

SGH Alumni Newsletter

ISSUE 34 | July — September 2021

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NEW APPOINTMENTS

Key Leadership & Clinical Appointments



A/Prof Koh Liang Khai Darren
Clinical Educator Lead (Medical)
Singapore General Hospital



Ms Png Gek Kheng
Chief Nurse
(Nursing Practice Development)
SingHealth



Dr Ho Vui Kian
Head, Surgical Intensive Care
Singapore General Hospital



Ms Lim Poh Ying Christina
Chief Nurse
(Crisis Planning and Nursing Operations),
SingHealth



A/Prof Lim Eng Hoe Winston
Director, Postgraduate Medical Institute
Singapore General Hospital



Ms Wong Sook Thow
Chief Nurse
(Nursing Transformation)
SingHealth



A/Prof Ong Biauwei Chi
Group Chief Risk Officer
SingHealth



Ms Tay Ai Liu Amy
Chief Nurse
(Nursing Manpower Planning and Leadership Development)
SingHealth



Prof Ng Wai Hoe
Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer
(Strategy & Planning) [DGCEO (S&P)]
SingHealth



Ms Loh Huey Peng
Director, Nursing
(Nursing Wellness & Engagement)
SingHealth



Mr Jim Gu Ping Yen
Chief Operating Officer (Visitor Services)
SingHealth



Ms Lian Siew Bee
Director, Nursing
(Nursing Quality & Safety)
SingHealth



Ms Ng Gaik Nai
Deputy Group Chief Nurse
(Nursing Education & Professional Development)
SingHealth



Ms Yeap Theng Hui Stephanie
Director, Nursing
(Patient Experience & Empowerment)
SingHealth



Ms Teo Swee Hong Stephanie
Deputy Group Chief Nurse
(Care Integration and Community Nursing),
SingHealth



A/Prof Andrew Wong Siang Yih
Deputy Chairman Medical Board (Surgical Disciplines)
Changi General Hospital

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Key Leadership & Clinical Appointments



A/Prof Benita Tan Kiat Tee
Chairman, Division of Surgery
Seng Kang Hospital



Ms Amber Yeong Hor Kwan
Chief Operating Officer
National Heart Centre Singapore

Chief Operating Officer (Retail Service)
National Heart Centre Singapore



Mr Chong Pang Boon
Chief Operating Officer
National Cancer Centre Singapore



Dr Robert Yap Tze Jin
Head, Hand & Reconstructive Microsurgery
National Cancer Centre Singapore



Dr Nicholas Tay Choo Wei
Chief Planning & Performance Officer
National Cancer Centre Singapore

AWARDS RECIPIENTS

NATIONAL DAY AWARDS 2021



This year, 313 recipients from the SingHealth Duke-NUS Academic Medical Centre (AMC) received National Day Awards in recognition of their exemplary contributions to our AMC, our patients and our nation's success.

Read more at: <https://www.singhealth.com.sg/about-singhealth/newsroom/national-day-awards-2021>

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE



(Top, from left) Ms Mumtaz Ibrahim, SGH Chief Nurse Ms Ng Gaik Nai, Assistant Nursing Director Mr Nidur Maran Shanmugam, and Nursing Deputy Director Ms Elena Mohamed Ayob, pose with a mother-son pair of runners, Ms Kandimadhy Pitchy Marie and Mr Shashi Chandra Segaram, who are both Nurse Clinicians.

“The SingHealth family has come together as one to support President’s Challenge since 2004,” said Dr Gan Wee Hoe, Chairman of SingHealth President’s Challenge 2021. “Even as we continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, this public health crisis has thrown into sharp relief the challenges faced by vulnerable groups in society. This compels us in SingHealth to once again rally to raise funds for the needy and the less fortunate in our midst,” added Dr Gan.

Dr Gan said that the format of this year’s events is different from previous years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. “Our physical presence will be scaled down significantly to comply with safe management measures, but we hope that hosting these events in the virtual space will bring together even more supporters and donors than before,” said Dr Gan, who is also Head, Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, and Chief Medical Informatics Officer, SGH.

Besides ensuring that the race does not violate safe management measures, passing on the baton virtually is in line with this year’s national President’s Challenge focus to build a digitally inclusive society. The traditional donation Pledge Cards will include a QR code to encourage donors to give digitally. SingHealth is also organising outreach activities for beneficiaries, as well as a ticketed virtual concert and art exhibition titled “A Night to Remember”.

Singapore’s largest healthcare group is aiming to raise \$550,000, with donations to benefit the SingHealth Fund (CGH Homecare Assist), South Central Community Family Service Centre, Metta Welfare Association, Rainbow Centre, and Yong-En Care Centre. These organisations offer assistance to the unwell, those with special needs as well as other vulnerable groups.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/singapore-health/rising-to-the-challenge>

Singapore General Hospital is organising the President’s Challenge activities for SingHealth institutions this year.

Eight pairs of siblings, spouses, parents and children will take to the roads before climbing to the top of SingHealth Tower come August in a bid to raise funds for this year’s President’s Challenge.

They are among 200 pairs of runners who together will run a total of 200km in the SingHealth Digital Relay to set a new Singapore Book of Records’ Longest Relay Run. Significantly, the 200 number underscores the 200th anniversary being celebrated this year by Singapore General Hospital (SGH), which is organising the President’s Challenge activities for SingHealth institutions. The figure also represents the 200 years of medicine that Singapore is celebrating in 2021.



Outram Community Nurse Mr Shajjullah Abu Bakar (left), in a staged photo, represents the last runner who will end the race at Level 12 of SingHealth Tower, while his brother, SGH General Surgery nurse Mr Khairullah Abu Bakar, runs behind him to complete the run together.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

IMPROVING CLINICAL OUTCOMES FOR BORDERLINE RESECTABLE AND LOCALLY ADVANCED PANCREATIC CANCER

By Assoc Prof Chan Chung Yip (Head & Senior Consultant), Dr Koh Ye Xin (Consultant), Dr Chua Wei Quan Darren (Associate Consultant), Dept of Hepato-pancreato-biliary and Transplant Surgery, Singapore General Hospital

With recent advancements in chemotherapeutics and surgical techniques, more patients with borderline resectable and locally advanced pancreatic cancers can now be considered for curative surgery. Find out the latest state-of-the-art clinical developments for borderline resectable and locally advanced pancreatic cancer.

EPIDEMIOLOGY OF PANCREATIC CANCER

Pancreatic cancer is currently the fourth leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States and among the top ten most common causes of cancer-related death among Singaporeans.

It is estimated that only 20% of patients are eligible for upfront curative resection at the time of presentation. The larger group of borderline resectable and locally advanced pancreatic cancers had a much poorer outlook in the past.

Over the years, improvements have been made to the chemotherapy regimens and surgical approach for the treatment of pancreatic cancer such that more of these patients now have a chance of cure of the disease.

	Vascular Structure	Localised and Resectable	Borderline Resectable	Locally Advanced
Pancreatic Head	Arteries	No arterial abutment, clear fat plane with CA, CHA and SMA	CHA abutment or encasement; no extension to the celiac axis < 180 degree SMA, no CA encasement	> 180 degree abutment of SMA or any CA abutment Aortic invasion
	Veins	No venous abutment, clear fat plane with MPV and SMV	MPV or SMV encasement with reconstructible MPV or SMV	Unreconstructible MPV or SMV
Pancreatic Body or Tail	Arteries	No arterial abutment, clear fat plane with CA, CHA and SMA	< 180 degree SMA, or CA encasement	> 180 degree abutment of SMA or CA abutment
	Veins	No venous abutment, clear fat plane with MPV and SMV	Reconstructible MPV or SMV	Unreconstructible MPV or SMV

Table 1 National Comprehensive Cancer Network guidelines on resectability criteria

Legend: CA: celiac axis, CHA: common hepatic artery, SMA: superior mesenteric artery, MPV: main portal vein, SMV: superior mesenteric vein

DEFINITION OF BORDERLINE RESECTABLE AND LOCALLY ADVANCED PANCREATIC CANCER

Traditionally, borderline resectable and locally advanced pancreatic cancers, as defined by the International Study Group of Pancreatic Surgery and National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) to have varying degrees of vascular involvement, were deemed unresectable.

However, patients with borderline resectable and locally advanced lesions can now be considered for curative surgery.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/defining-med/improving-clinical-outcomes-for-borderline-resectable-and-locally-advanced-pancreatic-cancer>

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

SGH AND DUKE-NUS CREATE MODEL TO PREDICT RISK OF SEPSIS-RELATED DEATH MORE ACCURATELY IN JUST FIVE MINUTES

10 September 2021 – Sepsis is a life-threatening medical emergency when the body has an extreme response to an infection. A person with a weakened immune system, elderly or infants and those with medical conditions such as cancer, diabetes, liver or kidney diseases, are at higher risk of developing sepsis. If not detected and treated early, the death rate may be up to 50 per cent when the infection progresses to severe sepsis and septic shock.

To determine the risk of sepsis-related death quickly and accurately, researchers at the Singapore General Hospital (SGH) and Duke-NUS Medical School leveraged artificial intelligence (AI) and developed a predictive model. The model uses AI analysis of simple clinical information and electrocardiogram (ECG) analysis of Heart Rate Variability (HRV), which is the time variations between patient's heartbeats. From the readings produced, the team was able to give an accurate risk stratification in five minutes.

“Our Emergency Department sees more than 1,000 patients yearly who present with sepsis. In a busy environment, it helps to be able to quickly stratify them according to severity and mortality risk so that the department can efficiently redirect necessary resources and care to prevent patients with a higher risk from going into septic shock,” said Professor Marcus Ong, Senior Consultant, Department of Emergency Medicine, SGH, and senior author of the study. Prof Ong is also Director of the Health Services and Systems Research (HSSR) Programme at Duke-NUS Medical School.

Every year, sepsis kills more than five million people worldwide. In Singapore alone, close to 5,000 deaths were attributed to sepsis from pneumonia and urinary tract infection in 2019.

The most accurate method to assess mortality risk of a patient with sepsis presently is a blood test. However, the results may take two to four hours, resulting in delay to give the appropriate treatment. The team felt there was much potential in using HRV analysis due to its quick turnaround time of five minutes without the need for invasive tests, and decided to expand its use.

Read more of the press release at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/patient-care/sgh-and-duke-nus-create-model-to-predict-risk-of-sepsis-related-death-more-accurately-in-just-five-minutes>

Source: SGH Website

MOVING TOWARDS ZERO ASTHMA EMERGENCIES



Under the A-CARE programme, Senior Staff Nurse Jenneth Leow provides asthma counselling and education on inhaler use to patients like Ms Katrina Tan (right), who was unaware of the severity of her symptoms until she was admitted to SGH's ED in 2019 for a severe asthma attack.

A pilot programme, which incorporated asthma counselling into the patient journey at the Emergency Department, brought about improved asthma management and outcomes.

Capacity

When patients do not understand their asthma or how to care for their condition, they find themselves seeking treatment — often repeatedly — at the emergency departments (ED) for severe symptoms, such as breathlessness and chest tightness.

Severe asthma attacks can be life-threatening. Of 376 patients with life-threatening asthma who were admitted to the intensive care units of four restructured hospitals, 47 died during admission, a 2011-2015 study found. Severe asthma attacks also tend to occur at night, when temperatures drop.

To reduce ED visits and hospital admissions, an asthma specialist nurse has been included in Singapore General Hospital's (SGH) ED night team under a pilot programme called Asthma-COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) Afterhours Respiratory Nurse at Emergency, or A-CARE.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/singapore-health/moving-towards-zero-asthma-emergencies>

Source: Singapore Health

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

THROUGH THICK AND THIN



With a passion to elevate nursing care, two nurses leverage technology to improve the well-being of patients and upskilling of staff amidst the pandemic.

Engaging patients, promoting physical and mental well-being

As Senior Nurse Manager of Ward 63C at Singapore General Hospital, Yuan Long Xia and her team of nurses handle patients from both the Internal Medicine and Geriatric Medicine departments. They make special effort to ensure the 66-bedded ward is an elderly-friendly, restraint-free environment for their patients.

“Most of our patients are elderly with dementia who have behavioural problems that can be triggered by drugs, dehydration and infections,” said Long Xia.

“Their family members or caregivers may not be able to cope with their behavioural changes. Through our observation and assessment of the patients, we help to stabilise them before referring them to nursing homes or community hospitals,” she added.

After reading numerous studies on how engagement games could help the elderly improve their physical health and cognitive abilities, Long Xia’s team carefully evaluated and selected a series of video games as rehabilitative therapy for patients at Ward 63C.

The games utilise a black box sensor that can detect the movement of the patient’s arms and limbs, and are played using a TV screen at the activity room. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, infection prevention was a key consideration so the team opted for games that did not require patients to wear any equipment. The nurses also considered how engaging, intuitive and inclusive the games were, so that patients with varying abilities would be able to play.

“The games had to embrace gamification principles such as having an engaging narrative and enhanced visuals, to draw and maintain a patient’s interest as well as instil a sense of achievement and gratification by showing the player’s progress and offering rewards,” said Long Xia.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/singapore-health/Through-thick-and-thin>

SELF-CARE HEROES



Nurses step up to encourage fellow healthcare frontliners to strengthen mental resilience and wellness.

Taming stress with mindfulness

A good idea does not have to be elaborate, as Yvette Yeo Yin Hui, Staff Nurse, Sengkang General Hospital (SKH), proves with her “Mindfulness Jar” workshop.

Every day, thousands of thoughts run through our minds but for operating theatre nurses like Yvette, the job requires their full attention. The practice of mindfulness is critical to help them stay focused, especially during long surgeries that require precision. Yvette came up with the idea of setting up a workshop to guide colleagues in the making of their own mindfulness jars.

The workshop, held in December 2020 in SKH, saw Yvette instructing a small group of colleagues on how to piece together their own mindfulness jars with glass jars, glue, glitter, food colouring and water. Akin to a snow globe, the mindfulness jar allows the nurses to observe how the glitter gently settles at the bottom of the jar — a powerful visual metaphor for how “we achieve greater clarity of mind once our thoughts and feelings settle”. The session was very well received, with one of her colleagues commenting that the mindfulness jars make good Christmas gifts.

Yvette’s own mindfulness jar sits in her locker, ready to provide her with some calming respite whenever the need arises. One of the upshots of the workshop was also the sense of camaraderie fostered between the participants.

Fostering mental resilience in nurses

With almost two decades of nursing experience under her belt, Hartini Binte Osman, Senior Nurse Manager, Singapore General Hospital, understands first-hand the importance of self-care.

“As nurses, we are taught to care for others but after a long and demanding shift, we often forget to care for ourselves,” said Hartini, adding that taking time to care for oneself can go a long way in ensuring physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/singapore-health/Self-care-heroes>

FELLOWSHIPS & INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Dr Hnin Ngwe Phyu from Myanmar shares her fellowship experience in SGH, Department Vascular & Interventional Radiology (VIR)

What was your impression of Singapore's healthcare industry?

The Singapore's healthcare industry is perfect as it is able to extend quality service to each individual.

Are there any differences compared to the healthcare industry in your country?

Our country is huge and it comprises of a variety of tribes. The healthcare industry in my country is not able to fully cover each patient.

Why did you choose to apply to Singapore/SGH for your attachment?

The main reason is to be exposed to hands on training.



*Dr Hnin Ngwe Phyu (on the left) during her fellowship programme with department Vascular & Interventional Radiology
(Photos were taken before the issuance of government advisories on COVID-19)*

Did you face any difficulties (e.g. culture, language) during your attachment? What were they?

The main difficulty is cultural difference. It took me a few weeks to get used to Singaporean accent.

During your attachment, what was a 'typical' day like?

Everyday is an exciting day for me. There are many new procedures which that I get to learn which are not available in my country.

What were your learning experiences?

The working environment is very nice and sweet although there are a few negligible minor incidents.

How has the attachment make an impact on you?

I had low confidence before I came to SGH for attachment as I am not even confident of puncturing a vein. After my attachment here, my confident level has raised, and I can even perform moderate risk procedures.

What did you enjoy most during your attachment?

I enjoyed the safety that Singapore has and I have no problem being outside alone during the night.

Would you recommend SGH to interested doctors? Why?

Yes. Although the working environment is stressful, I am able to get high standards of hands on training here.

How would you describe your Clinical Fellowship attachment experience in 3 words?

The best ever



*Dr Hnin Ngwe Phyu (2nd from the right)
(Photos were taken before the issuance of government advisories on COVID-19)*

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2021

5TH

Head & Neck Surgery GP Webinar - Neck Lumps & Oral Ulcers

Presented by SGH Department of Head & Neck Surgery

Registration Link: https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_q4Nyee-7SGeDKuEJyeEqaw

12TH

Fight Smoking, Save Lives GPCME

Presented by SGH Department of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine

Registration Link: https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_l1wK3dsrSoWvP9NLhwdXSww

15TH

Endometriosis Health Talk

Presented by SGH Department of Obstetric and Gynecology

Registration Link: https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dYVVimmXSgWcdCaQYfbXkg

16TH

Stop Osteoporosis in its Track – Public Forum

Presented by SGH Department of Endocrinology

Registration Link: https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_W8gfMOZIS8KOhJzovzE0Dw

16th

Interventional Nephrology Course

Presented by SGH Department of Renal Medicine

Registration Link (Part 1): https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_A0LrerU_TzuulxU-OwLfuw

Registration Link (Part 2): https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_izc89E40TnO-a6hY-vh6oQ

23TH

Epilepsy For The General Practitioner

Presented by SGH Department of Neurology

Registration Link: https://ihis.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WuZKWhsVRgildQZMxAH5Cg

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2021

10TH

Singapore Hyperbaric and Underwater Medicine Course

Presented by SGH Hyperbaric Centre

Registration Link: <https://form.gov.sg/#!/611b28b5d152f10012ceb942>

13TH

Public Forum: Severe Asthma

Presented by SGH Department of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine

Registration
Opening Soon

20TH

ENT Sleep and Voice GPCME Webinar

Presented by SGH Department of Otorhinolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery

Registration
Opening Soon

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY LUNCHTIME Q+A SESSION WITH GPs

Registration Link: https://ihis.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJclfuChqDwiHtT-DKNCXwQz7h2iC_u_WrLx

Please refer to our website <https://www.sgh.com.sg/pgmi> for events updates.



**TELL US
WHAT YOU WANT!**

We are always looking for ways to improve and engage our alumni members. If you have any suggestions or ideas for newsletter contents or alumni events, know anyone who would like to contribute to the newsletter, please let us know! Email your suggestions and contributions to alumni@sgh.com.sg

SGH ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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