

# What is ComCare?

ComCare refers to the Community Care Endowment Fund that has been set up by the Government to address the socio-economic needs of needy Singaporeans and their families.

***"The social safety net must be more like a trampoline - springy enough to help people bounce back and take advantage of opportunities for a better life, so that they do not need to rely solely on the Government."***

***Extracted from a Speech by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth & Sports at Committee of Supply Sitting, 2005, 10 March 2005***

## Aims of ComCare

To provide more help for needy Singaporeans by:

- Setting up new schemes that equip and enable needy Singaporeans and their families to achieve self-reliance.
- Decentralising the administration of social assistance to community organisations such as CDCs, CCCs and VWOs, who are closer to the ground and able to better understand people's needs.
- Giving community organisations more flexibility in giving help where it is needed, taking into account special circumstances faced by needy Singaporeans and their families.
- Streamlining social assistance schemes, and making the process for rendering help simpler and more efficient.

## Principles of ComCare

- a. Build **self-reliance**
  - Emphasise **mutual obligation, not entitlement**. Individuals should be prepared to help themselves.
  - Provide **assistance, not welfare**.
- b. **Family** should remain as the **first line of support**
  - Individuals should first rely on family support.
- c. Adopt a **Many Helping Hands** approach.
  - Additional help will come from community groups and organisations such as Community Development Councils, grassroots organisations, Voluntary Welfare Organisations and self-help groups.

*“ComCare is different because of its strong focus on helping all our residents to be self-reliant and stand on their own two feet. In other words, we will teach our residents to fish as best as they can, instead of serving them fish on a platter. I see the greatest strength of the ComCare concept is its flexibility. CDCs and grassroots organisations will be able to shape programmes around local needs.”*

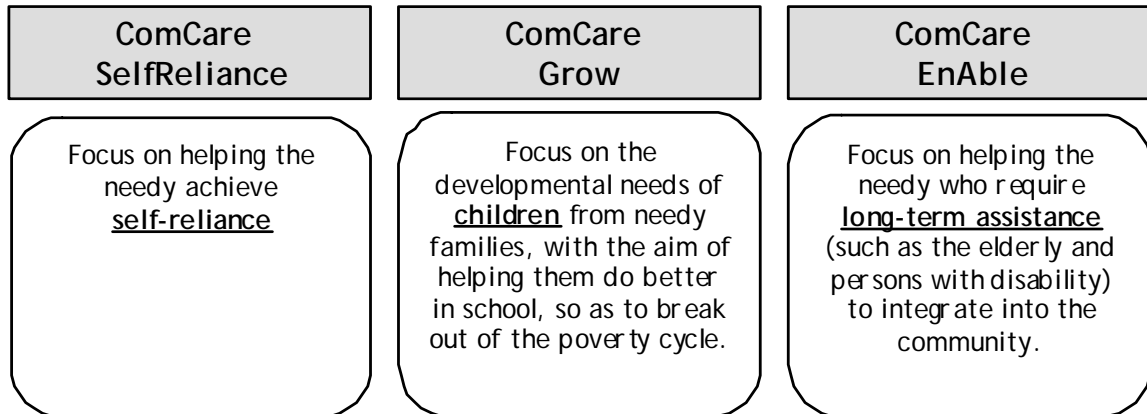
*Matthias Yao, Mayor, South East District*

## ComCare Funding

The ComCare Fund is an endowment fund. It will provide a regular and sustainable source of social assistance funding. It will have an initial capital sum of \$500 million. Over time, the Government will build up this capital sum to \$1 billion.

## The 3 Pillars of ComCare

Under ComCare, social assistance schemes will fall under 3 key pillars, namely ComCare SelfReliance, ComCare Grow and ComCare EnAble, which are targeted at needy individuals, children as well as the elderly and people with disabilities.



## Simplification of schemes and processes

Under ComCare, the various schemes will be reviewed and rationalised. Where possible, eligibility criteria and other aspects of the schemes will also be streamlined. There are also efforts to make the delivery system more effective and efficient.

A Central Database will be set up for screening purposes and to enable various service providers to share basic data on the clients. This would help speed up the processing of applications.

## ComCare is about greater community involvement

Greater focus will also be placed on decentralising social assistance. Hence, CDCs, grassroots organisations and voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) will have a greater role and be in the frontline of providing social assistance.

## **More Flexibility for CDCs and CCCs to Help the Needy**

ComCare will provide the Citizens' Consultative Committees (CCCs) with the resources and flexibility to help needy residents.

Administered by the Citizens' Consultative Committees (CCCs), the CCC ComCare Fund gives CCCs the flexibility to help genuinely needy residents who might not get any assistance otherwise. The fund can be used to help needy residents either in cash or in kind.

Application to the CCC ComCare Fund will commence on 1 July 2005. Application forms are available at all the Community Centres and Clubs. Needy residents can also approach their grassroots leaders for advice. The applicant must be a Singapore citizen or permanent resident of Singapore (PR). If the applicant is a PR, at least one of the household members must be a Singapore citizen. The CCCs will assess the needs of the applicants based on their individual circumstances, and determine the assistance to provide.

## **Funding for Pilot Programmes**

Under ComCare, \$10 million will be set aside to fund pilot programmes or starting up programmes. Grassroots Organisations (GROs) and Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) can propose new pilot programmes and ComCare will help provide the initial funding.

## **Pilot Programmes under the ComCare Fund**

The pilot programmes that ComCare will fund should plug existing service gaps, or improve current schemes so as to better address the needs of their beneficiaries. Some pilot programmes to be funded under ComCare include:

- (i) ComCare Meals-at-Home for Homebound Elderly – A programme under ComCare EnAble
- (ii) ComCare Therapy @ Home - A programme under ComCare EnAble
- (iii) ComCare Silver Connect - A programme under ComCare EnAble

MCYS will also be re-positioning its Social Enterprise Fund into a ComCare Enterprise Fund that will help provide seed money to fund sustainable enterprises in the community that help needy Singaporeans and families. Such assistance could either be in the form of providing jobs for needy Singaporeans, or in the form of programmes that benefit needy Singaporeans.

## **Managing ComCare**

ComCare will be managed by a **Supervisory Committee** that oversees ComCare and functions as the approving body for funding of programmes.

The Members chosen represent the broad range of agencies and organisations which work with needy Singaporeans and their families. They were also chosen on the basis of their expertise and leadership role in the community.

The Supervisory Committee consists of:

- Minister of State for Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) – Chairperson;
- Mayors of the 5 Districts;
- Permanent Secretary (MCYS);
- Chief Executive Director of People’s Association (PA);
- the President of National Council of Social Service (NCSS); and
- Leaders from Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) dealing with needy children, elderly and people with disabilities.