



AGEING EXPERTS TO BRING OXFORD UNIVERSITY GERONTOLOGICAL EXPERTISE TO SINGAPORE

New programme by the Oxford Institute of Ageing and Council for Third Age (C3A) to help build capacity in the seniors sector

Singapore, 14 September 2009 – Gerontological practice in Singapore has received a boost from the renowned multidisciplinary Oxford Institute of Ageing (OIA), known for its cutting edge gerontological research and training programmes. The C3A-OIA Active Ageing Programme is modelled on the OIA's Spring School, and is the first time the course is being offered outside of England.

The programme was launched this evening by Mr Lim Boon Heng, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Minister-in-Charge of ageing issues.

Speaking at the launch, he called the partnership between C3A and the OIA a "much needed boost to the gerontological scene."

"Gerontology is relatively new, but in developed Western countries, the huge increase in the elderly population has led to this becoming one of the most rapidly growing fields. In Singapore, gerontology is in its infancy, so I am glad that C3A has taken a number of proactive steps – of which this is one – to nurture and develop the gerontological movement. For policymakers and practitioners, the findings and insights of gerontologists will provide us with a solid grounding upon which to base our policies and programmes," Minister Lim added.

The three-day programme, which will take place until 16 September 2009 at the Pan Pacific Singapore, will see Professor Sarah Harper, Director of OIA, and Dr George Leeson, Deputy Director of OIA, address a broad spectrum of ageing-related issues, including healthcare models of the future, implications of the greying workforce, and the impact that technology will have on work and care environment.



The Oxford team also includes Mr Kenneth Howse, whose work covers intergenerational equity and ethics, Mr Jaco Hoffman, who researches into community housing designs for older people; and Ms Angelika Kaiser, an expert on grant management.

A highlight of the programme will be a workshop on **Singapore in 2030: Different Demographic, Family and Health Scenarios**. Drawing on findings from the OIA's Global Ageing Study and The Future of Retirement Study, a series of reports produced for HSBC, this interactive session on **16 September 2009 at 1.30pm** will see the Oxford team presenting alternative futures for Singapore in 2030 and engaging participants in a scenario-planning exercise. The C3A-OIA Active Ageing Programme is attended by 33 professionals from private and public sectors, non-government organisations and academics.

Explaining the decision to bring the Oxford programme here, Professor Harper said, "The success of the OIA's Oxford Spring School resulted in many requests for more such programmes internationally. It became clear to us that Asia, and in particular, Singapore, had a large demand for such training. We decided to explore the possibility of taking the OIA School abroad for the first time. We see that Singapore is very advanced in its planning for its upcoming older population and we are delighted to work with policy makers, researchers and practitioners here in Singapore to ensure that Singapore approaches its forthcoming demographic shift well-planned."

"The partnership with the Oxford Institute of Ageing is the most significant milestone of the Council's Knowledge Networking on Ageing Programme (KNAP), a networking platform for people to share experience and information on active ageing and gerontology," said Mr Gerard Ee, Chairman of C3A.

"There is a need to help NGOs, senior interest groups and other key stakeholders build up their capacities, especially given how rapidly Singapore is ageing. The Council for Third Age recognises that society in its entirety needs to adjust and adapt to the changing demographic landscape. And there is an urgent need to equip future professionals and leaders with the skills and knowledge to lead the way in making those adjustments. As an authority in global ageing issues, the Oxford Institute of Ageing will be an invaluable partner in helping to accomplish that," added Mr Ee.



Since its inception in May this year, a number of events have already been organised under KNAP. These include forums as well as a public consultation exercise. Other conferences and workshops are in the works.

Next month, C3A and the Institute of Policy Studies will present the Asian Gerontology Experience Symposium: A Multidisciplinary Symposium on the Gerontology Landscape in Asia. C3A is also organising a major conference on intergenerational bonding with the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes in April next year.

For more information, visit www.c3a.org.sg/oxford

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For further information on the C3A-OIA Active Ageing Programme, please contact:

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About Council for Third Age (C3A)

Set up in May 2007, Council for Third Age is an independent body that promotes active ageing, so that seniors can achieve a better quality of life in all the six dimensions of wellness – social, intellectual, physical, vocational, emotional and spiritual. The Council plays a leadership role in driving the thrust towards creating an active ageing culture in Singapore, and partners businesses and community organisations to develop products and services that fulfill the aspirations and interests of seniors.