

# HSEU

Second Quarter 2008

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## A Place of Our Own Delegates give mandate to purchase property

At the Special Delegates' Conference held on 27 March 2008 at Downtown East, delegates voted overwhelmingly to approve the purchase of our very own property at a unit from a building at Bukit Pasoh. More than 95% voted in favour of the purchase.

Since the formation of HSEU, it has been the union's dream to own a property that its members can call home. However, several of the property viewings have been unsuccessful due to either price or location.

The current property at No 3 Bukit Pasoh Road Unit 02-01, is conveniently located at the junction of both the North-East and East-West train lines. There are currently 3 other unions housed within the building and it is expected that HSEU will be able to gain from future collaborations / economies of scale. Purchasing property in land-scarce Singapore is also a form of

investment and preserving the value of the union dollar.

Delegates were also given an overview of the CPF system and retirement financial security by speakers from the CPF Board. This was followed by a lively dialogue session on current issues with a panel that included HSEU Advisors Dr Fatimah Lateef and Dr Lim Wee Kiak.

*"HSEU has planned for a long time, to buy a property to operate our union activities as well as an investment but did not have enough resources. We have been very thrifty all these years to achieve it. We are not paying hard cash but we have done our calculations. In line with LM2011, we are also increasing our membership base by intensifying recruitment campaigns and hope to open more branches wherever feasible."*

Mahmood Idrose  
President, HSEU



*"We deliberated on the work plans for HSEU for the next four years. I am very proud to say that the Executive Committee has constructively put the work plans in place. The concerns were mainly on what more could be done for the members. The decision to buy the property makes today special. It is for the future of the union, the future generations. It is somewhere they can call home."*

Diana Chia  
General Secretary, HSEU



## HSEU is Now GST-registered

Effective 1 May 08, HSEU will become GST-registered. However, members will continue to enjoy union membership at no extra cost to them. HSEU will absorb GST on all subscription fees for members. HSEU has decided to absorb the 7% GST to uphold its commitment to deliver real value to its members.



## Word from GS

that with your support, this is possible. We endeavour to reach out to all our members regardless of nationalities and age. In fact, members can continue to join us even after their retirement.

by asking them to join this union. We want to invite all our members to join us as we move ahead. With your support your union can do so much more. Let us strive together towards a better and brighter future for our profession.

HSEU has come a long way but where do we go from here? In view of the long term progress, HSEU has started on the Corporate Planning exercise in the beginning of this year. We have adopted a few dragon boats, one of which will include the Gold Collar – where we would like to attract more Executives and Professionals to join us.

In line with the LM2011, HSEU aims to increase our membership base to 13,500 this year. To do so, we need to recruit another 2,500 members and we know

We have set a hectic pace for ourselves and we will continue to challenge ourselves to do better. HSEU can and will provide more meaningful activities, benefits and services; but it is your support and participation that will indicate as to whether what we have provided is what you want. Get this message to your friends who have yet to become members. Tell them that they should not wait until they have a problem before they join HSEU. There are numerous tangible benefits that they are missing out. You will be doing your non-member colleagues a great favour

We aim to establish a caring, cohesive and progressive union where leaders and members work as a team not only to serve our members better but also to provide quality service to employers and patients. HSEU encourages open communication, constructive management of conflicts and expectations. In our shared HSEU 2011 vision, we hope to have forward-thinking workers in a healthcare industry, consciously and purposefully going for multi-skill training to achieve better productivity in the workplace. In this, we aspire to secure a future for members realising a better life for you and I.

## NTUC Learning Journey to TTSH

Some 60 union leaders attended the NTUC Learning Journey to Tan Tock Seng Hospital on 19 June 2008 to learn more about National Health Group's (NHG) initiatives for the re-employment of older workers.

At the Learning Journey, NHG signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Healthcare Services Employees' Union (HSEU) to implement the provisions and recommendations in the Tripartite Advisory on the Re-employment of Older Workers 2008. NHG also launched its Encore project for older workers, in collaboration with HSEU, the Employment & Employability Institute (e2i) and NTUC Learning Hub.

NTUC gave an update on the good progress made by the Labour Movement in getting unionised companies on board re-employment initiatives. As of end May 2008, 545 companies in the unionised sector have adopted re-employment. Out of these, 7 companies are on Level 4 of NTUC's four-tier framework which tracks the level of commitment of unionised companies towards re-employment. Two of NHG's hospitals – NUH and TTSH - are Level 4 companies.



# Means Testing at Restructured Hospitals

Minister for Health, Khaw Boon Wan has announced the means testing framework in Parliament on 3 March 2008. The details are:

- Patients whose income is \$3,200 and below would receive full subsidy (65% for Class B2 and 80% for Class C)
- Patients whose income is \$5,201 and above would receive 50% subsidy for Class B2 and 65% subsidy for Class C
- Patients whose income falls between \$3,201 and \$5,200 would receive graduated subsidies between 50-65% for Class B2 and between 65-80% for Class C
- Monthly income is defined as average monthly wage based on last available 12-month data
- Patients who are economically inactive will receive full subsidy (65% for Class B2 and 80% for Class C) unless they live in property with Annual Value exceeding \$11,000. The latter will receive subsidy at 50% (B2) or 65% (C)
- Subsidy for Permanent Residents will be 10%-points less than citizens of equivalent income level
- The implementation date at all public hospitals would be on January 2009

## Work Injury Compensation Act

The Work Injury Compensation Act replaces the Workmen's Compensation Act from 1 April 2008.

The coverage and benefits under the Work Injury Compensation Act are applicable to accidents that happened **on and after** 1 April 2008. For accidents that happened before 1 April 2008, the coverage and benefits under the Workmen's Compensation Act will continue to apply.

### Compensation Benefits

Under the Work Injury Compensation Act, an injured employee is entitled to claim the following compensation benefits:

- **Medical leave wages.** These include (a) full pay up to 14 days for outpatient medical leave; and (b) full pay up to 60 days for hospitalization leave. Beyond these two periods, 2/3 salary is payable up to a maximum period of one year following the date of accident;
- **Medical expenses.** These include medical expenses incurred within one year from the date of accident and up to a cap of \$25,000; and
- **Lump sum compensation for permanent incapacity (PI) or death, if any.**

The compensation amount is subjected to the following limits:

	Limits	Amount
Permanent Incapacity	Maximum	\$180,000 x % loss of earning capacity
	Minimum	\$60,000 x % loss of earning capacity
Death	Maximum	\$140,000
	Minimum	\$47,000

Increase in compensation limits

The maximum and minimum compensation limits for all age groups will be adjusted as follows:

	Limits	Workmen's Compensation Act	Work Injury Compensation Act
Permanent Incapacity	Maximum	\$147,000 x % loss of earning capacity	\$180,000 x % loss of earning capacity
	Minimum	\$49,000 x % loss of earning capacity	\$60,000 x % loss of earning capacity
Death	Maximum	\$111,000	\$140,000
	Minimum	\$37,000	\$47,000

# National Heart Centre Branch Inaugural General Meeting

National Heart Centre (NHC) Branch held its Inaugural General Meeting on 17 January 2008. In her address, Ms Diana Chia, General Secretary of HSEU, welcomed the members of the National Heart Centre Branch to HSEU and stressed the importance of the healthcare sector to the social framework of Singapore. They should keep an open mind to continue to up skill themselves to keep up with the progress of the sector.



# Union-Management Engagement Session

The combined Union-Management sessions brought together the management of different institutions i.e. Singhealth, National Healthcare Group, National University Health System (NUHS) and Alexandra Health, allowing a very interactive sharing of challenges, visions and plans for the future from different industry players. This ability to synergise the efforts of various parties is a value-add of HSEU and hints at the potential of larger achievements for the union and the industry.



# HSEU–SingHealth and HSEU–NHG Bursary Grants

Every child's education is important and those who need help must be given assistance to bring out every child's potential to the fullest. At both Healthcare Services Employees Union Bursary Grants Award Ceremonies with SingHealth and National Healthcare Group (NHG) on 12 December and 18 December 2007 respectively, both bursary grants aim to encourage children and to better themselves. "The two bursary grants are a joint commitment between HSEU, SingHealth and National Health Group to encourage children of our union members to excel in their studies. The two joint projects are an extension of caring and sharing to the less fortunate," said HSEU General Secretary Diana Chia.

HSEU-SingHealth and HSEU-NHG bursary grants awarded 439 recipients based on the criteria of per capital income below \$860, academic results and the length of union membership. The primary, secondary and Institute of Technical Education, Junior College and Polytechnic recipients received \$100, \$150 and \$200 respectively. HSEU, SingHealth and NHG contributed \$20,000 each to HSEU-SingHealth and HSEU-NHG bursary grants. Bursary grant recipient and Singapore Polytechnic Media and Communications second year student Sumathii d/o Regunathan, 18, said she thanked the organisers for awarding her the \$200 bursary grant. "I contribute back to society when I don't charge my neighbours tuition fees," said Sumathii.



# NTUC "U Stretch" Vouchers

To help union members and their families partially defray the higher cost of living, the HSEU Welfare Subcommittee has distributed \$35,600 worth of NTUC "U Stretch" vouchers to 712 rank-and-file members from 1 May 2008 onwards. Funded by NTUC, Singapore Labour Foundation and three of NTUC's social enterprises - NTUC FairPrice, NTUC Choice Homes and NTUC Income, these qualified union members can enjoy discounts offered by six participating social enterprises. Valid from 1 May 2008 to 31 December 2008, the vouchers can be used, for example, to offset expenditure on groceries from NTUC FairPrice, school fees at NTUC Childcare Centres and services from NTUC Club, NTUC ElderCare and NTUC Healthcare.

The NTUC "U Stretch" vouchers will enable union members to stretch their hard-earned dollar and in part restore their reduced purchasing power due to higher inflation. Each eligible member will enjoy a discount of 5% off \$1,000 worth of purchases over a period of up to eight months. The projected inflation rate for 2008 ranges from 4.5 - 5.5% as compared to the inflation rate of 2.1% in 2007. The 5% discount will therefore help cushion the impact of higher inflation, especially in food prices, which we are experiencing this year.



## Linkpoints Redemption is now available at HSEU Union Office

Ever since the Healthcare Services Employees' Union (HSEU) introduced a LinkPoints redemption counter, its union office has been swarmed with both members and non-members keen to check out the items available for redemption. This customer-service initiative was started to make it more convenient for members to redeem their Linkpoints. More than 30 members redeem their Linkpoints from the union's redemption counter each month, and the new initiative has also drawn many non-union members. A variety of items are available to suit members' different tastes and the list of items is updated monthly to provide fresh choices for members.



***"Providing member-centric service has always been HSEU's priority and its approach of adding membership value and worth,"*** said Ms Diana Chia, General Secretary of HSEU.

***"Our members get to redeem their LinkPoints at their convenience, and when non-members see this, coupled with the attractive items, they see the added value of joining the Union,"*** added Ms Chia.

## Launch of HSEU Membership Drive 2008

The HSEU Membership was launched on 19 January 2008 at the Scarlet City Ang Mo Kio Hub. Guest-of-Honour Dr Fatimah Lateef, MP for Marine Parade GRC and Member, HSEU Council of Advisors was present to witness the launch. The theme of this year's membership drive is "Growing Membership, Stronger Voice!" There were attractive prizes to be won. From 1 February 2008 to 30 November 2008, a \$5 NTUC Voucher is given for each new HSEU member who joins during this period, with successful GIRO.



## Assistance to Sunlove Home – NUH Branch

NUH Branch has supported the call by Sunlove Home. We have coordinated the collection of old but still useful items from our union members and channelled them to Sunlove Thrift Shop so that they can refresh those items and sell them to raise fund for the home and day-care centre. The project name "Used but useful" that lasted for a month since December 2007 was a great success. Numerous items, some of which include an exercise machine, a toaster, bags, clothes, toys and many others which are still in good condition have been coming in for the past 2 months. It goes to show that our Union members are indeed very generous in giving.

Here is a picture of branch committee members, administrative staff and the staff of Sunlove in the act. The two staff from Sunlove Home came over to collect those items which were required two trolleys to shift them. Sunlove Home and Elder care centre is where those who have chronic mental illness / depression spend time at the step-down care centre to better manage their disease condition. In fact, the centre Manager, Mr Chelvan shared that some of the patients helped to give these used items a new look for sale at their thrift shop. So our small act of care, help and support goes a long way in not only providing an avenue for the Home and Elder care centre to raise fund but also provide an opportunity for these patients to put their mind and skills to work, for a worthy cause.



# HSEU Amazing Youth Race

Of course, all work and no play makes HSEU a dull place. Our members enjoy a slew of activities all year long. Recently, on 21 June 2008, HSEU sent 9 teams for the Amazing Youth Race – a joint event between the youth chapters of Chemical Industries Employees' Union (CIEU), Education Services Employees' Union (ESU), Healthcare Services Employees' Union (HSEU), Metal Industries Workers' Union (MIWU), and United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries (UWEEI). Though the race was gruelling, our young and young at heart racers did HSEU proud by obtaining the 2nd, 6th and 9th and 10th placing.



## Movie Screening

For movie lovers, HSEU ran a special screening of the Chronicles of Narnia – Prince Caspian, drawing a full theatre of more than 200 members who enjoyed the show with titbits and Prince Caspian premiums.



# HSEU NIGHT TOUR



The Young HSEU organised the HSEU Night Tour on 12 May 2008. The event was very well-received by members and their family with an overwhelming response of 49 participants. Besides getting a goodie bag each, participants also stand the chance to win attractive prizes during the night lucky draw at Telok Blangah Hill. Items like the Zen Creative MP3 players were one of the sought after prizes by our participants. The night trip started with a daredevil trip to Old Changi General Hospital, a hearty supper at Changi Village followed by the Ladies' all time favourite shopping at Mustafa Shopping Centre.

Next, we embarked on a brisk nature walk up Telok Blangah Hill where we managed to burn our calories gained from our supper followed lastly by a final destination at Jurong Fishery Port where we had a whiff of fishy potpourri even before we stepped into the port itself. The night ended with a gusty shower of rain but that did not deter our participants from a hard-bargaining with the fishmongers to get a good catch! It was indeed a memorable trip for everyone. A big thanks to the Youth Committee who had made the event a successful one!



# May Day Award

## Comrade of Labour Award

This award is conferred on a serving and deserving trade unionist who has made significant contributions to his / her trade union and is still active in the union's executive council. This year, we are glad to announce that the Comrade of Labour Award has been conferred on our member, Ms Lau Soy Soy. HSEU would like to congratulate Ms Lau for her outstanding achievement and contributions towards the labour movement.



**Ms Lau Soy Soy**  
**Changi General Hospital**

Sister Lau Soy Soy is well-liked among her fellow members. Affectionate, big-hearted and a natural humourist, there is never a dull moment with her around. She is uncompromising in her stance if she deems that workers have been unjustly treated. She is mentor to younger union leaders and is always ready to provide guidance and opportunities for them to develop their leadership potential. Sister Lau was also a union representative in the NTUC Industrial Relations Committee and Healthcare Sectoral Workgroup on Employability of Older Workers. She mooted the idea of the Silver Connection Office with SingHealth management in 2005 which has contributed in engaging older workers.

## Medal of Commendation

This award is conferred on a senior management person who has made significant contributions towards promoting good industrial relations, workers' training and welfare of workers.



**Mrs Karen Koh**  
**Deputy Chief Executive Officer,**  
**SingHealth, and**  
**Deputy Chief Executive Officer**  
**Singapore General Hospital**

Under Mrs Karen Koh's leadership, labour-management relations between SingHealth Group, Singapore General Hospital and the Healthcare Services Employees' Union have been harmonious. There is healthy regard between both parties with constant dialogues and consultations on issues affecting workers. Mrs Koh's support for the Union is tangibly demonstrated with the set up of rent-free fully furnished union headquarters within the Singapore General Hospital's premises. She constantly looks for ways to enhance career progression for her staff. Mrs Koh chairs the Healthcare Sectoral Work Group for the Tripartite Committee on Employability of Older Workers. Among various initiatives, she set up the Employee Assistance Support for older workers and Silver Connection (a term coined jointly with union leaders) in SingHealth in 2006. Silver Connection supports older workers in their personal and organisational development including creating job opportunities for them.

## Plaque of Commendation

This award is conferred on a company that has made significant contributions towards promoting good industrial relations, workers' training and welfare of workers.



**Singapore Health Services Private Limited**

Singapore Health Services Private Limited enjoys a strong strategic partnership with the Healthcare Services Employees' Union. Its proactive and progressive management has taken a lead in supporting the National Trades Union Congress and Healthcare Services Employees' Union's initiatives, especially in the area of re-employment of older workers. Recently, it set up the Silver Connection Office where mature employees can go to for information and advice on staying employable after reaching the retirement age of 62. The strong alliance between the SingHealth Management and union has resulted in fruitful collaborations. These include employing Postnatal Homecare Programme and a joint union-management learning journey to Japan to study its employment system for older workers. Last year, SingHealth started to take into consideration the contributions of branch officials in their performance appraisal. Together with HSEU, SingHealth also conducted a joint salary review of healthcare workers to benchmark against the market. SingHealth supports the HSEU by contributing generously to the Union's dinner and dance, organised to raise money for needy members and building up funds for bursary grants to help members defray the educational expenses of their children.

# MAY DAY MODEL WORKERS AWARDS 2008

At this year's May Day Model Workers Awards, 16 of our comrades did us proud with their excellent performance at the workplace. The management staff of SingHealth and NHG took pains to identify good performers and nominated them for this annual award. The 16 awardees basked in the recognition from their employers and the media, and enjoyed a 5-day tour to Bangkok and Pattaya, Thailand.



## CONGRATULATIONS to our 16 HSEU Awardees!

- Tan Suan Geok Jasmine (Assistant Nurse)
- Anthony Joseph (Pharmacy Technician)
- Yee Ah Nui (Health Attendant)
- Zinnat Ara Husain (Senior Patient Service Associate)
- Lee Li Beng (Administrative Assistant)
- Ng Hoon Kwang (Healthcare Assistant)
- Rama Chhabra (Patient Information Associate)
- Ranjit Singh (Healthcare Assistant)
- Teng Ngwen Hua Lilian (Healthcare Assistant)
- Yeo Ah Lay (Therapy Assistant)
- Fatimah Taha Suhaimi (Senior Enrolled Nurse)
- Ismail Abdullah @ Tan Oh Hai (Healthcare Assistant)
- Loh Siew Luan Mary (Executive)
- Nur Erlina Bte Ibrahim (Ward Clerk)
- Ramasamy Thavamani (Senior Healthcare Assistant)
- Tan Lee Cheng (Senior Enrolled Nurse)

## Gold Collar Outreach

HSEU has been actively reaching out to Gold Collar workers in the healthcare industry. This group includes senior management staff such as CEOs and Directors. Most notably, SGH's Director of Nursing Mdm Lim Swee Hia joined HSEU in March 2008. HSEU hosted a welcome session for her and invited key HR management staff and nursing management staff. During the session, a lively discussion on the benefits of union membership ensued. At the end of the session, SGH's HR Director Anna Fok and HR Deputy Director Ms Esther Tan committed to HSEU membership along with a few other nursing management staff. Deputy Director of Nursing Mdm Tan Ah Pang suggested collaborations between SGH and HSEU e.g. outreaching to trainee nurses before they enter the workplace.

At the recent union-management dialogue session in May 2008, Ms Jacqueline Chin (NHG Deputy Chief Human Resource Officer) pledged her support for HSEU by signing up for membership.



Mdm Lim Swee Hia (SGH Director of Nursing) being welcomed to the HSEU family by GS Diana Chia



Ms Anna Fok (SGH Director of HR) getting to know the benefits before signing up for membership



Ms Jacqueline Chin (NHG Dy Chief HRO) receiving her temp pass from GS Diana Chia

## Bouquets from members

"I'm moving on..." It may be insignificant for some but those words mean so much to me. I have been working in a healthcare institution for 11 years. Being part of the medical team has been such a joyous journey as they have showed me the lighter side of themselves despite their busy discipline. There was never a day where we would not crack a joke or two. I have been a member of HSEU since 2004 after being cajoled by a colleague. I thought nothing to benefit from it except earning NTUC Link Points.

There came a point in my career last year that I faced challenges beyond my ability to cope. These challenges affected my morale. Alas, there are people who cared and listened to my grief with open hearts and understanding. They are none other than our TTSH Branch Union that I initially thought was dormant. Other than support, they also had a vision to guide and help me to overcome the challenges and see that I move forward. I would like to convey my gratitude to Charles and Catherine from our Branch Union for the support that they have rendered. My deepest and most heartfelt appreciation to Dennis Yeoh whom in my opinion, no other representative could have done a better job. He has been very professional and excellent in his duties in following up with updates via phone calls and meetings. Thank you HSEU, thank you Dennis..... I'm moving on.

Letter from member **Nor Adzlela**  
Tan Tock Seng Hospital

"The union is more vibrant than before. It has progressed a lot. And it offers many new benefits to members these days such as the purchase of movie vouchers at low price, tickets. Thank you for offering us so much subsidies and benefits throughout the year. Keep up the good work :)"

Email from member **Sok Hong**  
SGH-Allied Health Division

## Certified Recruiters' Summit

The Certified Recruiters' Summit was held on 12 April 2008 to honour branch officials who have been actively recruiting members for the past year. The 2 Day / 1 Night summit held at a seaside kelong in Tanjung Pinang was an interesting and engaging one. The summit was a lively and interactive one. Through presentations and games, the participants developed a better understanding of HSEU's membership drive. They then brainstormed for ideas focusing on the key areas of membership for the year. Some participants have also expressed that it was meaningful to attend the summit as they felt it allows quality interaction among active recruiters.



## Certified Recruiters' Course

The course was held on 15 March 2008 and subsequently on 30 May 2008.



## Branch Activities

### KKH Branch Members' Nite

KKH Branch organised her first members' nite for her members on 12 March 2008. About 100 members and guests attended the fun-filled party. KKH's own crooners belted out several numbers including a self-penned composition from Nasrin. Lucky draw winner Chin Wai Yong walked away with top prize, a home entertainment system. CEO Prof Ivy Ng, COO Tan Jack Thian, DN Lee Heng Pheng and Director HR Chua Pek Khim also graced the occasion with their presence.



### TTSH Recruitment Roadshow 22 February 2008



### Changi General Hospital Genting Tour 11 January to 13 January 2008



### IMH Recruitment Roadshow 24 April 2008



## Coming your way

### Young NTUC Celebrates National Day 2008 Flag Formation

Date : 9 August 2008  
Venue : Padang

### Union Fame Awards 2008 / 2009

Open for Registration: 10 June 2008  
Closing date : 30 August 2008

### Inter Branch Bowling

Date : 31 August 2008

### Mahjong Competition

Date : 11 October 2008