

press release

Standard Chartered launches Mobile Eye Clinic – Singapore’s first comprehensive eye care on-the-move for senior citizens

Initiative targets to benefit 1,600 by September 2016

27 September 2014, Singapore – Standard Chartered Bank (the Bank) today officially launched the Mobile Eye Clinic (MEC), Singapore’s first initiative that provides a comprehensive eye care on-the-move programme for senior citizens. The Bank has partnered the Singapore Society of Ophthalmology (SSO) for this two-year initiative and aims to bring eye care to senior citizens who are unable to have access to healthcare due to physical constraints or logistical barriers. MEC was launched at Bright Hill Evergreen Home, with support from Guest-of-Honour Dr Lam Pin Min, Minister of State, Ministry of Health.

With an objective to do more as an organisation for these senior citizens, Standard Chartered collaborated with doctors from SSO to conceptualise and implement the MEC project. The Bank funds the initiative which involves doctors from the SSO, optometrist volunteers and volunteers from the Bank who will come together to set up mobile eye clinics in various nursing homes, local community centres and public spaces in housing estates to ensure that senior citizens can have access to professional health care. The target beneficiaries for MEC are Singaporeans aged 50 and above who are logistically or physically unable to visit tertiary hospitals for eye care on their own.

Neeraj Swaroop, Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank, Singapore said:

“We want to contribute in a way that has the most impact and which will truly benefit the local community. After discussing with our partner, the SSO, we were deeply concerned that many elderly Singaporeans are staying alone, away from their families. Many of these elderly do not have access to something as basic as eye care because they are

physically not able to see a doctor or are unable to afford the medical fees. This is an area which might not have been looked into by other organisations in Singapore, so we decided to launch the MEC to build a comprehensive system that not only brings eye care to these elderly, it also includes follow up and follow through actions so that those in need of medical care are identified and our volunteers will help them to get the necessary treatment.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all our partners from the SSO, Singapore National Eye Centre, Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Bright Hill Evergreen Home and all the volunteers for their commitment and dedication to this initiative.”

Associate Prof Lee Shu Yen, President of the SSO and Senior Consultant Ophthalmologist at Singapore National Eye Centre (SNEC), said:

“Singapore Society of Ophthalmology and the Singapore National Eye Centre have a long history of organising community outreach programmes. Ophthalmologists and staff have been volunteering during weekends to screen needy elderly residents. It is our hope that through the Mobile Eye Clinic, more elderly can be reached and have their vision restored so they can lead meaningful lives in their golden years. The SSO is pleased to partner Mount Elizabeth Hospital which provided the surgeries and Standard Chartered Bank.”

Through MEC’s first two pilot sessions that were conducted earlier this year, over 400 beneficiaries have already gone through eye screening to identify cases of uncorrected refractive error, cataracts, age-related macular degeneration and glaucoma. With the remaining six sessions which the Bank plans to arrange, it targets to benefit 1,600 in total by September 2016. Post screening, those in need of medical attention will be identified and referred to Social Services from the SNEC so that they can seek full medical care and the necessary help.

The 12 beneficiaries identified in the pilot sessions as requiring cataract surgery have undergone surgery at Mount Elizabeth Hospital. The procedures were fully sponsored by the hospital and its team of eye surgeons.

Dr Kelvin Loh, Chief Executive Officer of Mount Elizabeth Hospital, said:

“Failing eyesight is one of the most troubling conditions in the elderly. It limits their mobility and also erodes their ability to enjoy simple everyday activities. Mount Elizabeth

Hospital is honoured to be part of this meaningful project to restore vision to these needy senior citizens.”

The MEC is part of Standard Chartered's Seeing is Believing initiative – the Bank's global programme which raises funds to help tackle avoidable blindness – and is also aligned with the Bank's Silver Lining initiative which was established in 2012 to enhance the lives of elderly in Singapore.

- Ends -

For more information, please contact:

Carol Alisha Chan

Corporate Affairs, Singapore
Standard Chartered Bank
DID: +65 6596 9403
Email: Carol-HY.Chan@sc.com

Jasmine Zhao

Corporate Affairs, Singapore
Standard Chartered Bank
DID: +65 6596 7756
Email: Jasmine.Zhao@sc.com

Note to Editors:

Standard Chartered in Singapore is part of an international banking group with more than 86,000 employees and a 150-year history in some of the world's dynamic markets.

We bank the people and companies driving investment, trade and the creation of wealth across Asia, Africa and the Middle East, where we earn around 90 per cent of our income and profits. Our heritage and values are expressed in our brand promise, Here for good.

Standard Chartered has a history of 155 years in Singapore, opening its first branch here in 1859 and in October 1999 was among the first international banks to receive a Qualifying Full Bank (QFB) license, an endorsement of the Group's long-standing commitment to its businesses in the country.

The Bank transferred its Singapore Retail and SME business to a locally-incorporated subsidiary, Standard Chartered Bank (Singapore) Limited (“SCBSL”) on 7 October 2013. After the transfer, all banking services offered to retail and SME clients, particularly deposit taking, wealth management services, overdrafts, personal loans, credit cards, auto financing, and mortgages, are offered by SCBSL.

The Bank offers corporate and institutional clients services in trade finance, cash management, lending, securities services, foreign exchange, debt capital markets and corporate finance. The Bank also provides private banking services through its private banking division.

The Bank employs over 7,300 people in Singapore and has a network of 19 branches, 7 Priority Banking centres and 32 ATMs.

The Bank's global business is managed out of Singapore, as is its global Technology & Operations function.

Mobile Eye Clinic (MEC) Factsheet

About MEC

The MEC project is a two-year partnership between the Singapore Society of Ophthalmology (SSO) and Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) with the goal of bringing eye care to senior residents who are unable to have access to healthcare due to physical or logistical barriers.

The objectives of this project are:

- To provide an outreach platform for local volunteer ophthalmologists to serve the visually impaired in communities who are unable to come to the tertiary hospitals.
- To screen and examine the elderly local community for early signs of blinding diseases such as glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration.
- To identify blind people in the elderly community and refer them to the social support networks available, vocational and home-care support services.
- To involve the non-medical community by engaging volunteers from SCB to be involved in providing primary eye care e.g. in the form of simple eye screening, patient education and simple prescription of reading glasses; under the supervision of qualified eye care professionals.

How the MEC is carried out

The MEC, which is funded by SCB, is run in various nursing homes, local community centres and public spaces in housing estates.

- Doctors from SSO and optometrist volunteers will conduct vision checks, refraction assessment, intra-ocular pressure examination and slit-lamp examination of the eyes. Patients who require basic eye care treatment or refractive correction can be treated at the MEC.
- SCB volunteers will befriend and assist the elderly through the respective screening stations, and any follow-up care if necessary, for example, sending reminders to the beneficiaries for follow-up checks and bringing them to SNEC for their surgery.
- SCB will reimburse participants the cost incurred for transport, consultation and medications up to the first visit post-MEC at SNEC if they complete their consultation with the SNEC/SSO doctors in the community project.

MEC beneficiaries

The target beneficiaries for the MEC are Singaporeans aged 50 and above, especially those who are living by themselves and are unable to receive tertiary hospital care either due to physical or logistical barriers. The Singapore Government reports that up to 13.9% of the elderly live without support from their families (2011) and projected up to 83,000 elderly will be living alone by 2030 (www.singstat.gov.sg).

MEC targets

To conduct eight MECs by September 2016, benefitting 1,600 elderly.

MEC impact to date

- Two pilot MECs, benefitting 400 elderly, have been conducted at Taman Jurong and Chin Swee Road in 2014 before the launch.
- Out of the 400 elderly, 12 have undergone cataract surgery sponsored by Mount Elizabeth Hospital.
- Many others were referred for follow-up checks at SNEC as subsidised patients for other eye conditions, or the polyclinics for other health conditions.

MEC partners and their contributions

- The SSO's member doctors provide support through eye care and eyesight screening.
- SCB funds the MEC projects and provides staff volunteer support.
- Mount Elizabeth Hospital provides facilities, such as operating theatres, and equipment for volunteer doctors to perform cataract surgeries on the elderly.
- SNEC and Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI) doctors, nurses and optometrists provide support for the eye screening programmes on-site.
- Topcon Singapore Medical Pte Ltd provides the complete range of eye screening equipment at the various 'mobile' locations.