

# Project Vitalize

#07-13

Multi-Year Project

## **Members:**

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## **Section I: Overview**

### **Area of Concern**

Diabetes is widely prevalent in Singapore today. Prime Minister Lee's stated in his National Day Rally speech in 2017 that 1 in 9 Singaporeans have Diabetes and Singapore has the 2nd highest proportion of diabetes in Asia. Increasing affluent lifestyles and unhealthy eating habits, has led to a spike in blood sugar levels, manifesting in many associated health related issues, such as Diabetes. From a survey we conducted on 140 youths, we found that there was a lack of awareness on how to combat Type 2 Diabetes, ways to leading an active lifestyle, as well as knowledge of organisations which provide help and assistance regarding diabetes. Through our survey, we also concluded that youths had numerous misunderstandings regarding diabetes as a disease. In addition, being cognizant of the many diseases stemming from diabetes as well as rising healthcare costs, there is a pertinent need to step in to prevent the issue from escalating.

### **Challenges Identified**

Our beneficiary, Diabetes Singapore (DS) provides medical and psychological support for diabetic patients through the Diabetes support group. They operate and rely on public funding, hence there is a restriction of their services and activities. This has become such a prevalent issue that DS has had to close down one of its only two centres due to the lack of finances, and hence has limited outreach to diabetic patients because of its location.

### **Underlying Problem**

Given the lack of understanding of diabetes, coupled with an increasingly affluent lifestyle Singaporeans have, has led to a growing proportion of people diagnosed with diabetes and increasing stigma against it, how might we be able to educate both youths (13-18) and senior citizens (>50) alike to reduce the chances of developing diabetes and the health issues associated with it through leading a healthy lifestyle and a better nutrition whilst raising awareness for DS and its services?

## **Section II: Implementation of Action Plan**

We have improved this project from last year with much emphasis on education and clearing misconceptions pertaining to Diabetes. Instead of focusing on organising many large-scale events to have outreach with the public, we focused more on cultivating a healthy and preventive lifestyle against Type 2 diabetes to ensure that youths would not fall into the category of pre-diabetes if their eating habits were not kept in check.

To ensure the best plan of action, we adopted the thought process

1. How can we raise awareness and funds for Diabetes Singapore, which provides services for diabetic patients?
2. How do we promote leading of healthy lifestyles to reduce the chances of Type 2 diabetes amongst the general public?
3. How can we dispel the misconceptions that youths have with regard to diabetes and correct the false mindsets?
4. How can we educate youths to lead a preventive lifestyle against diabetes?

### **Action Plan**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Events</b>
<b>Step 1: Laying the Foundation</b>	
November - January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Liaising and meeting with DS</li><li>● Recruitment of 150 man-strong Organizing Team members and volunteers</li><li>● Introduction of project and group on Instagram</li><li>● Goal setting to ensure clear and achievable aims</li></ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Sourcing for sponsors for relevant logistics for future events</li><li>● Meetings with DS</li><li>● Diabetic Support Group Interaction Sessions<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bonding with DSG members</li><li>○ Gained insights about their lives and the disease itself</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Step 2: Planning and Organization</b>	
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Interviews with Diabetes Singapore's Chief Nurse to gain a deeper understanding of unaddressed impacts of diabetes</li><li>● Preliminary survey on 100 youths</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evaluating ideas based on cost-benefits and feasibility</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acquired funding through Youth For Causes and Young Change Makers Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Seed funding of \$1600 and \$3000 respectively</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Meeting with Health Promotion Board discussing feasibility of targeting pre-diabetes and a target group study</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Designing our original merchandise for Streetsales</li> <li>● Sourcing for talented performers for street busking</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sponsorship from Gongcha</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3: Implementation</b>	
February - April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborations with Diabetes Singapore in community outreach, managing exhibition booths or providing manpower at events such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community Centre Outreach @ Bishan CC</li> <li>○ Health Carnival @ AMK Hub &amp; Pasir Ris CC</li> <li>○ Diabetes Singapore Event at Heartbeat@Bedok</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
February - August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Events and initiatives were publicized through our Instagram page</li> <li>○ Interview transcripts with diabetes patients were publicized with interviewees' consent to share their stories and experiences</li> <li>○ Instagram page peaked at 1,447 followers and 5062 profile visits over a week</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
April - July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Walks with DS' Diabetes Support Group (DSG) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hindhede Nature Park and Kampong Lorong Buangkok</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exhibition Booth @ Hwa Chong Open House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Estimated outreach of 500</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Streetsales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 32 Sessions of Streetsales organised to raise funds for Diabetes Singapore around Singapore at Jurong East, Changi, Bishan, Bugis and Somerset</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An estimate of \$11000 was raised</li> <li>● Street Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Busking Sessions at Junction 8 and 313@Somerset</li> <li>○ Infographics and posters displayed</li> </ul> </li> <li>● SGA &amp; Keppel Club's 9-Hole Walkathon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Solicited donations and engaged participants with games and posters that drew attention to the issue of diabetes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● #zeropercentsugar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Initiated a social media challenge for students to buy a cup of milk tea with zero percent sugar</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Run for Gongcha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 350 participants walked 10,000 steps in a single day to redeem a free cup of Gongcha at the Hwa Chong - Nanyang Combined Sports Meet</li> <li>○ Exhibition booth at Hwa Chong - Nanyang Combined Sports Meet</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diabetes Talk to migrant workers at Project Integrate's Sports Carnival</li> <li>● Featured in Diabetes Singapore Newsletter Issue Q4</li> </ul>

## **Section III: Project Outcomes**

### **Accomplishments:**

We have garnered public support for our events, as shown by the high turn up at events and likes on our pages. We conducted interviews to get feedback from participants and learnt that they enjoyed the event, as well as ways for improvement. We have raised an estimate of over **\$12000** for DS and reached out to over **17500** people so far.

### **Reflections on Outcomes:**

Through this project, we have not only learnt about the plight of Diabetes, but also the increasing social stigma accompanying it. We have also learnt and felt the Hwa Chong spirit resonate strongly within us, given that without the support of the school as well as alumni who had provided us with multitudes of sponsorships for our events, our project would not have been able to be as successful as it is. In hindsight, whilst we might have been able to interact with our beneficiary Diabetes Singapore, as well as its patients, what we have realised is that those who we have interacted with are those who have already undergone years of controlling their blood sugar and diet, and those who truly need help, are unlikely to come forward. With the increasing number of youths in Singapore having diabetes, we would be working together with the next batch of members to streamline the project and make it more targeted, to achieve greater success.

### **Scope of Impact:**

#### ***Outreach***

Alongside our events that we have organised, our social media presence and initiatives have also increased the number of people that we were able to reach out to throughout the course of this project. The talks and booths that we organised at Community Centres (CC) (Bishan CC, AMK CC, Pasir Ris CC) were able to reach out to the elderly in these housing estates. We were able to briefly introduce them to the threat of diabetes and more importantly teach them how to lead a healthy lifestyle through their dietary habits and also exercise. Through these events, we were able to reach out to more than 2,500 people.

With our social media presence, we were able to reach out to more than 10,000 youths, aged 13-18 with our Instagram page, where we posted informative posters and also clips of interviews that we had conducted with the numerous stakeholders involved in the fight against diabetes, including the Head Nurse of Diabetes Singapore, Ms Bhuvan, a type 1 diabetic and also Michael, a type 2 diabetic. Through our Instagram page, we managed to spread the stories and messages of these individuals to our followers and allow them to gain a deeper insight and understanding into the lives of diabetic patients.

### ***Interaction***

Beyond just outreach alone, we have organised events which were able to ensure interaction with our target audience - the diabetic patients. This was through the bi-weekly Diabetes Singapore walks, held in collaboration with the Diabetes Singapore Support Group. Through the past interactions with the diabetic patients, we were able to learn more about their fight against diabetes and how we as youths are able to prevent it. Their sharings and insights into their experiences proved to be beneficial for our volunteers who have embarked on these walks with us.