



## Hair for Hope 2019 Kicks Off with More Than 230 Shavees at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

**SINGAPORE (1 May 2019)** – For the eighth consecutive year, Hair for Hope (HfH), Children's Cancer Foundation's (CCF) signature outreach event will kick off at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery (KMSPKS). KMSPKS's participation shows Buddhist values such as '*metta*' (kindness) and '*karuna*' (compassion) in action.

KMSPKS has been HfH's top satellite partner since 2012, raising more than \$1.2 million dollars in aid of children and families affected by cancer. This year, more than 230 participants comprising KMSPKS staff, volunteers, devotees and Buddhist patrons of Singapore have registered to shave to tell children with cancer that they are not alone in their fight against this life-threatening illness.

KMSPKS's target is to encourage at least 350 participants and raise \$150,000 for CCF this year.

The kick-off event will see 14-year-old CCF beneficiary, Joanna Chong, and her father Chong Hui Kwee, being the first shavees of the HfH 2019 cohort. It will be a milestone for the father-daughter duo as they are shaving together for the first time. Joining them is home-grown actor, Andie Chen, who is also one of the three HfH 2019 ambassadors.

Joanna Chong was diagnosed with Medulloblastoma, a type of brain cancer, in 2014 and is currently in remission. It will be her first time shaving at HfH this year. "In fact, I have shaved twice personally. Once was when I was undergoing radiotherapy and my hair started to fall. The second time was in 2018 to return the support when my dad shaved for HfH. This year, I choose to shave at HfH as I want to encourage all other young fighters like myself to stay strong and never stop trying," says Joanna.



It will be her father's sixth shave this year. 51-year-old Chong Hui Kwee, who is Joanna's full time caregiver, had to miss his shave at HfH 2015 to accompany Joanna during her chemotherapy. He hopes that his participation in the campaign each year can help to contribute in building the community of support for other children with cancer and their families who are still battling the illness. "CCF helped to link me up with another family whose child was undergoing the same battle. Their sharing and encouragement provided much emotional support and comfort for me and my family. When Joanna completed her surgery, they even came to visit her at the hospital," shares Hui Kwee.

For home-grown actor Andie Chen, it will be his first time shaving at HfH. Andie together with his wife, Taiwanese actress-host, Kate Pang, volunteered as emcees at HfH 2018. He shares, "It was quite a sight and humbling to witness so many people queuing up throughout the day to shave to stand in solidarity with children with cancer." Fronting as the campaign's ambassador this year, Andie hopes that his actions can help to raise childhood cancer awareness and encourage more donations to support the work of CCF.

"Each year, CCF is encouraged by the enthusiasm of the organiser, devotees and members of the public who shaves at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery (KMSPKS). Many of them have expressed their interests to make a BALD statement even prior to the launch of our campaign," says Neo Lay Tin, Executive Director of CCF. "CCF would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to KMSPKS and supporters for believing in our cause. Together, we can tell children with cancer that it is OK to be bald and build a community of support for them and their families."

"Our hearts and prayers are always with the children and their families during this challenging period. As the Medicine Buddha aspires to heal all whom are suffering, we pray for the well-being of all sentient beings. With a positive outlook, one will be in a better position to deal with what lies ahead while keeping all the negative emotions in check. *Namo Xiaozai Yanshou Yao Shi Fo. (Homage to Medicine Buddha),*" says Venerable Sik Kwang Sheng, Abbot of KMSPKS.



This year, CCF hopes to encourage at least 6,000 participants to make a bald statement and raise \$3.6 million to help children with cancer and their families. The two-day main event of Hair for Hope 2019 will be held on 27 July 2019 (Saturday) from 11am to 7pm and from 11am to 6pm on 28 July 2019 (Sunday) at VivoCity.

Hair for Hope 2019 is made possible through the kind support of VivoCity – Official Venue; QB Net International Pte Ltd – Official Hairstylist; MOTHERS AND SONS – Official Brand Partner; Horangi Cyber Security – Official Cyber Security Partner; Seamless Communications – Official Digital Partner; Mediacorp OOH Media – Official Digital Outdoor Media; CWT Pte. Limited – Official Logistics Partner; Moove Media Pte. Ltd. – Official Media Partner; Selfiprint Singapore Pte Ltd – Official Photo Booth Partner; White Paper Communications Pte Ltd – Official Print Partner; Power 98FM and 88.3Jia FM – Official Radio Stations; One Dash 22 Pte. Ltd. – Official Videographer; ECHouse Pte Ltd, KC Group Pte Ltd, Shunji Matsuo Pte Ltd, Sultans of Shave and Hair Fitness – Supporting Hairstylists.

You and your photographer/camera crew are cordially invited to the event on:

**Date:** 1 May 2019 (Wednesday), 9.30am to 1.30pm (See attached programme)

**Venue:** Venerable Hong Choon Memorial Hall, Hall of No Form @ Level 4

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**Programme:**

<b>9.30 am</b>	Registration
<b>10:00 am</b>	Welcome address by Venerable Chuan Sheng and CCF Executive Director, Ms Neo Lay Tin
<b>10:15 am</b>	Presentation of Certificate
<b>10:20 am</b>	<b>Ceremonial shave:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCF beneficiary, Joanna Chong (1<sup>st</sup> time shavee)</li> <li>• Caregiver of Joanna Chong, Chong Hui Kwee (6<sup>th</sup> time shavee)</li> <li>• Hair for Hope 2019 ambassador, Andie Chen (1<sup>st</sup> time shavee)</li> </ul>
<b>10.30 am</b>	Group Shaving begins
<b>1:30 pm</b>	End of programme

**About Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery**

Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery (KMSPKS) is a spiritual sanctuary in urban Singapore where one can learn the Buddha's teachings of wisdom and compassion; practise mindfulness; develop gratitude and cultivate happiness.

Founded in 1921, KMSPKS was the first traditional Chinese forest monastery in Singapore. Over the years, we have grown dynamically in our Dharma propagation, community involvement and religious harmony efforts. Today, we are a community of Buddhists who come together to learn, practise and share the teachings of the Buddha.

**About Children's Cancer Foundation**

Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF) is a non-profit organisation with a mission to improve the quality of life of children with cancer and their families and children impacted by cancer through enhancing their emotional, social and medical well-being.

Founded in 1992, CCF provides children with cancer and their families the much needed support in their battle against the life threatening illness. Over the years, CCF has helped more than 3000 children and their families at different stages of the illness and recovery.

Armed with the vision of providing leading resources and psychosocial services to children and their families impacted by childhood cancer, CCF employs caseworkers and counsellors, and adopts an integrated hospital-community-home service model to offer a spectrum of critical services to our beneficiaries

### **Services offered to children with cancer and their families**

- Casework and Counselling
- Therapeutic Play
- Art Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Expressive Arts Therapy
- Family Therapy
- Grief Therapy
- Child Life Service
- Caregivers Support Services
- Hospital Play Services
- Survivorship Programme
- Schooling Programme
- Place for Academic Learning and Support (PALS)
- Tuition and Befriending
- Psychosocial and Recreational Activities
- Financial Assistance
- Palliative and Bereavement Service
- Very Important Brothers and Sisters (VIBS) Programme
- Children Impacted by Cancer Programme

### **About Hair for Hope (HfH)**

HfH is the only head-shaving event in Singapore that serves to raise funds and awareness of childhood cancer. Every shaven head represents an understanding by an individual of the ordeals that a child with cancer is subjected to. By volunteering to shave, the shavees become CCF's ambassadors in spreading childhood cancer messages to their family, friends and colleagues.

Through this symbolic gesture, we aim to:

1. Create awareness of childhood cancer in Singapore
2. Show children with cancer and their families that they are not alone in their fight against cancer
3. Tell children with cancer that it is OK to be bald
4. Raise funds to help children with cancer and their families
5. Build a community of support for children with cancer and their families

The funds raised will enable CCF to continue providing critical programmes and services to assist our children with cancer and their families to cope with the needs at different stages of the illness.