and avoid scams, Community disputes (Mediation) and Advance Legal Planning etc which are common to what we hear about and come across these days.

11 In addition to the online webinars, In Person legal talks are also organised at the premises of our community partners, in different languages. This will enable more of our seniors or clients who are not

digitally savvy, to gain easier access to basic legal knowledge while having accessible community legal services via Community Legal Clinics.

12 I would like to take the chance today, to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all the pro bono lawyers who have volunteered at the Community Legal Clinics, and in making these online webinars and In Person legal talks possible. Thank you.

Closing Remarks

13 In closing, I hope this ecosystem of pro bono legal services will continue to thrive and grow stronger through the support of our many stakeholders in our country and our community.

14 Let us continue to work alongside one another, together we can nurture the collective partnership in the community.

Thank you again.