

**SPEECH BY MR BENJAMIN WILLIAM, SECRETARY GENERAL / CEO,
SINGAPORE RED CROSS AT WORLD FIRST AID DAY CELEBRATIONS
AT TAMAN JURONG CC ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2017**

Minister Desmond Lee, Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development, and soon
Minister of Social and Family Development
Residents of Taman Jurong
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning. Today, we are gathered to commemorate World First Aid Day. We also thank
Minister Desmond Lim, for gracing this occasion as our Guest-of-Honour. I want to thank all of
you for choosing to spend your Saturday learning useful first aid skills. Our celebration of World
First Aid Day, emphasises the importance of first aid.

In most instances medical emergencies happen when you least expect them. In such situations,
having first aid skills differentiate lifesavers from bystanders. Often, the act of rendering first aid
and CPR determines whether a life is saved or lost. It can determine whether someone suffers
permanent injury or enjoys a full recovery after a medical emergency. Learning first aid means
being prepared at all times.

Singapore Red Cross has more than 1000 Community First Aiders. Our volunteer first aiders learn
the latest techniques and procedures. They then hone their skills by providing first aid services
through our community services. Besides providing an important public service, this prepares
them to confront medical emergencies and accidents when they happen. Our first aiders
immediately know what to do, how to make a person feel better, and how to mitigate the situation
until professional medical help arrives. Often they go beyond their call of duty, responding to
emergency situations. Our first aiders are also always ready to share the importance of learning
first aid with those in their own communities.

Today on World First Aid Day, we pay tribute to all first aiders, who often work quietly behind the
scenes to save lives or prevent one's medical conditions from worsening. Thank you for your
service!

For decades, we have worked hard to make first aid more accessible to everyone. As SRC, we
have remained in the forefront of national efforts to have a first aider in every home. Since the
1960s, the Singapore Red Cross has been training people in first aid. Today, as part of our One
Billion Coalition for Resilience framework, we hope to be instrumental in having one million
people trained in first aid over the next five years.

Our Academy continuously rolls out new courses relevant to specific societal needs such as first aid for caregivers of infants and seniors, to sportsmen and workplaces. Most Singaporeans have time constraints. So we have compacted courses to under five hours. It maximises outreach by running train-the-trainer courses, talks and workshops. The Academy has also developed first aid themed treasure hunts for preschoolers to experiential camps for young people.

To build the next generation of first aid conscious children, we have worked closely with 3M Nexcare to bring first aid skits and activity booklets to primary schools. To mainstream First Aid, we launched the nation's first multilingual first aid app three years ago. It now has more than 17,900 users, and I hope more will download this useful and free app. Five years ago, we launched Rapid Rescue, a location-based app that allows people who face a medical emergency to crowdsource community responders in their vicinity. Now the Singapore Civil Defence Force and IDA Singapore has *myResponder*, and ordinary Singaporeans have responded to over [4,200 alerts](#).

Today, we will launch **InstaSave** - a series of step-by-step treatment videos you can save from Singapore Red Cross' Instagram now, to save lives in future. This is a pro bono effort by advertising agency DDB. I thank DDB for its efforts in advocating first aid learning. I hope all of you will save these neat videos starring our volunteer first aiders.

I am happy that many youth in our midst today are proficient in first aid. First aid skills will enable you to make a positive difference at home, school and community at large. With your youthful exuberance and passion for humanitarian causes, you can influence your peers to learn first aid and volunteer for first aid duty together. In addition to physical and psychological first aid, youth can also be the advocator of disaster risk reduction, both at school and community.

Later today, the Red Cross Youth will go from door-to-door to distribute first aid kits to 300 households in Taman Jurong & Jurong Spring. They will also be on-hand to share first aid tips at these activity booths. We hope you will enjoy what they have put together. I thank the organising team lead by Mr Daryl Ee for their efforts in organising this community outreach.

First aid is for everyone, and anyone. No one is too old or too young to learn first aid. I urge all of you to learn first aid with us, and for all those who are already trained, to volunteer with us, so your skills stay relevant.

Thank you and Happy World First Aid Day!