

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Singapore Teochew Foundation fuels The Hope Train through 3 years of funding support to nurture children with cancer**

**Singapore, 24 October 2023** — This year, The Hope Train, a Christmas fundraising initiative organised by the Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF), sets its sights on raising SGD\$700,000 to provide essential support to children and their families impacted by cancer. The funds raised will be channelled into empowering social and educational interventions that will significantly benefit CCF's children and their families. One of the programmes to benefit from this support is CCF's Place for Academic Learning and Support (PALS).

The Singapore Teochew Foundation (STF) has pledged a remarkable SGD\$600,000 donation to support The Hope Train. The donation, which will be disbursed over a period of three years of SGD\$200,000 annually, will help to bolster PALS.

In Singapore, education serves as the primary catalyst for social mobility, unlocking the potential of children and paving the way for them to pursue their aspirations for a brighter future. A higher level of education equips our children with the skills and opportunities necessary to compete successfully in the job market and create economic and social benefits for themselves and their families.

PALS is such a programme which bridges the learning gap between the treatment phase and regular schooling routines. It aims to establish a secure learning environment by implementing effective infection-control measures while enhancing students' academic and psychosocial competencies. PALS prepares students for a seamless return to regular school routines, ensuring they are well-prepared for continued educational success, after they had completed active cancer treatment.

Such is the case of our beneficiary Nurin, who was diagnosed with Lymphoblastic Leukaemia at 13. During her remission in July 2022, PALS provided a safe and conducive environment for Nurin to catch up on what she missed during Secondary 1. This helped her achieve remarkable academic progress, with improved grades, including As and Bs for all subjects. Additionally, she was also able to forge strong friendships with other children at PALS.



"We are thankful to STF for its strong support towards PALS. The commitment reflects a shared vision with CCF towards nurturing the growth and development of these young warriors," said Ms Peng Haiying, CEO of CCF.

"We are deeply honoured to join hands with CCF to support The Hope Train. The STF is dedicated to the well-being of individuals and families in challenging circumstances and have provided invaluable assistance to many over the years. We hope that our funding will help fuel The Hope Train and PALS to reach out to more beneficiaries and provide children battling cancer with the necessary educational support and environment to have an equal playing field alongside other children in Singapore," said Dr Wu Chiaw Ching, Chairman of STF.

Organised by the Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF), The Hope Train is an online Christmas fundraising campaign to raise funds for children and families impacted by cancer from 1 September to 31 December 2023. The funds received will support programmes and services for children and families impacted by cancer. To show your support, please visit us at <https://www.ccf.org.sg/get-involved/hope-train-2023/>.

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## Annex A

### About Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF)

Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF) is a Social Service Agency with a mission to improve the quality of life of children with cancer and their families through enhancing their emotional, social, and medical well-being.

Founded in 1992, CCF provides children with cancer and their families with much-needed support in their battle against life-threatening illnesses. Over the years, CCF has helped more than 3,700 children and their families at different stages of illness and recovery.

### Services offered to children with cancer and their families.

- Casework and Counselling
- Play Services
- Financial Assistance
- Art Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Animal-Assisted Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Child Life Services
- Caregivers Support Services
- Hospital Play Services
- Survivorship Programme
- Schooling Programme
- Place for Academic Learning and Support (PALS)
- Tuition and Befriending
- Psychosocial and Recreational Activities
- Palliative and Bereavement Service
- Children Impacted by Cancer Programme

#### Quick Facts

Number of children and families that CCF served in 2022	652
The most common cancer among children	Leukaemia
The largest age group of children newly diagnosed with cancer	0-4 years old
No. of children diagnosed with childhood cancer in 2022	184

## Annex B

### About Place for Academic Learning and Support

CCF conceptualised PALS in 2012 to provide a transitional platform for bridging the learning gap between the treatment phase and the everyday schooling routines. It aims at providing a safe learning environment through effective infection-control measures and enhancing its students' academic and psychosocially competencies in preparation for the eventual school return. This is the first step of many to re-establish normalcy for children affected by childhood cancer.

PALS is an EDCA<sup>1</sup> They have an accredited education institution that provides a safe learning environment by adopting infection-control measures. The programme facilitates a holistic curriculum consisting of academic lessons, enrichment activities, and psychosocial group work, enhancing students' academic and psychosocially competencies in preparation for their eventual return to formal schooling. Students at PALS get academic support through small group classes and are taught by MOE/ECDA-qualified teachers with teaching experience. Through PALS, CCF aims to provide educational support for children to build viable futures for themselves.

Below are the eligibility criteria for PALS:

- Student must be a Singaporean / Singapore Permanent Resident (PR) / considered part of Singapore's community.
- Students must be diagnosed with cancer / pre-cancerous disease/tumor.
- Students must be at schooling age (from Nursery to Secondary 5) according to the Ministry of Education (MOE) enrollment age criteria. Nursery 1 (N1) admission is based on birth year, and the student must be 3 years of age.
- A doctor must certify students as being medically unfit for mainstream schools and fit to attend PALS.
- A caregiver must accompany students throughout school hours should they have special nursing care needs (e.g., tube feeding assisted toileting).

Since its inception, PALS has supported **382** beneficiaries. **266** have completed their studies with PALS and transited to the community.

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<sup>1</sup> The Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) serves as the regulatory and developmental agency for the early childhood sector in Singapore, overseeing key aspects of children's development below the age of 7 across both kindergartens and childcare centers.



**Children's  
Cancer  
Foundation**

## **Annex C**

### **About Singapore Teochew Foundation (STF)**

Since its establishment in 2010, the Singapore Teochew Foundation has been dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families grappling with challenging circumstances. STF has provided vital assistance to numerous families, guiding them through financial crises and helping them regain stability through the Hardship Assistance Scheme. STF contributes to educational, healthcare, and mental well-being initiatives and actively collaborates with various welfare organizations, universities, and hospitals to enhance beneficiaries' quality of life.

To find out more: <http://singaporeteochewfoundation.com.sg/>

## Annex D

### Story of Nurin

At just 13 years old, Nurin received a life-altering diagnosis of Lymphoblastic Leukaemia. Nurin's mother, Norlizah, shared their story: "When Nurin was diagnosed, she was just 13 years old. CCF approached us, explaining how CCF could assist us financially and emotionally providing detailed guidance on what to expect for her procedures. They even extended their support to our two other children at home."

Throughout this journey, she cited that CCF was pivotal in maintaining Nurin's close relationship with her siblings, aged 11 and 7 this year. The support network provided by CCF helped bridge the emotional distance created by her illness, allowing her siblings to understand better and support her.

Nurin's treatment journey was marked by significant challenges, including her mother, Norlizah, having to quit her job. This change in their financial situation placed a considerable financial strain on their family, with her husband being the sole breadwinner.

In July 2022, during her remission, Nurin found tremendous support from PALS in catching up on her studies, particularly those missed during Secondary 1. Under PALS' guidance, Nurin made remarkable academic progress, achieving improved grades, including As and Bs in all subjects.

Beyond academic assistance, Nurin discovered solace and friendship at PALS, where she formed meaningful bonds with younger kids, especially those undergoing treatment alongside her.

Nurin's journey exemplifies the transformative impact of CCF's support in terms of medical assistance and nurturing a sense of community and resilience among young cancer warriors.