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Mr Frankle Widjaja (centre), flanked by his wife Jehnny and their daughter Deborah, presented a \$5 million cheque yesterday to National University of Singapore president Tan Eng Chye (far right) and Professor John Eu-Li Wong (at left), the university's senior vice-president for health innovation and translation.
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KUA CHEE SIONG



\$5m donation for pilot project to boost Queenstown residents' health

Nisha Rahim

A pilot project to help Queenstown residents take better care of their mental and physical health got a boost with a \$5 million donation yesterday.

The donation – from the Widjaja family – will bolster research initiatives and efforts to fund events such as health screenings and talks on health matters, said Professor John Eu-Li Wong, senior vice-president for health innovation and translation at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

The pilot, called Health District @ Queenstown, is helmed by NUS, the National University Health System (NUHS) and the Housing Board.

Initiatives that the project will roll out include preventive health services such as check-ups to ensure measures are taken to prevent

illnesses, and more urban farming areas to encourage residents to head outdoors.

The Widjaja family has its roots in Indonesia, and is linked to the late Indonesian billionaire Eka Tjipta Widjaja, who founded the Sinar Mas Group – one of the largest conglomerates in Indonesia.

Yesterday, Mr Frankle Widjaja, executive chairman and chief executive of Band Centre Investment, presented a \$5 million cheque to NUS president Tan Eng Chye and Prof Wong at a ceremony held at Four Seasons Hotel in Orchard.

Mr Widjaja, speaking to reporters before the ceremony, said his family felt it was important to lend its support to such meaningful endeavours.

Queenstown, which is Singapore's first satellite town, was carved out as a health district last year with the aim of supporting residents to lead healthier and more productive lives.

The estate has one of the oldest populations in the country, with nearly one in four residents aged 65 or above, said HDB, NUHS and NUS in a joint statement.

Prof Wong said the funds will be used to implement sustainable programmes to help residents stay healthy and live longer, and make Queenstown a community suitable for people of all ages to live together.

He added: "We are currently meeting residents and speaking to different stakeholders on the areas that require support. Once we have identified these areas, we will need seed funding to get these programmes going."

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