

ABSTRACT

SG Enable is an agency dedicated to promoting an inclusive society through enabling persons with disabilities. It seeks to provide comprehensive disability support to persons with disabilities through provision of easy access to information, referral services, grants and schemes, as well as enhancing employability and employment options for persons with disabilities. Medical practitioners play an important role of medical assessment of people with disabilities and referral of eligible applicants for receipt of services and benefits from financial schemes and non-financial assistance to meet their needs ranging from accessibility, transport to assistive devices.

Keywords:

SG Enable, Schemes and services, Persons with disabilities, Children and youth, Adult, Medical practitioners, assessment, referral.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF)'s Enabling Masterplan 2012 to 2016 seeks to build on the foundation laid by the earlier initiatives for Singapore to strive towards an inclusive society. The Enabling Masterplan sets out to address the needs of persons with disabilities as well as the needs of caregivers. The vision of the Enabling Masterplan *sees Singapore as an inclusive society where persons with disabilities are empowered and recognised, and given full opportunity to become integral and contributing members of society*¹. SG Enable is an agency set up by MSF dedicated to the disabled. It serves as a focal point for their needs.

OVERVIEW OF SG ENABLE

Formed in July 2013, SG Enable is an agency dedicated to promoting an inclusive society through enabling persons with disabilities. We seek to provide comprehensive disability support to persons with disabilities through provision of easy access to information, referral services, grants and schemes, as well as enhancing employability and employment options for persons with disabilities.

We believe that everyone has latent potential waiting to be discovered regardless of their abilities. Adopting a person-centric approach through a life-course perspective, we seek to equip persons with disabilities with essential resources at different life

stages so that they and their caregivers can explore various options best suited to their needs.

SCHEMES AND SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

SG Enable provides information and referral on the following programmes and services, adopts a life course approach covering early intervention, employment, and adult care.

For Children and Youth

- **Early Intervention Programme for Infants & Children (EIPIC)**

EIPIC provides therapy and educational support services to children with special needs, enhances their developmental growth potential, and minimises the development of secondary disabilities.

- **Enhanced Pilot for Private Intervention Providers (PPIP)**

PPIP provides additional options in early intervention programmes for children. It is a subsidy scheme which helps parents defray the cost of enrolling their children in selected private intervention centres.

- **Integrated Child Care Programme (ICCP)**

ICCP enables children with mild special needs to learn, play and socialise with their peers in mainstream childcare centres so as to prepare them for future entry into mainstream education.

- **Development Support Programme (DSP)**

DSP is an early intervention programme which provides therapy and learning support services to children with mild developmental needs enrolled in pre-schools.

- **Special Student Care Centres (SSCC)**

SSCCs provide before- and after-school care services to children with special needs. SSCCs also provide educational support and impart social and life skills for independent living.

For Adults

For adults with disabilities, SG Enable focuses on enhancing the employability and employment options. The agency adopts a coordinated approach to serve as a common touch point for persons with disabilities and employers. The agency also leverages on the strengths of existing partners and schemes to facilitate training services, employment services and employment opportunities.

- **Employment Facilitation Services**

We work closely with various partners like Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) and training providers to support persons with disabilities with vocational assessment, pre-employment training, job placement and job support services, and continuous education and training. Our goal is to help persons with disabilities find and sustain meaningful employment.

TAY MUI CHIN,
Senior Manager, Enabling Services, SG Enable

We also provide consultancy services to employers to help them in hiring and retaining persons with disabilities. We work closely with employers to tap on incentives and grants to support companies' initiatives such as job redesign and workplace modification, mentoring and integration, apprenticeship, work experience and training programmes for persons with disabilities. Our goal is to grow the pool of employers hiring persons with disabilities as they recognise that this is a viable and sustainable option to augment their manpower needs.

We also provide information and referral to the following services:

- **Sheltered Workshops**

Sheltered Workshops provide work therapy for adults with mild to moderate disabilities who are not in employment.

- **Day Activity Centres (DAC)**

DACs provide care and skill training, as well as physiotherapy and occupational therapy sessions that promote the development of cognitive, social, communication, language and motor skills for adults with moderate to severe disabilities.

- **Residential Homes, Hostels and Community Group Homes**

Residential Homes, Hostels and Community Group Homes provide alternative housing arrangements for adults with disabilities whose families are unable to provide care for them.

Other Support

SG Enable administers various schemes to provide financial and non-financial assistance to persons with disabilities to meet their needs ranging from accessibility, transport to assistive devices.

- **Assistive Technology Fund (ATF)**

ATF provides financial assistance to persons with disabilities in mainstream and special education or open employment to purchase assistive technology devices.

- **Special Assistance Fund (SAF)**

SAF provides financial assistance to low-income families in purchasing assistive equipment, technical aids or home retrofits to aid persons with disabilities in their mobility, independence or rehabilitation.

- **Computer Access Trust Fund (CATF)**

CATF enables students in special education schools from low-income families to buy computers and computer-related assistive technology for educational purposes at home.

- **Traffic Accident Fund (TAF)**

TAF provides financial assistance to needy persons who have acquired permanent or temporary disabilities due to traffic accidents.

- **Concession Scheme for Persons with Disabilities**

The Concession Scheme allows persons with disabilities to enjoy 25% discount off the adult fares when they travel on public transport. They do not have to pay additional fares for distances beyond 7.2km. In addition, they may opt to buy a Monthly Concession Pass with unlimited bus and train rides at \$60 per month.

- **Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS)**

TSS caters to the transport needs of working adults and students from low-income families who have permanent disabilities and are certified as unable to take public transport and totally dependent on taxis for travelling to school or work.

- **VWO Transport Subsidies**

VWO Transport Subsidies provide support for persons with disabilities who need to take dedicated transport provided by Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) to access school and care services.

- **Car Park Label Scheme (CPLS)**

CPLS enables persons with physical disabilities who drive their own vehicles and use a bulky mobility aid, or who are ferried by their family members, to park at designated parking lots to allow them to get in and out of the vehicles with ease.

- **Special Needs Savings Scheme (SNSS)**

SNSS allows parents to set aside a portion of their Central Provident Fund (CPF) savings by disbursing a monthly sum upon their demise for the long term care of their children with special needs.

HOW CAN MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS HELP

Medical practitioners can help by conducting medical assessment of people with disabilities and making referral of eligible applicants for receipt of services and schemes. Please refer to the section on "Useful Resources for Medical Practitioners" in this issue.

Services for care for children and youth

- General eligibility criteria - Singaporean / Permanent resident (with at least 1 family member who is a Singaporean. Children and youth diagnosed with developmental, intellectual, hearing, visual, or physical disabilities.
- Application requirements – assessment for suitability by a doctor from the Children Development Unit (CDU) at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH), National University Hospital (NUH) or Singapore General Hospital (SGH).
- Medical social worker or doctor to submit referral form to SG Enable.

Adult care services

- General eligibility criteria – Singaporean / Permanent resident (with at least 1 family member who is a Singaporean); aged 16-55; disability types – intellectual, physical, sensory, autism, or other developmental condition; free from infectious diseases; and having no serious psychotic disorder or challenging behaviour.
- Application requirements – referrals from restructured hospitals, community hospitals, SPED (Special Education) Schools, Polyclinics, and Family Service Centres.
- A professional (e.g., doctor, social worker, or therapist) to be consulted for assistance in submitting an application to SG Enable,

Financial schemes

- General eligibility criteria – assistive devices that help to enable the pursuit of education or open employment; assistive devices that help to improve mobility, enhance independence or rehabilitation; Singaporean / permanent resident (with at least 1 family member is a Singaporean); gross monthly per capita household income is less than 1500 Sing dollars.
- Application requirements – referrals from hospitals, VWOs, SPED Schools.

- Medical social worker from hospital or Social Worker from VWO or SPED School to submit application.

Transport schemes

- General eligibility criteria – Singaporeans or permanent resident; PWD with permanent disability.
- Application requirements – certified by doctor or specialist to have a permanent disability of any one of the following – physical, visual, hearing, intellectual and autism spectrum disorder; or a member of a relevant VWO, or undergo a

Functional Assessment Report by a doctor.

- For taxi subsidy, need to undergo medical assessment by specialists at designated medical institution to certify totally dependent on taxis for travelling.

REFERENCES

1. Ministry of Social and Family Development. Enabling Masterplan 2012-2016 Full Report. Executive Summary. MSF: Singapore 2013 March 8.

LEARNING POINTS

- **SG Enable is an agency dedicated to promoting an inclusive society through enabling persons with disabilities.**
 - **SG Enable seeks to provide comprehensive disability support to persons with disabilities through provision of easy access to information, referral services, grants and schemes, as well as enhancing employability and employment options for persons with disabilities.**
 - **Medical practitioners play an important role of conducting medical assessment of people with disabilities and making referral of eligible applicants for receipt of services and benefits from financial schemes and non-financial assistance schemes.**
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