

redcross⁺

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A newsletter by the Singapore Red Cross

Celebrating volunteerism by co-creation

An International Volunteer Day
inspired by beneficiaries



contents



On The Cover – International Volunteer Day

(From far left) Red Cross Home for the Disabled resident Goh Quan Yao with Red Cross volunteers Kristine Gale Choa and Lareita Seet Mei Ling



(From left) Models Dorothy Leong and Jasmine Sim strut their stuff at the fashion runway show.

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sec gen's note

In the rat race to climb the corporate ladder or accomplish good grades in school in a highly competitive society like Singapore, we can easily overlook those who have fallen through the cracks in our society. Yet, we must never forget our mission to lift the lives of the most vulnerable in our community.

In January this year, 400 Singapore Red Cross (SRC) volunteers, comprising mainly our youth, banded together to conduct Project R.I.C.E. This annual initiative touches the lives of disadvantaged families with the gift of rice during the festive period (Page 9).

Project R.I.C.E is just one of several ways that we can do our part for the vulnerable in our midst. Most of us are in a position to give in one way or another. We want to encourage more volunteers, supporters and donors to come forward to contribute their time, skill-sets or resources to enhance and enrich the lives of the disadvantaged.

Recent surveys have shown that more people are volunteering or donating resources. But they volunteer or contribute on an adhoc or episodic basis due to their hectic work or school schedules. While we welcome all volunteers, SRC's programmes have to go on based on the established schedules regardless of the challenges faced.

To effectively sustain the reliability and effectiveness of the SRC, we need a pool of regular volunteers and donors who have incorporated volunteerism and regular donations as part of their lifestyles. Such volunteers and donors are passionate about the cause and committed to contribute. Many in turn, inspire their families and friends to contribute as well. Collectively, we can run our local humanitarian services and programmes effectively in a more sustainable manner.

You may have also observed that our newsletter has adopted a brand new look. We are embracing a more lifestyle-based approach to appeal to our various stakeholders and to stay relevant and interesting.

We are excited to introduce to you some new sections. 'Looking Back' highlights events over the last few months. This includes the International Volunteer Day (Pages 4&5) and the Overseas Humanitarian Project by Red Cross Youth – NTU Chapter (Page 6).

'Snapshots' provide a pictorial look-back of various events like Charity Golf and Truly Magical Christmas (Page 8).

'Live the Life' features interesting snippets of people involved in the SRC in one way or another. In this issue, we showcase good buys of MediaCorp Suria artiste, Ms Rilla Melati Bahri at our Weekend Sale (Page 10).

'Wellness' includes health tips and essential skills such as tips on creating a safe home (Page 12 &13), caring for dementia patients (Page 22), first aid kit essentials (Page 14) and ensuring a successful blood donation (Page 15).



'Insights' provide in-depth analysis and comments on various issues. Find out why in-kind donations could become a "disaster after disaster" (Page 16) and the changing face of conflicts in the world (Page 17).

With 'Close to Heart', we share personal experiences of people impacted by the SRC, such as Mr Ho Fook Onn, our TransportAid beneficiary (Page 23).

We all have noble aspirations to serve humanity. But none of us can go it alone. We need partners, volunteers, donors, and supporters who can join us in our journey to serve humanity and save lives. If you have already joined our SRC family, we thank you and we hope you will continue to inspire more to follow in your footsteps. If you have not joined us, we would like to extend an invitation to you to join us in our humanitarian mission. Together, we can achieve a lot more to serve the vulnerable in our midst.

Mr Benjamin William
Secretary General, Singapore Red Cross

(From far left) Red Cross Home For The Disabled resident Goh Quan Yao with Red Cross volunteers Kristine Gale Choa and Lareita Seet Mei Ling

Disability Doesn't Stop Creativity

By Jasmine Lim, The New Paper

RCHD residents collaborate with designers for fashion show

It started with a simple idea to make clothes for the Red Cross Home For The Disabled (RCHD) residents.

They have problems with regular clothes because of their unique body structure.

The idea then evolved into a creative collaboration between the residents and designers for a clothing line featuring artwork by the residents.

And the idea developed — catwalk models will showcase 21 unique pieces at a fashion show and auction tomorrow for International Volunteer Day, which celebrates and inspires the spirit of volunteering.

After her Red Cross basic training in first aid in March this year, Miss Kristine Gale Choa, 21, saw the potential in the residents' artwork.

The Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts' Fashion Studies diploma holder and three classmates made 10 pieces of clothing in September.

When more designers joined in, they created a total of 21 pieces.

The 11 designers are from different walks of life and made time to help.

One of them, Ms Lareita Seet Mei Ling, 21, was juggling two part-time jobs during the project.

The designers visited four RCHD residents with multiple neuromuscular and cognitive disabilities, spending about five to six hours with them each time.

The designers would then focus on the artwork which sparked their creativity and incorporate it into a piece of clothing.

"We never knew what to expect at each visit," said Ms Choa.

Mr Christopher Sng, 57, painted the trimmings of a black jacket, holding the paintbrush with his mouth.

Mr Goh Quan Yao, 21, used his fingerprints for a pattern on the same piece of clothing.

Ms Lim Bee Choo, 47, helped to dye yarn that was inserted into a colourful jacket.

"It's tiring but worthwhile because they can actually make a lot of things," said Ms Seet, who added that one of the challenges was to help the residents, who are easily distracted, stay focused.

The clothes will be auctioned off during the event tomorrow and proceeds will go to local Red Cross community services such as the RCHD, FoodAid and TransportAid.

Ms Seet is keeping her fingers crossed for the show to be a success.

"It's tiring but worthwhile because they can actually make a lot of things."

Designer Lareita Seet Mei Ling on working with the Red Cross Home for the Disabled on the project

Source: The New Paper © Singapore Press Holdings Limited.
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International Volunteer Day with a Difference

Fashion runway inspired by disabled beneficiaries

Singapore Red Cross celebrated International Volunteer Day (IVD) on 5 December 2013 with an inaugural fashion runway show. Co-created by beneficiaries and volunteers, the fashion runway show presents a meaningful visual treat for volunteers.

Twenty-one unique couture pieces, designed specially for this event were put up on a silent auction at Star Vista where all proceeds will go to Singapore Red Cross' local humanitarian services.

More than 300 people – volunteers, staff, beneficiaries were present at the Star Gallery of Star Vista to 'do what we do best for humanity', the theme of IVD 2013.

Held on 5 December, International Volunteer Day promotes the spirit of volunteerism, inspiring more to take up the challenge of helping to improve the lives of others.



Many thanks to all who made this possible!

Leaving Footprints Abroad

By Lee Xin Yi

Red Cross Youth – NTU Chapter's Lee Xin Yi shares her experiences on a 10-day trip in Vietnam in this journal.

It took us three months to prepare for the trip. Yet, as we were boarding the flight to our destination on 11 December, we did not anticipate the challenges we may face. Nor did we fathom that team members who were mere acquaintances could bond so well over the next 10 days. We just kept an open mind for what was to come.

We were on a 10-day trip to a small district of Dinh Lap in Lang Son Province Vietnam to set up a water filtration system in Dinh Lap Primary School, as part of our Overseas Humanitarian Project (OHP). Our 16-member team from Red Cross Youth – NTU Chapter reached our destination at noon without major hiccups. Our activities were to start the next day.

When we got up the following day, we were shivering; partly with excitement and partly from the cold. Our breakfast was Pho, a delectable bowl of noodle soup that gave us much sought-after warmth. We then trooped off to the elementary school, pleasantly surprised to be greeted by the children's cheerful smiles.

The day started with some hiccups. We realised that the worksheets and activities which we had meticulously prepared did not meet the expectations of the teachers, who were looking forward to a curriculum-based lesson.

We quickly made amends. Our team then taught as per the schools requirements. After lunch, the Red Cross Youth – NTU Chapter OHP team conducted the first aid lesson for all Grade 4 students at a play corner in Dinh Lap Primary School.

The next day, despite the lack of sufficient liaison officers, we managed to pull through a series of intensive English lessons for Grade 3, 4 and 5 children. With the help of the English teachers from the school, we communicated with the children in simple English and body language.

Just as we surmounted those initial challenges teaching the children English and first aid, more challenges awaited us on another front. The engineers working on the water filtration system informed us that they were unable to commence the work until their boss checked the place as per their norm.

Yet, despite this, our programmers overcame their initial stumbling blocks and the day ended well. Our teacher advisor, Dr Chan, smiled proudly and joked that one of our team members, Yibo was eligible to receive a 'degree' in early childhood education!





After a fun-filled evening, we retired, lost in a reverie. We were eagerly anticipating the food tasting and cultural exchange to be held the next day.

Our team woke up early at 5am the next morning. We prepared the ingredients, washed the pots and prepared milk tea, Tom Yum soup and bat kut teh; selections from the Singaporean cuisines.

We also brought biscuits to accompany with Nutella, Kaya and Nacho Cheese. The food tasting session came along with cautious nibbling, loads of gobbling and changing of facial expressions as the food tastes went from sweet to sour.

Later, we distributed stationery kits, toothbrushes and toothpastes to the kids, much to their delight. With the toothbrushes, we taught them the importance of hygiene.

Sunday found us all armed with hoes and shovels. We laid out a road for a needy family. After lunch, five of our team members distributed gifts to the needy families.

Dinh Lap Primary and Secondary Schools' Water Filtration System

The drilling works at the construction site commenced and progress could be seen. The team helped to conduct site surveys, move bricks and ensure that everything ran smoothly.

Time flew by so quickly when we were enjoying ourselves. We had all grown emotionally attached to everyone in Dinh Lap.

It meant so much to us to know that the Principal of Dinh Lap Primary School appreciated the work we did for the school. She said, "This project brings fresh water to my students and teachers in the school. I hope that in the future, there will be many projects like this one coming to other schools in Dinh Lap as well as Lang Son."

In the blink of an eye, it was 20 December. We woke up at 4am, had a bowl of Pho for breakfast and headed to Noi Bai International Airport for the journey back home.

Overall, the trip was an enriching and enlightening experience for all of us. It was enriching as we derived happiness in our ability to contribute what we could to enhance the lives of others. It was enlightening as it broadened our horizons and provided us with precious learning experiences. Not only did we learn much from the planning, preparation, implementation and post event evaluation of such humanitarian projects, we also learnt how to adapt in the face of challenges and to plan contingencies prior to the trip. This experience will undoubtedly pave the way for more humanitarian projects that will add colour to our lives in the future.



Collecting Memories

In celebration of our 65th anniversary, we are looking for 65 people with Red Cross memories to share. Fulfilling your childhood ambition working with the Red Cross?

Married to the person whom you marched alongside during your cadet days?

Experienced an incident that changed your perspective of life?

Please email to srcheritage@redcross.org.sg and we will be in touch.

Charity Golf

More than S\$300,000 was raised at the Singapore Red Cross Charity Golf at the Singapore Island Country Club on 16 October 2013. We would like to thank the organising committee, all golfers, donors and sponsors for contributing to our local humanitarian services.



Emergency Blood Exercise

An Emergency Blood Exercise was held on 27 October 2013 to test the preparedness of the Health Sciences Authority and the Singapore Red Cross to meet a surge in national blood demand during a civil emergency. Held at Bloodbank@HSA, Bloodbank@Dhoby Ghaut, Bloodbank@Woodlands and Bedok Community Centre, the one-day intensive collection exercise collected 1,298 units of blood, surpassing the target of 1,000 units.



Charity Draw

Held on 3 December 2013, the Red Cross Charity Lucky Draw 2013 raised more than S\$76,360 for our local humanitarian services. We congratulate all the winners and thank everyone for your generous support in making 'Count Your Blessings' Red Cross Charity Lucky Draw 2013 a success.

Photojournalism Forum

More than 70 volunteers and staff gleaned photojournalism tips at an entertaining and enriching forum held on 6 November 2013 at Red Cross House. Panelists Carlo Heathcote, Leo Simon, Neo Xiaobin and Stephanie Yeow (the latter two from The Straits Times) were generous in sharing their insights to build the capacity of the Singapore Red Cross volunteers.





Project R.I.C.E 2014

Organised by Red Cross Youth, Project R.I.C.E 2014 raised over 97,000kg of rice for beneficiaries during the festive period, surpassing its target of 30,000kg. More than 8,000 bags of rice were distributed by 400 volunteers to the beneficiaries on 25-26 January. The remainder will be distributed to beneficiaries by April 2014. We thank Sheng Siong Supermarket Pte Ltd and all partners and friends involved in this initiative.

Sharing About Volunteerism

Our volunteers, Sendhil Annamalai and Jayamani Overithi and our colleague, Gayathri R.Muthukrishnan were invited to share their views on volunteerism in Singapore on the current affairs talk show Kannottam 360 S2 on MediaCorp Vasantham on 15 January.



Christmas at Red Cross Home for the Disabled

National Taxi Association employees and Red Cross Youth – NUS Chapter members brought joy to the residents of our Home with caroling, dance and skit performances on 7 and 8 December 2013 respectively.



Truly Magical Christmas

A total of 396 units of blood were collected at the 'Truly Magical Christmas' blood drive held on 20 and 21 December 2013 at Bloodbank@Dhoby Ghaut and Bloodbank@Woodlands. This annual blood drive is organised by the Red Cross Youth – SMU Chapter in an effort to boost blood donation during the season of giving.

Shopping with a Star

By Linus Long

Photos by Mr P. Y. Chia

It would have been just another lovely, sunny morning on the hilly crest of 62 Jalan Khairuddin save for the buzz in the air. Since 9am, an expectant queue had already formed at the entrance of the Red Cross Training Campsite and Shop@RedCross.

Is it the Great Singapore Sale? No! It can only be - the Weekend Sale of the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) on 12 October 2013!

Ms Kartini Saat of the Singapore Red Cross, volunteer photographer, Mr P. Y. Chia, and yours truly were present to receive our celebrity guest, Ms Rilla Melati Bahri of Mediacorp Suria.

Looking radiant and glamorous as always, one would not have guessed that Ms Rilla barely had a voice after recovering from flu. Ms Rilla had her son, Nadim, 12, in tow, to de-stress after the most uniquely Singaporean rite of passage - the PSLE. Nadim wanted to look around in the toys section while Ms Rilla hoped to, in her own words, find herself "something vintage".

It was a most enjoyable day for the shoppers, and the team that made the Weekend Sale possible. Ms Rilla had gleefully found her vintage items and even has her mind set on coming back for the vintage mirror hanging in the shop. We saw many happy shoppers wearing big grins on their faces having gotten themselves some great bargains.

We would like to thank all the Red Cross staff and volunteers who were there to set up the merchandise for display in the early morning and to dutifully assist the shoppers thereafter. Special mention should also go to UPS volunteers who were out in force for the event. As one of them mentioned, it is their corporate philosophy to encourage staff to do volunteer work for charities every year. We hope the spirit of volunteerism can be kept burning bright with the ongoing support of volunteers, without whom none of this would have been possible.

Finally, we hope our readers can spread word to their friends and family about how they can help raise funds for a good cause by doing their shopping at Shop@REDCROSS. If you missed it this time, see you at the next one!

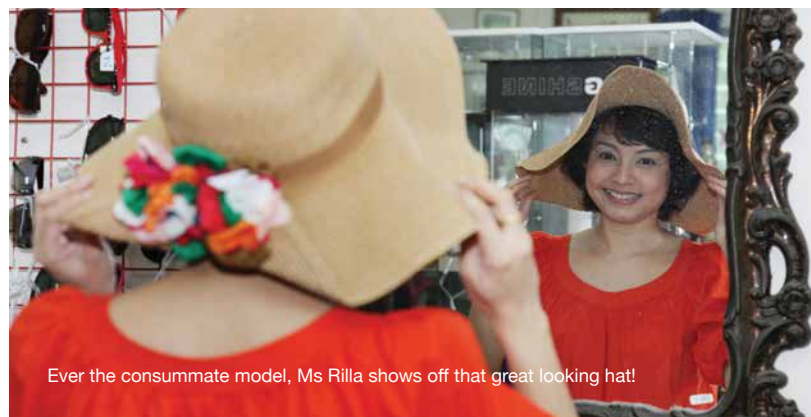
Shop@RedCross is now open in the heart of town! Visit us at Red Cross House, 15 Penang Lane, Singapore 238486 every Wednesday from 10am to 4pm for some great deals!



Ms Rilla Melati Bahri all decked out in her new found loot



Ms Rilla and her son pose for the 'paparazzi'



Ever the consummate model, Ms Rilla shows off that great looking hat!



CONNECT AND HELP SAVE LIVES

The Red Cross Connection is a network of blood donors and volunteers set up to help ensure Singapore has enough blood for those who need it. Join in, share your passion and save lives!

SHARE THIS!

Receive and share alerts when blood is needed



Locate your nearest blood bank



Donate blood and release the hero within



6 LIVES SAVED
SINCE 2011

Track your donations and number of lives saved

Download the Red Cross Connection App today



- 1 Simply scan this code or visit redcrossconnection.sg for more information, or download the application for iOS at the app store.
- 2 Use the in-app scanner to scan the code from the Red Cross Connection posters at our blood banks to check in.
- 3 Start donating, saving lives and sharing your activity with your friends!



Have a Safe Home

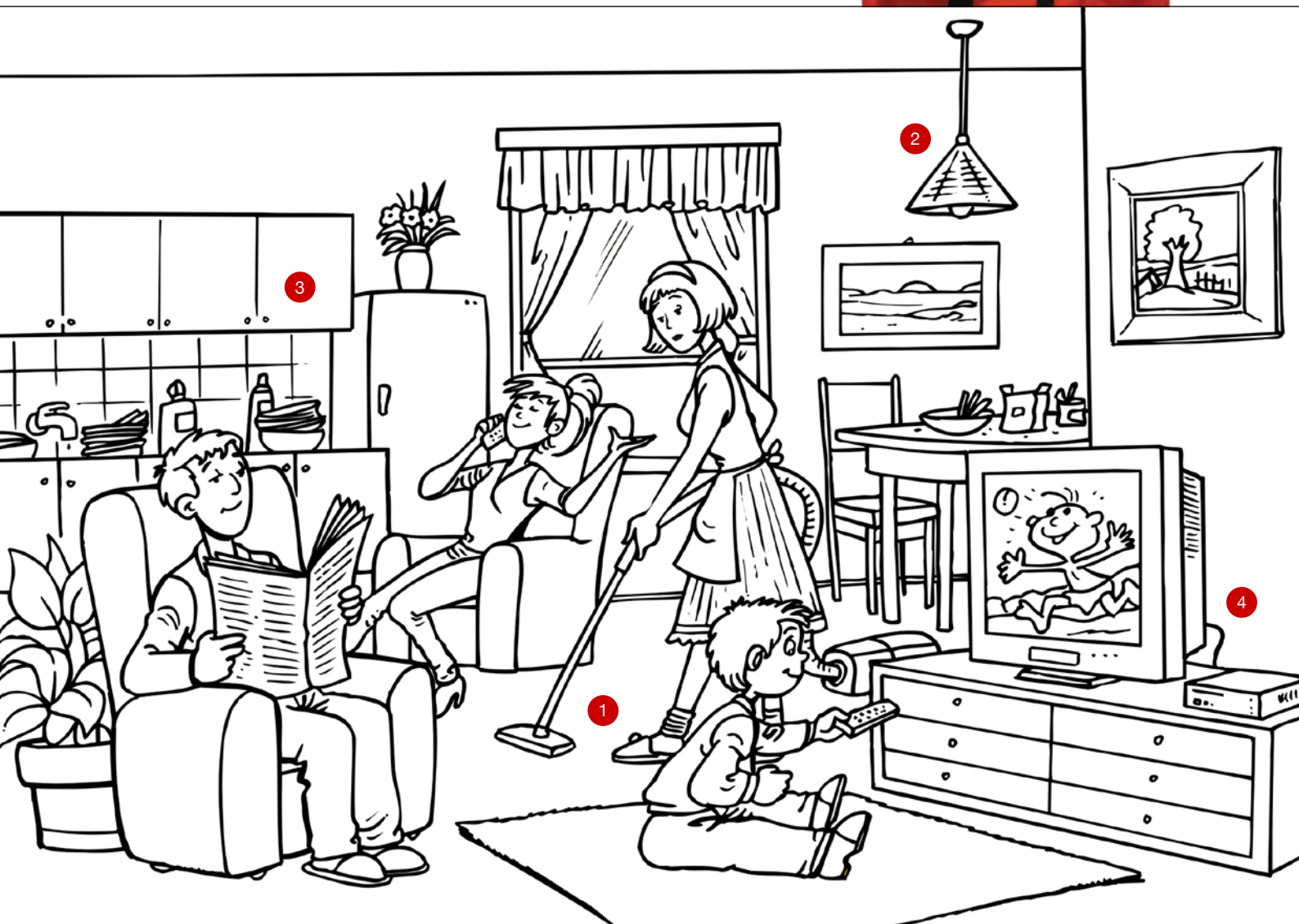
By Stephen De Souza, Senior Training Instructor,
Singapore Red Cross Academy

Accidents can happen any time and anywhere, especially where we think it's the safest – at home. Indeed, seemingly innocuous floors may cause accidents if they are wet. In the best case scenario, the person gets a bruised bum, but in bad cases, there may be fractures or cuts. The worst – the paralysis of a loved one. Hence, it is important to keep the home safe to protect our loved ones.

This checklist will help you identify potential dangers in your home and address them accordingly.



Mr Stephen De Souza



1

Floor

Potential Risk: Falls

Remove all loose mats or ensure they are firmly secured.

A slip resistant backing mat will stick to the floor and will stop the mat from sliding when you step on it.

Keep your floor dry at all times to prevent slipping on wet surfaces.

Stack magazines and newspapers and keeps items such as toys or shoes off the floor.

Tuck phone cords on walls or under carpets or rugs. Secure them so that they are out of walk ways.

Wipe floor surfaces dry. Put a carpet with a non-slip underlay over polished floors.

Lighting

2

Potential Risk: Falls

Use bulbs which are over 60 watts.

Move to a brighter area in your home or install lamps.

Ensure that entrances, stairways, and rooms are well lit.

Ensure that the carpet covering the steps are well secured and hand rails are not wobbly.

3

KITCHEN

Potential Risk: Cuts, Burns and Scalds

Using a blunt knife or holding a knife improperly may result in a kitchen accident if great pressure is exerted and the knife slips. Angle the knife away when cutting food so you won't injure yourself.

Protect against cuts by storing knives in a knife holder or putting a cork on the point of all sharps.

Be careful around heat sources.

Turn pot handles inward to prevent hot pots from being knocked onto the floor.

This also keeps them out of children's reach.

Hold the pot handle with a pot holder when you are stirring the pot.

Keep young children out of the kitchen while cooking.

Move flammable materials such as newspapers, paper towels and pot holders away from kitchen flames or stoves.

Be cautious of chaos.

Preparing a meal very quickly leads to spills which can lead to accidents.

Stay organised while cooking.

Clean up the mess or spills as you go to prevent accidents.

Always stay close by when cooking flammable substances such as oil or fat.

If they catch on fire, never use water to put them out.

Try to cover small fires with a wet cloth or use a fire extinguisher.

Always store a fire extinguisher in the kitchen.

Set the oven at the correct temperatures when roasting or baking.

Get it repaired if it is not working properly.

Remove items from ovens and microwave ovens with oven mitts.

Open covered microwave items slowly and away from you, allowing the steam to escape safely.

4

ELECTRICAL

Potential Risk:

Electric Shock, Death

Keep electrical cords away from water sources. Replace any shredded, broken or exposed electrical cords. Install circuit breakers to help prevent any electrical accidents.

First Aid Kit Essentials

By Stephen De Souza,
Senior Training Instructor,
Singapore Red Cross Academy

To handle common emergencies at home or in the public, you will need the right “tools”. A well-prepared first aid kit can save you time and money as you need not rush to consult a doctor for common injuries. To determine the size, form and contents of the kit, you will have to ascertain the usage of the kit and the number of people it has to be used for.



ITEMS	PURPOSE
1 Digital thermometer	For measuring body temperature
2 Cotton buds	For applying medication
3 Cotton wool or swabs - preferably sterile	For cleaning wound or as an absorbent
4 Crepe roller bandage - a few different widths	To hold dressings in place and to immobilize joints during sprains
5 Disposable gloves	To prevent infection/contamination
6 Face shield/CPR pocket mask (not in picture)	For mouth to mouth breathing
7 Gauze and non-adhesive dressing pads - preferably sterile (they come in all sizes).	As dressings or extra padding to cover wounds
8 Medicated plasters or adhesive dressings in assorted sizes	For covering small cuts and scrapes
9 Scissors - preferably curved scissors	For cutting gauze, dressings or cutting the clothes of a casualty in an emergency. Curved scissors are great as they don't have sharp points.
10 Medical adhesive tape	For securing bandages and dressings. Paper tapes are preferred as they can be torn by fingers instead of scissors.
11 Tweezers with easy-to-grip handles	To remove splinters
12 Triangular Bandage	To hold dressings in place and to immobilize joints during sprains
FOR EXTERNAL USE ONLY	
13 Antiseptic solution, cream or ointment (not in picture)	As an antiseptic for minor cuts and burns
14 Calamine lotion or stings and bites cream	For skin rash and insect bites
15 Cold pack	These are so useful for burns, bruising, swelling and sprains
16 Normal saline solution (not in picture)	For cleansing of wounds
17 Eye drops (not in picture)	For minor eye irritations

OTHER POINTS TO CONSIDER:

1. Check expiry dates of medication and replace outdated items in the first aid kit.
2. Store the first aid kit out of the reach of children who might play with it.
3. Learn how to use the items in the first aid kit. Familiarise yourself with the first aid manual.
4. Keep your first aid manual with the first aid kit at all times.
5. Your first aid kit should always be kept in an area where it can be easily found and accessed.
6. If you have not undergone a first aid training course, it is strongly recommended that you enroll in a first aid course to equip yourself with the necessary knowledge and skills.
7. Go through the list to decide on the items and amount that you may use frequently. Add others when you need them and buy small amounts to reduce wastage.

Maintaining Healthy Haemoglobin Levels

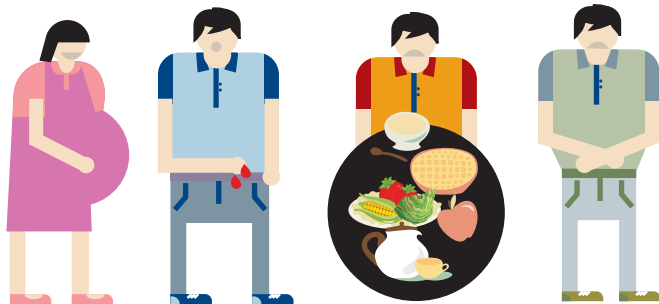
What is Haemoglobin?

Haemoglobin is a specialised protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen (O_2) to the tissues and return carbon dioxide (CO_2) from tissues to the lungs. Each haemoglobin molecule carries four haem groups which in turn contains iron. Therefore, iron is essential for the manufacture of haemoglobin.

What Causes Iron Deficiency Anaemia?

Iron deficiency anaemia is the most common cause of anaemia worldwide. The development of iron deficiency anaemia varies with age and sex.

Four most common causes are:



Haemoglobin Level and Blood Donation

Haemoglobin level is always tested before a blood donation. This is usually done using a simple fingerprick test. Donors must have a haemoglobin level of at least 12.5mg/dl before they can donate blood. This is to ensure safety of the donor as frequent blood donations without sufficient replacement of the iron can lead to **iron deficiency anaemia**.



Source: Health Sciences Authority

What is Iron Cycle?

An average diet contains about 10mg - 12mg of iron per day. Of which, about 10% (1 - 2mg) is absorbed.

About 0.5 - 1mg of iron is lost per day and it is caused by:

1. Shedding of cells from digestive tract
2. Growth of hair and nails
3. Excretion in urine and sweat

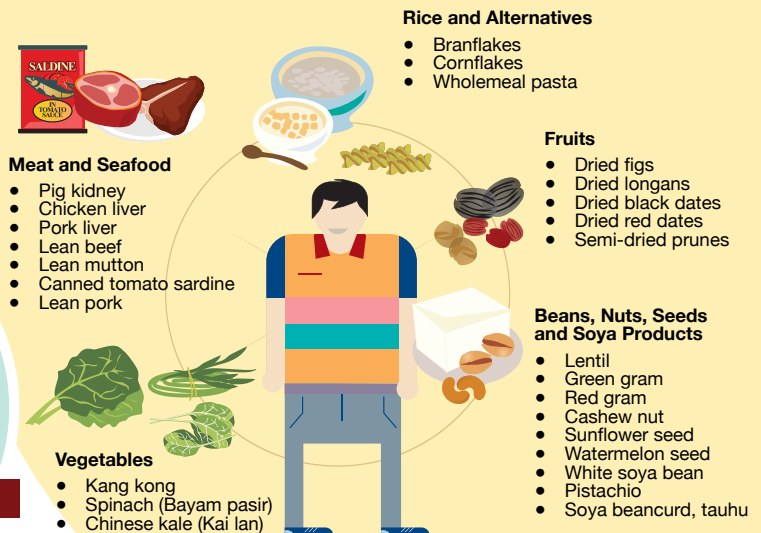
67% of the total body iron is contained in the circulating haemoglobin and is re-utilised for the production of haemoglobin after dead of red cells.

Females lose an additional 0.5 - 1mg of iron per day during the menstrual cycle. Therefore, to compensate for the loss, their daily iron requirement is twice the amount required by males.

How can iron Deficiency be prevented?

It can be prevented by eating a well-balanced diet that includes iron-rich foods. Iron from meat and seafood can improve iron absorption for non-meat and seafood sources by consuming them together with food and liquids rich in Vitamin C.

The following foods are ranked according to the iron content, from the highest iron content to the lowest per standard amount.



In-kind Donations – A Disaster After Disaster?

By Sahari Ani, Director of Services, Singapore Red Cross

We are often gripped to the core when we watch clips of disasters on the news. When Super Typhoon Haiyan swept everything in her path, our hearts went out to those who have lost everything. We want to do our bit to help. And we started thinking of what they would need. Flashlight? Medicine? Warm clothing? Food? What we fail to realise is, more often than not, in-kind donations hamper rather than help the relief efforts.

FOOD

Food donations are not encouraged as there are many considerations to take into account; the dietary preferences of the disaster-hit country, the expiry dates, storage conditions, the manpower and time required for the inspection, organisation, repackaging and the distribution. Cash donations are preferred as food appropriate for the locals can be purchased more quickly from within the country. This helps to revive the local economy of the disaster-hit nation.

MEDICINES

Donation of medicines/pharmaceutical products is not encouraged as the medicines may not be relevant to the emergency situation, to the disease pattern or to the level of care that is targeted. Medicines donated may be unknown to local health professionals and patients or may not comply with local policies or standard treatment guidelines. Some donated medicines come under trade names that are not registered for use in the recipient country and without a generic name on the label. There is also a need to consider the remaining shelf life of the medicines and the required documentation.

Disaster relief agencies and first responder units are usually well-stocked with the provisions to manage a medical crisis. When there is a need, they will work directly with drug companies and medical suppliers to get the right supplies to the right place.

CLOTHES

Boxes of clothes hinder rather than help the recovery efforts. Boxes of mixed clothing need to be sorted by size and type, cleaned in some cases, repackaged and deployed to those who need it most. If there is insufficient manpower to sort all the donations, the clothing may quickly fill warehouses or end up in the landfill with the rest of the disaster debris.

BLANKETS

Blankets may hamper the clean up efforts. Monetary donations will be more efficiently spent if blankets are bought directly from suppliers within the disaster-hit country. This will also indirectly help to boost the economy of the disaster-hit country.



In-kind donations are not encouraged due to logistical considerations associated with freight related issues. Besides the need for permit, there may be delays in clearing the items at the airport due to influx of donations from all over the world. If there is a delay, a fine may even be imposed. That is after deploying extensive resources to collect, sort and pack at the initial stage.

Monetary donations are encouraged because the money can be used to purchase items more quickly at other unaffected areas within the country, thereby enhancing flexibility in Singapore Red Cross' response coordination at this critical time of need.

The Changing Face of Conflict



Photo Courtesy of the International Committee of the Red Cross

The face of conflict is increasingly more complex than it was a century ago and it calls for changes in the way humanitarian aid is propagated and delivered.

The key regional and global challenges facing the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were highlighted by ICRC President, Dr Peter Maurer at a public lecture held at Orchard Parade Hotel on 20 November 2013. Jointly organised by the Singapore Red Cross, the Centre for International Law (CIL) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the public lecture was on 'Global Humanitarian Action Today – The Red Cross Perspective'. It was moderated by CIL Chairman, Emeritus Professor Tommy Koh.

At the public lecture, Dr Maurer outlined ICRC's role and highlighted the evolving complexity of key regional and global challenges the ICRC is facing today and how the institution is responding to those challenges while remaining faithful to its principled and accountable approach.

One of the challenges facing the ICRC today is the multi-layered today's humanitarian crises. The combination of food, fuel, financial crises and unemployment presents challenges in today's humanitarian landscape. In addition, the nature of armed violence is changing. With the blurring of lines between criminal violence and armed conflict, there is a proliferation of new actors. Furthermore, new technologies and cyber warfare e.g. cyber attacks against transportation systems, airport controls and nuclear power plants may result in significant casualties and damage.

To add to the series of problems, host states are actively impeding or controlling humanitarian response on their territory. Donor states and host states clearly want humanitarian action to contribute directly or indirectly to their own national interests, posing challenges to upholding humanitarian principles. Other challenges include the increasing difficulty in distinguishing between the combatants who may be lawfully attacked and the civilians who are protected against attack under IHL and the violence against healthcare facilities and personnel.

The ICRC has instituted some measures in response to such challenges. These include advocating respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL), enhancing accountability for violations of IHL, and highlighting the humanitarian consequences of using certain weapons. The ICRC also advocates the adoption of a strong Arms Trade Treaty, engages more diverse stakeholders, strengthens and develops partnerships with various partners (Red Cross and Red Crescent societies within the Movement, United Nations and international NGOs). Other ways include strengthening relationships with more states worldwide and investing more in the workforce.

Dr Maurer was on a two-day visit to Singapore at the invitation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, Mr K. Shanmugam under the International Organisations Distinguished Visitors Programme (IODVP). During his visit, Dr Maurer also visited the Red Cross Home for the Disabled and the Red Cross House where he met volunteers and staff for an interactive dialogue.



Humanity amidst Adversity

It is an irrefutable fact that sometimes, the best of humanity is unleashed in times of great adversity. Typhoon Haiyan clearly bears testimony of this.

The most powerful typhoon ever to make landfall in recorded history, Typhoon Haiyan has left a trail of destruction across nine regions of the Philippines when it struck on 8 November.

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC) had launched a fundraising appeal and the Restoring Family Links service to enable families to trace the fate of their loved ones, in addition to delivering S\$200,000 of emergency supplies. Over the span of a month, SRC deployed one advance and three medical response cum psychosocial support missions to Ormoc, and supported large-scale relief operations mounted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the International Committee of Red Cross, across the affected areas in the Philippines. By January 2014, SRC has received over S\$10.7 million in public donations.

The outpouring of compassion and generosity has been immense. People from all walks of life have banded together for a common cause – to provide aid to the survivors of Typhoon Haiyan. Here, we share the experiences of some of our esteemed volunteers who were deployed to the Philippines.



Ms Doreen Tan, member of the Haiyan advance team which distributed food relief supplies in Mahayhay and Malapascua."

"The survivors had to worry about where their next meal came from. Some ate the flesh of spoilt coconuts. One of them could no longer sell coconuts because all the trees were destroyed by the typhoon. She said, 'I am not crying anymore as there are no more tears left to shed.' As I reached out to give the villager a hug, she burst into tears. At that point, I started crying too. I realised that the villagers felt the pain of their loss and what life used to be, every moment of the day,"



"We saw how those who are affected by natural disasters cope with what we take for granted at home: shelter, food water, sanitation and telecommunication. A disaster zone frees us from our comfort zone, presenting the realities of our world, reminding us of what really matters in our lives."

< Mr Chew Lip Heng, member of the Haiyan advance team which distributed food relief supplies in Mahayahay and Malapascua

Dr Vivien Lim, member of the first medical relief team that > was deployed to Ormoc from 20 to 29 November 2013.

Challenges faced:

"Some of the common conditions we saw include respiratory diseases, musculoskeletal injuries and infected wounds. Every day, we had to set up our makeshift clinic in different places. Logistics was a major issue that we faced running mobile clinics because there was no central relief hospital. There was no way for us to set up an operating theater at a mobile clinic. We had to improvise as best we could."

Memorable experience:

"We were having a meal in a cafeteria when we saw two female street urchins, younger than 10 years old, being shooed away from the café. We gave them the remainder of our food. They scurried away and hid somewhere to tuck into the food ravenously. It was a heartbreaking sight. There were only two of them, but we knew that there were countless others whom we could not help."



By Chloe Tan,
Corporate
Communications
and Marketing

Amid the rubble and chaos left behind by the unrelenting storms of Typhoon Haiyan, a badly damaged and torn Philippine flag was what caught Chris Leong's eye.

Chris was part of the Singapore Red Cross' second medical mission team that was deployed to Barangay, Philippines to provide aid to survivors of the disaster. Like many others who have been to ground zero, he witnessed the roofless homes, shattered shanty towns, damaged infrastructure and traumatised survivors.

Two things, however, was more salient to him than others - the patriotism and resilience of the Filipinos.

Recounting his experience, Chris noticed that signs carrying the words 'Bangon Ormoc', which in their language means 'rise up Ormoc', could be spotted everywhere.

"If you meet any Filipinos or talk to any of them about their country, they speak with pride," he said.

Cognizant of Filipinos' patriotism and resilience during times of difficulty, the tattered and torn flags stuck out like a sore thumb to Chris.

"I see the flag as a sign of hope and a symbol of solidarity. Since I cannot provide them with cars and houses, I want to give them an unscathed flag that they can stand before in unity," he said.

It was this motivation that gave rise to a memorable and meaningful event during the team's visit to a school in Barangay where the national flag in the compound was blown away by the winds of the super typhoon.

"I went to buy a new flag and gave it to the students. It was something

small but it can mean a lot to them, especially during this period where the slightest glimpse of hope can be very inspirational," Chris explained.

There was an unspoken solidarity as the students hoisted the flag to the peak, gathered around the flag pole and began to sing the national anthem together. The singing of the national anthem was emotionally rousing as it uplifted the spirits of the survivors who were determined not to let adversities like Typhoon Haiyan bring them down.

Standing among the students, Chris and the team saw a perfect flag that was flying against the backdrop of a city in ruins, a glimpse of hope of a better future and the indomitable human spirit at its finest.

S\$10 million raised for

Rebuilding efforts in progress

Three months after Typhoon Haiyan made landfall in central Philippines, Singapore Red Cross (SRC) has raised more than S\$10 million in donations.

An initial sum of approximately \$750,000 was disbursed during the emergency response phase in December while up to S\$2.5 million of the total funds collected has been committed to the first batch of rebuilding and rehabilitation projects in the current recovery phase. These projects will benefit numerous communities in several provinces affected by Typhoon Haiyan. The remaining fund will be committed to additional projects in the coming months.



The first batch of rebuilding and rehabilitation projects includes:

1) Bantayan Island (Cebu) – commenced in January 2014

Distribution of shelter materials (zinc sheets and umbrella nails) and jerry cans as well as construction of six community water filtration systems. These projects will benefit the entire island's population of 200,000.

The following projects, commencing from February 2014 are:

2) Busuanga Island (Palawan)

Reconstruction and/or construction of three health stations, enhancement and equipping of one medical centre, provision of two ambulances and improvement of three community water supply systems, reconstruction of three schools as well as rebuilding livelihoods (agriculture). These projects will benefit Busuanga's 22,000 residents.

3) Leyte Island

Rehabilitation of a Day Care Centre, distribution of shelter material (zinc sheets and pegs), back-to-school programme which focuses on stationeries and nutrition, livelihood projects

through microcredit programmes, and the construction of a school. These projects will benefit more than 2,000 people.

4) Iloilo

SRC will focus on rehabilitating two schools in Iloilo. This project will benefit 1,000 students.

Meanwhile, SRC teams are continuing its assessments in the affected regions. New projects are being identified to meet these needs.

"Since the launch of our appeal, we have received overwhelming response from the people of Singapore, whose compassion and solidarity has made a difference in the devastated communities and facilitated the rebuilding process. Our Red Cross Youth and volunteers will also participate actively in the implementation of some of our future projects. On behalf of SRC, I thank each and everyone for their continuous support for the typhoon-stricken communities in Philippines. We assure them that all the money collected will be used effectively and efficiently to directly impact the lives of the families affected by this disaster as well as to help restore and rebuild their lives," said Mr Benjamin William, Secretary General of the Singapore Red Cross.

Typhoon Haiyan Relief

Banding Together for a Good Cause

Little Giving Hearts: Students of International School of Singapore organised a toy sale, a silent art auction and a flag day that raised more than S\$5,500 for the survivors of Typhoon Haiyan.



"Some children donated their money without purchasing a toy, showing how much our kids at ISS really care about others in need. The toy drive was a success, raising over S\$1,000 for the survivors of Typhoon Haiyan via the Singapore Red Cross," Lilli Watkins, Grade 4, of ISS.

"I feel proud that we did our part to help the people of the Philippines from going hungry. We drew nice and colourful pictures to make the Filipinos happy," Uee Jung, Grade 1 student of ISS.

"I feel super because I am glad that we helped the Philippines," Grace Rabey, Grade 1 student of ISS.



Corporate Giving: Oxley Holdings matched public donations dollar-for-dollar, catalysing public donations and bolstering the our fundraising efforts by a generous gift of S\$1 million.

"We are very lucky to be residing in Singapore where we are protected from typhoons, earthquakes and tsunamis. The worst weather condition that we face for example is a few days of continual rain! So we are in a good position to help, and that is what we should do. Through the dollar-for-dollar matching, we want to help survivors of Typhoon Haiyan rebuild their lives, and at the same time encourage others to do the same," Mr Ching Chiat Kwong, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Oxley Holdings.(extreme right in the photo)

Due to space constraints, we are unable to include all donors and volunteers in this feature. Please be assured we value your contribution, which will go a long way to help those in need.



For more information about Singapore Red Cross' efforts for Typhoon Haiyan, please scan this QR code.

Living with Dementia

By Chloe Tan, Corporate Communications and Marketing

Memory loss, forgetfulness, communication difficulties, disorientation and mood changes are symptoms associated with dementia. It affects not only the life of the individual who is diagnosed with the illness, but also the lives of those closest to the person – spouse, family and friends.

Caring for a loved one with dementia can be challenging but the pressures are not wholly unavoidable. Caregivers can better cope by learning how to communicate and interact with them.

Caregivers might find it easier if you try to understand the illness better and find suitable strategies that are best for your loved one. Here are some practical tips that you might want to consider while interacting with dementia patients.



1. Do not expect the person to remember

With the disease, people are not able to remember many things, you will frustrate the person by asking, “Don’t you remember?”

2. Distract the person when he becomes agitated

When the person becomes agitated or displays a challenging behaviour, try to distract him with another activity. For example, when he wanders around the house seemingly lost, ask him to take a cup of tea with you.

3. Be flexible

Ask yourself “Is the behaviour hurting anyone or the person himself?” and if the answer is “No”, you may wish to allow the behaviour to continue.

4. Simplify activities and communication

Break an activity down into simple, step-by-step tasks. The person with dementia will be able to focus on one step at a time and complete the activity.

5. Create routines

A consistent plan for each day including what time to get up, take meals and do activities helps decrease anxiety and promote a sense of comfort for the person with dementia.

6. Offer reassurance and praise

This will increase the person’s self esteem and reinforce the behaviour.

7. Do not argue with the person with dementia

His reality is not your reality.

8. Identify and remove triggers to behaviour

For example, if the person wants to go out of the house each time he sees shoes by the door, remove the shoes.

9. Establish needs when the person demonstrates a new challenging behaviour

Try to establish if he have any underlying needs that he could not express. For example, he could be too hot or too tired, or he could need a drink or use the toilet. If he seems uncomfortable, it could also be related to a medical problem.

10. Exercise daily

Make sure the person has opportunities to have exercises every day.

11. Maintain social activities

Social activities ensure that the person with dementia remains in contact with other people and offers a sense of well-being.

12. Ensure that the environment is safe and secure

13. Simplify and create a calm, quiet environment

Source: The Alzheimer’s Disease Association (ADA) <http://www.alz.org.sg/about-dementia/living-dementia>

The Singapore Red Cross runs caregivers first aid courses for the elderly, stroke and diabetic patients. Call the Singapore Red Cross Academy at 6664 0500 or visit www.redcross.org.sg to learn more.

Your Love Brings Hope

By Hsu Nan-Ting, Corporate Communications and Marketing

A story of Mr Ho Fook Onn, beneficiary of SRC TransportAid



(From left):
Mr Ho Chin Weng
with his elder brother
Mr Ho Fook Onn
who is a beneficiary of
SRC TransportAid

Mr Ho Fook Onn, 53, worked at different jobs that brought him around the world. Unfortunately, the last one ended his career and changed his life forever.

A few years ago, Mr Ho was a welder working in the boiler room of a ship that sailed to the South China Sea. Suddenly, the boiler exploded and hit him hard on one side of his head. The impact caused Mr Ho to lose his balance, hitting the other side of his head. The accident caused severe damage to his brain, leaving him in critical condition.

Mr Ho's younger brother, Mr Ho Chin Weng, 51, recalled, "A friend of my brother called informing me that my brother was involved in an accident. Frightened, I called his company. They flew me out to China immediately."

The elder Mr Ho was operated the following day in Xiamen, China. A second operation was carried out a few weeks later in Singapore. In between the two operations, he was able to speak and move a little bit; he was also aware of his surroundings. Unfortunately, after the second surgery, Mr Ho could no longer speak, eat, move, respond to stimulations, let alone care for himself or go to work.

Thankfully, the elder Mr Ho has his younger brother who is able and willing to take care of him; bathing him, changing his diaper, feeding nutritious drink every few hours directly into his elder brother's stomach with a tube, bringing him to his medical check-ups and physiotherapy sessions. The younger Mr Ho shows his brother old photos and tells him stories of their childhood to stimulate recall.

The road has not been easy for the Ho brothers. The elder Mr Ho needs attentive care round-the-clock. It is painful to see one's loved one in such a condition. The medical bills,

nutritious drinks, specialised transport from privately operated service suppliers led to the financial burden.

Fortunately for patients like Mr Ho, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) TransportAid service provides transport for the disabled and the elderly, to get to and from their regular medical treatments, rehabilitation and day care centres, at subsidised rates.

The elder Mr Ho has been using this service for two years to go for medical check-ups and physiotherapy once or twice a week. The younger Mr Ho shared that "my brother is now familiar with the SRC TransportAid staff, so I don't have to accompany him to his regular medical visits any more."

"The staff is so friendly and helpful! When the elevator broke down, they even came up to my door to help carry my brother down by the stairs. They are also very warm and reliable; they will talk to my brother, encourage him to '加油' (improve). It's really a relief for me to see him in such good hands."

With regular medical check-ups, physiotherapy and encouragement from all those who are close, Mr Ho has shown signs of improvement. He now responds to loud noise and could focus when asked to look at something. The hope is for his condition to improve further – Mr Ho, 加油 (improve)!

Help us keep these wheels that move for a good cause. To donate by credit card, visit <http://www.redcross.org.sg>. Donations can also be made via AXS machines, iNETS kiosks and regularly through GIRO.



Scan the QR code to learn more about SRC TransportAid.

Come
Join Us!



What's
On...



National First Aid Competition

The first aid skills of Red Cross Youth Links and Cadets will be put to the test in this island-wide competition organised by Red Cross Youth.

Dates: 1 March (Preliminary Round), 15 March (Finals)

Time: 9am to 3pm (Preliminary Round),
12pm to 5.30pm (Finals)

Venue: Ngee Ann Polytechnic, School of Health Sciences

Blood Mobile Organiser Seminar

Singapore Red Cross is organising the Blood Mobile Organiser Seminar with a twist! If you have not been to one and would like to know how saving lives is as easy as ABC, do join us!

Date: 5 March

Time: 6pm to 9.30pm

Venue: Singapore Red Cross Academy @ Atrium

Register at: <http://go.donorweb.org/bmoseminar2014>

Public Lecture: Humanitarian Diplomacy in Action

Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr Bekele Geleta, will speak on the evolving global humanitarian diplomacy agenda, and the opportunities it can bring for the humanitarian community in South-East Asia.

Date: 24 March 2014 (Monday)

Time: 8.30am – 10.30am

Venue: Rendezvous Hotel
(9 Bras Basah Road Singapore 189559)

Register: academy@redcross.org.sg

War from the Victims' Perspective, Photographs by Jean Mohr

Produced by the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne and supported by the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this exhibition, featuring works by Jean Mohr, is co-presented by the Singapore Red Cross and the Embassy of Switzerland in Singapore to mark the 150 years of humanitarian action by the Red Cross Movement, the 150th anniversary of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the signing of the First Geneva Convention.

Dates: 25 to 30 March

Time: 10am to 8pm

Venue: International Involvement Hub, The Atrium@Orchard,
#04-01 Tower 1 60A Orchard Road, Singapore 238890.

World Red Cross Day: My Red Cross Story

World Red Cross Day is celebrated on 8 May each year, marking the anniversary of the birth of Henry Dunant, the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the recipient of the first Nobel Peace Prize. As the theme for this year's World Red Cross Day is 'My Red Cross Story', we would like to invite you to share your Red Cross story at srcheritage@redcross.org.sg

Singapore Red Cross Benefit Gala 2014

The Singapore Red Cross Benefit Gala 2014 will raise funds for our local humanitarian services: TransportAid, FoodAid, Red Cross Home for the Disabled.

We thank all donors, sponsors and volunteers for their generosity.

Guests-of-Honour: President Tony Tan Keng Yam
(Patron of the Singapore Red Cross) and Mrs Mary Tan

Date: 1 March 2014 (Saturday)

Time: 6.45pm

Venue: Shangri-la Hotel's Island Ballroom

11th Red Cross Red Crescent South East Asia Leaders Meeting

The Singapore Red Cross is hosting the 11th Red Cross Red Crescent South East Asia Leaders Meeting from 24 to 26 March 2014. This meeting brings together key appointment holders of the Red Cross Movement in Southeast Asia, to collaborate in mitigating and overcoming the many humanitarian challenges faced by countries in this region. We welcome all delegates to Singapore

Guest-of-Honour (Opening Ceremony): Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dates: 24 to 26 March 2014

Venue: Rendezvous Hotel Singapore

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Share



First Aider on Wheels

Whoever said volunteering was boring? Join SRC's weekly programme at East Coast Park, our first aiders patrols the park to render first aid to anyone who needs it. Watch and learn how you can help!



To join us, email
volunteer@redcross.org.sg

Secretary General shares thoughts on volunteerism

What does volunteerism mean to you? Find out what SRC Secretary General, Mr Benjamin William has to say about volunteerism on SALT, an online portal of the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre.



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