



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Animal-Assisted Services Charity EQUAL opens Singapore's first-ever Canine Programme Centre**

Since its establishment in 2015, EQUAL has helped transform the lives of children with special needs, youths-at-risk, families, and the elderly through animal-assisted services.

The initial team of animal partners at EQUAL, horses, were first rescued then re-trained to aid in animal-based learning programmes. These specialised programmes enabled transformative breakthroughs in emotional health, behaviours and relationships.

Besides horses, animal-assisted interventions with dogs are well-researched to lower stress and anxiety levels, helping to improve mood, as well as build social and physical skills.

Today marks the opening of EQUAL's new Canine Programme Centre, officiated by Senior Minister of State – Tan Kiat How on World Animal Day, as an extension of EQUAL's mission to empower vulnerable persons by enhancing their socio-emotional well-being and social integration, helping to build stronger communities.

SG Enable has allocated an area within Enabling Village to EQUAL for converting into a dog-friendly centre to serve persons with pan-disabilities and the wider community. The Centre features its own dog-run called the BARK PARK, and will be a safe and conducive environment for clients and rescued dogs to learn, play, and heal as they support one another.

Through the Canine Programme Centre, EQUAL plans to extend its work with other Social Service Agencies and schools to help improve the quality of life in both people and dogs, so both can live life to the fullest as they journey together.

#### **About EQUAL:**

EQUAL is a charity with Institute of Public Character (IPC) status, offering animal-assisted services to youths, persons with different needs, families and the elderly to equip them with life skills and to support social integration.

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