



P R E S I D E N T
R E P U B L I C O F S I N G A P O R E

Key Messages

- The focal area of President's Challenge 2019 will be on mental health.
- Organisations such as SAMH play an important role in supporting people with mental health conditions over a range of platforms, including using arts like what is done at Creative MINDSET Hub, to promote greater awareness of mental health challenges and contribute to a more caring community.
- Mental health conditions can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. We should work together as a community to help others overcome mental health conditions and the stigma surrounding them.

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT HALIMAH YACOB
AT THE LAUNCH OF SINGAPORE ASSOCIATION FOR
MENTAL HEALTH'S CREATIVE MINDSET HUB ON
1 DECEMBER 2018 AT OUR TAMPINES HUB**

Dr Francis Yeoh, President, Singapore Association for Mental Health

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

I am happy to be here today to grace the Official Opening of Creative MINDSET Hub by the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH).

Let me begin by commending SAMH for your dedicated efforts over the past 50 years in promoting mental health awareness and well-being to our community. Having worked closely with SAMH, I have witnessed the organisation's efforts in providing quality care to individuals with mental health conditions, and supporting them as they reintegrate into the community.

SAMH has grown from strength to strength in supporting those with mental health conditions. From vocational training sessions at the MINDSET Learning Hub, to supporting the young at YouthReach and now, with Creative MINDSET Hub, SAMH has expanded its range of services over the years to cater to more beneficiaries over a broader range of platforms.

Mental health conditions do not discriminate; it can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. In October, the World Health Organisation reported that one in four people in the world will be affected by mental or neurological disorders at some point in their lives. In fact, around 450 million people suffer from such conditions at this very moment, placing mental health conditions

among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide. Research has also shown that half of all lifetime cases of mental conditions begin by the tender age of 14. We now see a rising number of youths facing mental health conditions. This is one of the reasons why the focal area for President's Challenge 2019 will be on mental health.

In recent years, Singapore has made progress in lifting the stigma of mental conditions, and strengthening preventive and rehabilitative mental healthcare for all. For example, the National Council for Social Service (NCSS) recently launched a campaign entitled, "Beyond the Label", to encourage people to look beyond the label of a mental health diagnosis and celebrate the resilience and contributions of those in recovery from mental health conditions. I am heartened that the campaign has shone a spotlight on the difficult issue of stigma and sparked more conversations among the community on mental health. SAMH's Creative MINDSET Hub will add on to this effort. The Hub aims to be a key part of our holistic healthcare system, and bring quality mental health care closer to the community.

As arts and heritage have the power to connect communities and strengthen social bonds, they also have great potential to break down the barriers of stigma, and lead to a profound impact on our mental well-being. For example, the Arts for Ageing Well study in 2017 by the National Arts Council and Nanyang Technological University showed that seniors who participate in the arts are significantly more inclined to experience a greater sense of mental well-being, when compared to non-arts participants. The art programmes at SAMH's Creative MINDSET Hub are more than just platforms for individual expression. They promote greater awareness of mental health challenges, and contribute to a more caring community.

Many of you would also have noticed the beautiful ART LOOPS on display. These are artworks created by people from all walks of life. The artworks are combined to represent community partnership, which is critical to one's journey towards mental wellness. We will need to work together as a community to help others overcome mental health conditions and the stigma surrounding them. Let us look beyond the label, and embrace new

ways to show more empathy towards those with mental health issues.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the SAMH team once again on the official opening of the Creative MINDSET Hub, and for their commitment in shifting hearts and minds towards greater acceptance of those with mental health conditions.

With that, I declare the Creative MINDSET Hub open! Thank you, and have a wonderful day ahead.
