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NTUC HEALTH LAUNCHES SINGAPORE'S FIRST EVER WALKING FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR SENIORS, REDEFINING ACTIVE AGEING THROUGH SPORTS



The football stadium at Our Tampines Hub was abuzz with excitement as more than 400 seniors from NTUC Health's network of 25 Active Ageing Centres (AAC) cheered on their teammates in the finale of Singapore's first-ever walking football championships for seniors.

Since November 2024, some 200 seniors from 19 NTUC Health AACs have taken part in more than 50 training sessions, guided by Coach Dr Dee Dee Mahmood, Director of Walking Football4Health Global (WAF4H). Along the way, they have built not just skills and stamina, but also a strong sense of teamwork and camaraderie. The top four teams, each representing a different AAC cluster, competed in this finale event - complete with warm-up showcases, tele-matches, and a thrilling championship match.

Ms Chan Su Yee, CEO of NTUC Health, said: "We believe life can be rich and fulfilling at every age. Growing older shouldn't mean giving up the things that bring us joy. In particular, we have seen how competitive sports can energise seniors in a way few other activities can! With thoughtful adaptations like walking football, we aim to build a community where seniors can stay active and enjoy the lasting benefits of movement, camaraderie, and spirited play."

Said Dr Dee Dee Mahmood: "Healthy seniors are crucial to the well-being and prosperity of a nation. At WAF4H, we believe in the transformative power of sports for all. Our collaboration with NTUC Health on Walking Football for seniors reflects our commitment to health, promoting active lifestyles among seniors for better quality of life. Walking football isn't just a game; it's a way to foster social connections, enhance health and mental well-being, improve mobility and independence for seniors. This partnership aligns perfectly with WAF4H's mission for sports accessibility and inclusivity for all. Together, we're proving that fitness and fun have no expiration date!"

Mdm Woo Chu Lon, 69, from AAC (Care) (Jurong Central Plaza), added: "Participating in walking football has significantly improved my strength and stamina. I feel lighter on my feet and less fatigued after exercise. It's made it easier for me to stay active throughout the day and take part in other activities I enjoy."

Building Connections Through Sports

In addition to these benefits, seniors also had the opportunity to expand their social networks, as the initiative brought together participants across NTUC Health’s network of AACs across the West, East, South, North, and Central regions—reflecting our borderless approach to ageing and community-building.

Mr Joseph Noel Lawrence, 68, from AAC (Care) (Pasir Ris Central), shared: “When I first heard about walking football, I honestly thought it was a joke! But after watching a few videos online, I realised it was something I could actually do. I’ve loved football all my life, so I decided to give it a try. It’s helped improve my mobility, given me a reason to stay active, and even introduced me to new friends like Manjeet from AAC (Heartbeat@Bedok).”

Supporting More Seniors to Age Well

This initiative is supported by the FUN! Fund, a set up by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) and Community Foundation of Singapore (CFS), with contributions from various donors. The FUN! Fund empowers Community Care organisations to create joyful, engaging and new activities for seniors – encouraging them to explore different interests and stay meaningfully engaged, and facilitated by Walking Football4Health Global (WAF4H). The Football Association of Singapore (FAS) also generously sponsored the use of Our Tampines Hub for the finals.

Mr Chew Chun-Liang, General Secretary of the Football Association of Singapore, who graced the finale event, shared: “We’re excited to support this meaningful initiative that brings football to the wider Singapore community. It’s heartening to see seniors embracing the sport with such passion and positivity. The success of this walking football pilot has laid the groundwork for plans to grow the sport within the senior community.”

“We are glad that NTUC Health has tapped on FUN! Fund to create new opportunities for seniors to have fun,” said Mr Chern Siang Jye, Assistant Chief Executive Officer of AIC. “Through the FUN! Fund, 50 community care providers have rolled out 30 innovative programmes to create more fun for seniors.”

Over the next two years, NTUC Health will expand its network with the opening of eight new Active Ageing Centres across Singapore, bringing the total to 27 centres islandwide. Close to 9,000 seniors were engaged through their active ageing programmes last year.

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Walking Football Media Factsheet

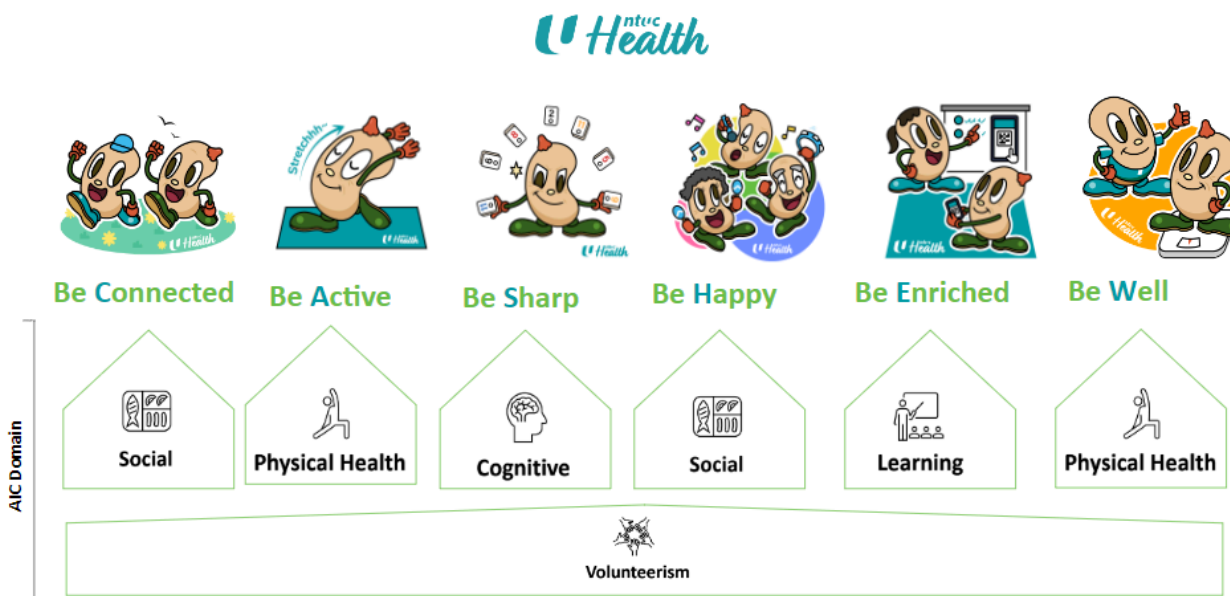
Overview

NTUC Health’s focus has always been to enable seniors to age well and not just to have their physical care needs met. For instance, we believe in encouraging seniors to be ageless, to exercise independence and choice, and to have a positive mindset where they continue to have a passion for life and learning as they age.

We also believe in the importance of holistic well-being and our programmes at our active ageing centres are designed along our CASHEW framework to ensure that all aspects of ageing well are included. NTUC Health runs the largest network of AACs. Last year close to 9,000 seniors were engaged through our active ageing programme and by the end of this year, we will have a total of 27 active ageing centres across the island.

What is the CASHEW framework?

The CASHEW framework was developed by NTUC Health to ensure that our active ageing programmes address the different aspects of ageing well. It stands for Be Connected, Be Active, Be Sharp, Be Happy, Be Enriched, and Be Well. This aligns well with AIC’s five key domains of social, physical health, cognitive, learning and volunteerism.



NOTE: Communal dining is a mandatory programme, under the Be Happy pillar (Social pillar under AIC domain).

Across our Active Ageing Centres, we want to empower seniors to adopt an active and healthier lifestyle through participating and volunteering in active ageing programmes. We aim to foster greater social connectedness amongst seniors living in the community - to step out of their comfort zones to try out new things.

Be Connected - empowering seniors to be socially healthy by providing opportunities for them to build meaningful relationships, strengthen social ties and contribute to the community.

Be Active - promoting physical health by engaging seniors in regular exercises, reducing the risk of chronic diseases.

Be Sharp - fostering cognitive health by stimulating their minds and enhancing their creativity.

Be Happy - curating fun programmes that allow seniors to enjoy and celebrate life, enhancing their overall positivity and mental wellness.

Be Enriched - offers a wide range of workshops such as robotics and coding, language classes, to promote lifelong learning.

Be Well - health-focused programmes encourage seniors to develop good eating habits and a balanced lifestyle, enabling a healthy and fulfilling life.

NTUC Health Active Ageing Centre — Walking Football Championships

The finals of NTUC Health's AAC first-ever Walking Football initiative will take place at Our Tampines Hub on 22 April 2025, where about 35 seniors will compete for the top spot. This event marks the culmination of six months of dedicated training and spirited sessions, bringing together over 200 seniors across our Active Ageing Centres (AACs) to build fitness, teamwork, and friendly competition.

A total of 19 NTUC Health AACs from across Singapore—West, East, South, North, and Central—have been actively involved in this initiative. Since November 2024, seniors have been training diligently, taking part in more than 50 walking football sessions to steadily improve their skills, stamina, and coordination.

More than 400 seniors across our network of 25 AACs will join us in spectating the finals. Four top teams from different clusters will face off in a thrilling competition, featuring warm-up showcases, tele matches and the ultimate grand final showdown. This action-packed event celebrates the competitive zeal of our seniors while showcasing the transformative impact of active ageing

through sports.

More about walking football

Walking football is a modified version of the sport designed to be less physically demanding while emphasising fun and inclusivity. It is particularly suited for older adults or those with limited mobility, ensuring that they can stay active in a safe and enjoyable way. In this variation, players are only allowed to walk, and physical contact is kept to a minimum. Running is not permitted, heading the ball is prohibited, and the ball must remain below hip height at all times. These rules help to reduce the risk of injury and strain while maintaining the spirit of the game.

Beyond its physical benefits—such as improving cardiovascular health, balance, coordination, and muscle strength—walking football fosters social interaction and camaraderie among players. The initiative aligns seamlessly with NTUC Health’s borderless AAC concept, promoting inclusivity and a sense of community among seniors.

Funded by the Fun Fund! (supported by the Agency for Integrated Care and the Community Foundation of Singapore), Fun!Fund donors and supported by WalkingFootball4HealthAsia (WAF4H), this initiative has been well-received by seniors across our AACs. The Football Association of Singapore (FAS) has also generously sponsored the venue for the finals at Our Tampines Hub.

We aspire to establish an annual seasonal Walking Football Premier League across our AACs, further championing active ageing through sports and fostering a vibrant community of senior athletes.

About NTUC Health Co-operative Limited

NTUC Health Co-operative Limited (NTUC Health) is an NTUC social enterprise that provides a comprehensive and integrated suite of quality and affordable health and eldercare services to meet the growing needs of families and their dependents. Building on close to three decades of experience and expertise, NTUC Health is among the largest providers of active ageing, senior day care, nursing home, and home personal care services in Singapore. We also serve vulnerable seniors in selected areas in Singapore through Community Case Management Services (CCMS), CREST mental health support, and a sheltered senior group home. In addition, we run a family medicine clinic.

Our purpose is to achieve 'health for life'; enabling healthy and fulfilling years by being a trusted partner of seniors and their families in our community.

For more information, please visit ntuhealth.sg or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Services: Senior Day Care | Home Care | Nursing Home | Active Ageing and Senior Fitness | Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy | Family Medicine

Community Support: CCMS (Community Case Management Services) | CREST (Community Resource, Engagement and Support Team) | Henderson Home

职总保健合作社简介

职总保健合作社是全国职工总会所属社会企业，提供全面且综合的优质、可负担的安老和医疗保健服务，以满足每户家庭日益增长的需求。凭借近三十年的经验和专业知识，职总保健合作社是新加坡最大的活跃乐龄、乐龄日间护理、疗养院和居家护理服务提供者之一。

我们也通过社区个案管理服务 (CCMS)、邻里咨询小组 (CREST) 的心理健康支助、和年长者合居型居室等，为新加坡特定地区所需要的年长者服务。此外，我们还经营一间全科医疗诊所。

我们的目标是实现“终身健康”，通过成为社区中乐龄人士和家属信任的搭档，助力他们度过健康和充实的年华。

欲知更多详情，请浏览 ntuhealth.sg 或关注@NTUCHealth在面簿和Instagram。

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