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association for persons with special needs

JOINT MOUNT ALVERNIA HOSPITAL AND APSN NEWS RELEASE

Mount Alvernia Hospital partners APSN to provide medical and dental care for persons with special needs

Singapore, 1 July 2019 – In a partnership with Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN), Mount Alvernia Outreach Medical and Dental Clinics are providing highly subsidised medical and dental care for persons with Mild Intellectual Disability (MID). This is a monumental step in the special needs sector, as this benefits individuals who have attended APSN's special education Schools and Centre, supporting them into their adult years as alumni members of the Association. This group forms the majority of persons with mild intellectual disability in Singapore.

Currently, 40 financially-needy APSN alumni have received a one-year membership that will allow them to visit any of the Mount Alvernia Outreach Medical or Dental Clinics for primary healthcare services at very affordable rates – \$5 for medical and \$10 for dental, respectively. The outreach clinics are located at Agape Village in Toa Payoh and Enabling Village in Lengkok Bahru.

The Mount Alvernia Outreach Medical and Dental Clinics adopt a targeted approach to reach out to people who have fallen through the safety net and who are most in need and are at a disadvantage. The clinic services include general practitioner consultation and management of common illnesses as well as providing dental care. The initiative is part of Mount Alvernia Hospital's community outreach programme to bring healthcare services to the less privileged and to serve the vulnerable and underserved who are limited by circumstances.

APSN and Mount Alvernia Hospital have plans to expand this service to the entire APSN alumni population.

Ms Germaine Teo, a 31-year-old waitress, is one of the beneficiaries of Mount Alvernia Outreach Dental Clinic.

Her procedure included an X-Ray and tooth extraction, which came up to \$208.40, but Ms Teo paid only \$10.

Mr Caleb Goh, an Alumni Executive with APSN, shares that before providing this exclusive membership from Mount Alvernia Hospital, the Alumni Services team will do an assessment of each alumni and their families' financial situation, prior to approving each application.

He notes that a lot of alumni have not really taken care of their teeth, as they cannot afford to give priority to dental care or may not know where to turn to for such services.

Madam Joo Lee Ho, Germaine's mother who works as a cashier, says, "I'm very relieved as this service helps lessen our financial burden."

Other than these outreach clinics, Mount Alvernia Hospital also operates a mobile outreach clinic to bring the services closer to the beneficiaries.



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Dr Christopher Tay, Chief Executive Officer of APSN, says, “A lot of the MID population cannot afford medical and dental costs at private clinics and, sometimes, the wait at polyclinics can be very long. The situation gets exacerbated when they lose their jobs. Mount Alvernia Hospital’s generosity and APSN’s passionate work in this partnership are really meeting a great need in this community.”

“The hospital is privileged to partner APSN for this meaningful initiative. We realised that not everyone has the means or recourses to take care of their basic health needs, even if they know their health status. Alumni of APSN are an example. A number of them still require help to reintegrate and to be gainfully employed before they can become self-sufficient. We reach out to them by providing the alumni a familiar place where they know they can be cared for in terms of their medical and dental needs,” says Mr Goh Hock Soon, Director of Corporate Development, Mount Alvernia Hospital.

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APSN alumna Germaine Teo proudly showing off her membership card for the subsidised medical and dental care at Mount Alvernia Outreach Clinics.



APSN Alumni Executive Caleb Goh going through the enrolment process with Ms Germaine Teo and her mum, Madam Joo Lee Ho.



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From left to right: APSN Alumni Executive Caleb Goh, alumna Germaine Teo and Mount Alvernia Outreach Medical Clinic staff Anita John.

About Mount Alvernia Hospital

Founded on Catholic values by the Sisters from the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) in 1961, Mount Alvernia Hospital is a 305-bed, not-for-profit general acute care private hospital. Supported by over 1,200 accredited doctors and more than 190 specialist doctors on campus, the hospital has tertiary medical capabilities and two multi-disciplinary medical specialist centres. Mount Alvernia Hospital is the only private hospital in Singapore providing dedicated Clinical Pastoral Care as part of its holistic care for patients and their families. Since 2009, the hospital has an active community outreach programme that provides free health screening to the needy, elderly and less mobile. For more information, please refer to our website at <https://mtalvernia.sg>

About Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN)

Established in 1976, Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN) is a social service organisation providing special education for persons with mild intellectual disability (IQ 50-70). Today, APSN operates four Special Education (SPED) Schools (APSN Chaoyang School, APSN Katong School, APSN Tanglin School and APSN Delta Senior School) for students aged 7 to 21, an APSN Student Care Centre for children aged 7 to 18 and an APSN Centre for Adults for persons aged 16 and older, benefiting over 1,200 beneficiaries each year.

The APSN Schools and Centre adopt a holistic approach in its curriculum, comprising academic, vocational and social skills which are important for open employment and lifelong learning. APSN seeks to enable persons with special needs to be active contributors of the society and is committed to inspire and build capabilities of its partners and community to lead and advocate an inclusive society.



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To date, APSN's growing database has more than 5,000 alumni members and beneficiaries. The Association is constantly expanding its network to reach out to and understand the needs of its members to better support them.

For more information on APSN, please visit www.apsn.org.sg

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