

# SINGAPORE

## Telcos donate \$3m worth of data lines to the vulnerable

M1, Singtel and StarHub to each provide 10,000 mobile data lines to support 30,000 beneficiaries

**Anjali Raguraman**  
Consumer Correspondent

Ms Chan Ying Xiu has had to tap her father's phone as a mobile hot spot to access the Internet outside their home, but she will now have her own free mobile data line from StarHub's Giga.

Ms Chan, 34, who has cerebral palsy, is a beneficiary of the Data for All scheme.

It was launched yesterday by Minister for Communications and Information Josephine Teo at the first Digital for Life Festival, organised by Infocomm Media Development Authority.

Customers of the three major tel-

cos here will be able to pledge their support to help vulnerable individuals and build a digitally connected and inclusive society.

The telcos - M1, Singtel and StarHub - have each committed to providing 10,000 mobile data lines, which will collectively support 30,000 beneficiaries.

Valued at more than \$3 million, the initiative will benefit children, young people and seniors from low-income families plus people with disabilities and caregivers.

Ms Chan's father and caregiver, 62-year-old retiree Patrick Chan, said that while her condition limits her motor skills, she can still write with her keyboard and take photos with her iPad to send to friends.

"(With her own mobile data line)

at least she has the independence... she and her mother can check e-mails, book appointments at polyclinics and use (ride-hailing) apps without needing to have me around," he said.

Each of the telcos is focusing on a different vulnerable group.

Users of StarHub's Giga can lend a helping hand to people with disabilities and their caregivers, through a redemption in the Giga app.

With every pledge, a beneficiary will get 6GB of data per month and other bonuses such as 500 minutes of talk time.

M1 is donating up to 10,000 SIM cards with free mobile plans to young people from low-income families. They will get 50GB of data every month for a year and unlimited incoming calls.

Singtel's Gomo mobile plan users can donate their extra data.

The telco will consolidate the

data into Hi! SIM cards that will be distributed to 10,000 vulnerable seniors, who will get 3GB of data a month.

The initiative is backed by public organisations, social service agencies and community partners.

The Ministry of Social and Family Development will assist in reaching out to children and young people from low-income families.

AMKFSC Community Services, Care Corner, Lions Befrienders, NTUC Health and Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities will link up with seniors from low-income families.

SG Enable will do likewise with people with disabilities and their caregivers.

"While the Digital for Life Festival recognises that so much of our daily lives have gone digital, not everyone is equally comfortable when they engage digitally," noted Mrs Teo, speaking on the sidelines of the launch.

"There is a need to know about access, and how to protect oneself from harms such as scams... in trying to promote digital inclusion, it is useful to work with partners from both the private and people sector," she added.

"We hope that this festival will inspire more partners to come on board, (and) also help more Singaporeans to go digital with confidence and with a great sense of comfort."

It is a sentiment shared by Singtel's vice-president of group sustainability, Mr Andrew Buay, who said: "We believe that by enabling seniors to have digital access and having them know how to use it safely, these will form important foundations for future health-care-related and social care applications, especially given that Singapore has an ageing population."

The nine-day festival is on till May 29.

Activities such as blockchain workshops and sessions on navigating a POSB digibank mobile app are being held this weekend at Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Activities at Heartbeat@Bedok on May 28 and 29 include getting tips on how to be a cybersafe family and go cashless via a FairPrice app at the supermarket chain.

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## 149 people lose \$71m to scam involving spoofed work e-mails

**Wallace Woon**

Since the start of the year, at least 149 people have fallen prey to a scam involving spoofed work e-mails, with losses amounting to at least \$70.8 million.

In a statement yesterday, the police said the scammers, using a hacked e-mail account or e-mail address, would impersonate colleagues, business partners or suppliers of the victims.