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MEDIA RELEASE

CHARITY COUNCIL LAUNCHES SHARED SERVICES INITIATIVE (ISERVE)

Charities and Institutions of a Public Character (IPCs) in the social services, health and sports sectors can now look forward to a shared services platform to outsource their corporate functions in a pilot project launched by the Charity Council.

2. Called iServe, the shared services platform aims to enable charities, IPCs and National Sports Associations (NSAs) to outsource their finance and account management tasks to a professional third-party service provider. This would enable the charities, IPCs and NSAs to better focus their attention and resources on delivering core services and programmes to their beneficiaries. With the help of the shared pool of professional resources, these organisations would also be able to further improve their internal controls and processes.

3. As a start, iServe will focus on attracting charities and IPCs in the social services, health and sports sectors. Nevertheless, charities and IPCs in other sectors may also sign up for the service if they wish. They can also apply for funding support of 75 percent of the monthly cost of the service from the Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) – Charities Capability Fund (VCF) Shared Services Grant in the first year, followed by 50 percent and 25 percent of the monthly costs in the second and third year respectively.

4. Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports Dr Vivian Balakrishnan announced the launch of iServe to representatives from over 200 charities, IPCs and NSAs this evening. In his address, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan said that improved governance in charities and IPCs could lead to better accountability to donors and the public, even though administrative costs may rise accordingly. He said, “This project for shared services for charities and IPCs will help elevate standards of governance and lower costs as they focus on their core competencies and maintain public confidence.”

5. Mrs Fang Ai Lian, Chairman of the Charity Council also noted that the initiative would relieve charities from administrative procedures, and allow them to focus on direct service provision and governance. It would also allow smaller charities to tap onto professional services at competitive costs.

6. The service provider for iServe is ST Electronics (e-Services) Pte Ltd, which was selected through an open tender exercise conducted by the Charity Council Secretariat earlier this year.



The CHARITY COUNCIL

10 September 2009

About the Charity Council

The Council was set up in October 2006 to promote a culture of good governance and self-regulation in the charity sector. It seeks to be a:

- i. **Promoter** – to encourage adoption of good governance standards and best practices, and to enhance public confidence in the charity sector;
- ii. **Enabler** – to help build the governance capabilities of charities to enable them to comply with regulatory requirements and to enhance public accountability of charities; and
- iii. **Advisor** – to advise the Commissioner of Charities (COC) on key regulatory issues where there may be broad-ranging impact on the charity sector.

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