

# SGH Alumni Newsletter

ISSUE 38 | July — September 2022

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UPCOMING EVENTS



## NEW APPOINTMENTS

### Key Leadership & Clinical Appointments

#### Singapore General Hospital



**Prof Brian Goh Kim Poh**  
Head, Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary and  
Transplant Surgery,  
Singapore General Hospital



**Ms Ng Hong Yen**  
Head, Pharmacy,  
Singapore General Hospital

#### SingHealth HQ & SingHealth Institutions



**Mr Gabriel Leong**  
Director Allied Health (Designate),  
Changi General Hospital



**Dr Aw Junjie**  
Chief Risk Officer,  
SingHealth Community Hospitals



**CI A/Prof Ching Chi Keong**  
Chief Data and Digital Officer  
National Heart Centre Singapore



**A/Prof Laura Tay Bee Gek**  
Head, SingHealth Duke-NUS Memory and  
Cognitive Disorder Centre

## AWARDS RECIPIENTS

### NATIONAL DAY AWARDS 2022



This year, 393 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-2022?fbclid=IwAR1on7D1EM4FPdeI-yoipbME7t1v2G9L0jB0kal95jwJOuZV3H1Jv\\_FuNH0&mibextid=d3iphx](https://www.singhealth.com.sg/about-singhealth/newsroom/national-day-awards-2022?fbclid=IwAR1on7D1EM4FPdeI-yoipbME7t1v2G9L0jB0kal95jwJOuZV3H1Jv_FuNH0&mibextid=d3iphx)

## AWARDS RECIPIENTS

### NATIONAL MEDICAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2022

#### National Outstanding Clinician Educator



#### Prof Chan Choong Meng

Group Chief Education Officer,  
SingHealth

Senior Consultant, Dept of Renal  
Medicine, SGH

Senior Associate Dean, Duke-NUS  
Medical School

#### National Outstanding Clinician Scientist



#### Prof Marcus Ong

Director, SingHealth Health  
Services Research Centre

Senior Consultant, Dept of  
Emergency Medicine, SGH

Director, Health Services and  
Systems Research Programme,  
Duke-NUS Medical School

The National Medical Excellence Awards (NMEA) recognise outstanding clinicians and healthcare professionals who have made outstanding contributions in advancement of healthcare improvements in standards of patient safety and quality of care, which ultimately improve lives.

Congratulations to Prof Chan Choong Meng and Prof Marcus Ong as they were awarded the National Outstanding Clinician Educator and Clinician Scientist respectively.

Prof Chan, Senior Consultant, Renal Medicine, was awarded for his outstanding contributions to the education and training of clinicians and healthcare staff. Looking afar at future healthcare needs, Prof Chan is constantly thinking of the education and training needs necessary to build up medical skills and competencies in future generations of clinicians.

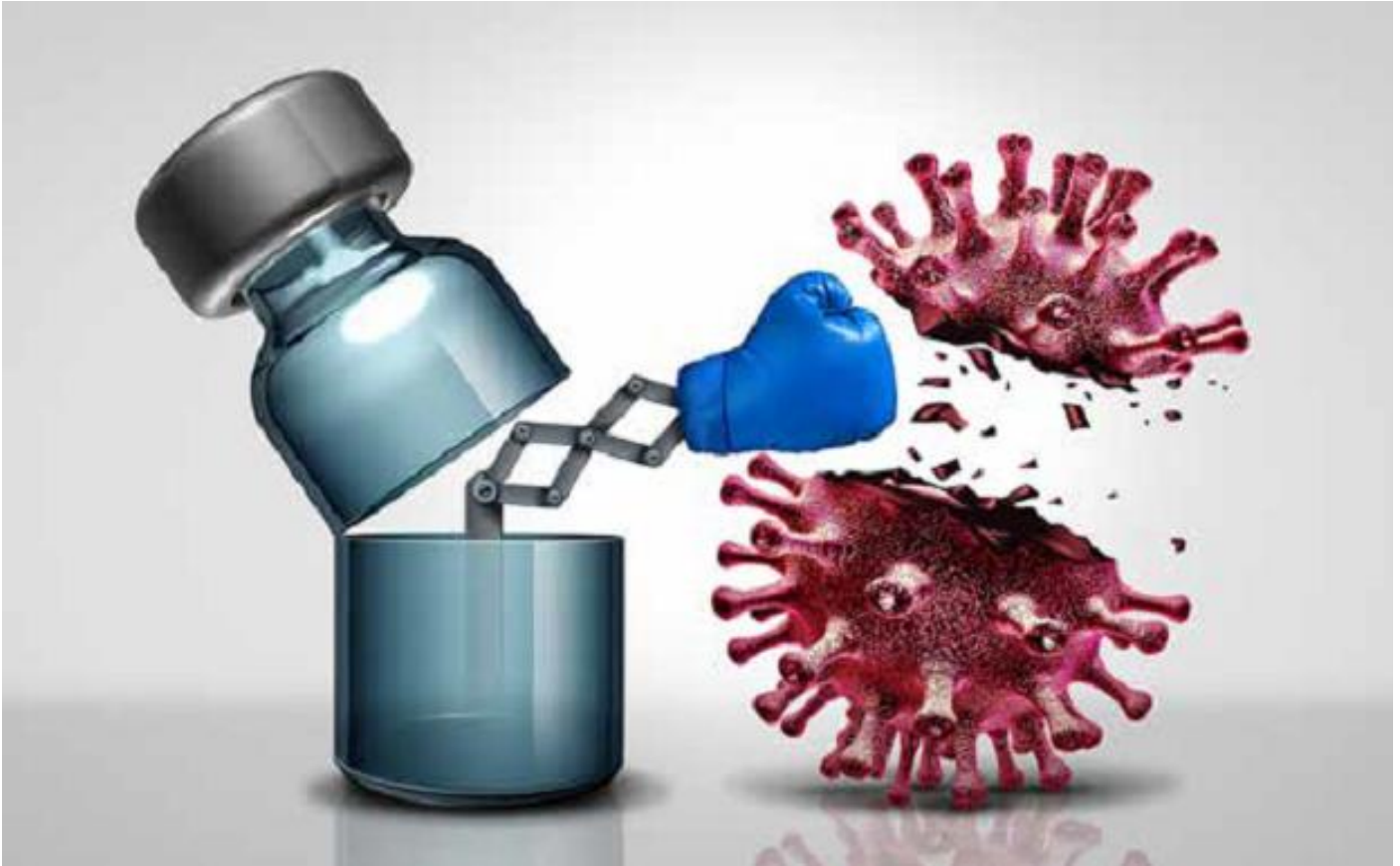
Prof Ong, Senior Consultant and Clinician Scientist, Emergency Medicine, was awarded for his pioneering research and tireless dedication to prehospital emergency care and systems. Often working with the Singapore Civil Defence Force, Prof Ong implemented dispatcher-assisted cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in 2012, heightened awareness of the importance of bystander emergency assistance and doubled the bystander CPR rate from 22% (2011), to 61.8% (2018) for cardiac arrest patients.



## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

### SINGAPORE STUDY DEVELOPS NEW TREATMENT FOR ADVANCED LIVER CANCER

**This new treatment safely combines an immunotherapy drug with radiation therapy, a boon for advanced liver cancer patients who have limited treatment options.**



Combining radiation and an immunotherapy drug can safely and effectively treat a common but advanced liver cancer, according to results of a study by Singapore General Hospital (SGH) and National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS) researchers.

The study involved patients with advanced hepatocellular carcinoma, which is the third and fourth most common cause of cancer deaths among men and women in Singapore respectively. A large proportion of patients are diagnosed at a stage when their cancer can no longer be removed by surgery and treatment options are limited. This highlights an urgent need to find new ways to improve survival for patients with this disease.

Forty patients between the ages of 23 and 79 years were given immunotherapy drug nivolumab and yttrium-90 resin microspheres radioembolisation (Y90-RE), a form of internal radiation therapy. Nivolumab was given intravenously 21 days after Y90-RE was administered, and then every two weeks after. The treatment was halted when severe toxicities developed or progressed.

The study found that the participants had an overall response rate of 30.6 per cent, which rose to 43.5 per cent for those with cancer limited only to the liver. The combination therapy was also found to be safe and tolerable, the study said.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/singapore-health/singapore-study-develops-new-treatment-for-advanced-liver-cancer>

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

### A NEW THERAPY FOR OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNOEA: HYPOGLOSSAL NERVE STIMULATION

Continuous positive airway pressure for obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) is often met with discomfort and compliance issues, while surgical treatment options fail to address the poor muscle tone that results in upper airway collapse during sleep. Discover hypoglossal nerve stimulation – a new therapy which addresses these limitations and offers durable, positive outcomes for OSA patients.

#### THE BURDEN OF OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNOEA

Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) is a common, serious, and potentially life-threatening disorder characterised by recurrent episodes of upper airway obstruction during sleep that lead to hypoxemia and hypercapnia.

OSA is associated with substantial cardiovascular morbidity and mortality, endocrine disturbances, daytime somnolence, decreased quality of life, decreased cognitive function, decreased work productivity and motor vehicle crashes, hence increasing socioeconomic costs.



#### CURRENT GAPS IN OSA THERAPY

Effective treatment of OSA has been shown to improve quality of life, and decrease morbidity risk and its attendant healthcare costs.

The first-line gold standard therapy is the use of continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) to act as a pneumatic stent to maintain airway patency. However, it is limited by poor patient acceptance with long-term adherence rates of only 39-60%. An audit conducted in Singapore General Hospital showed that 60-70% of patients diagnosed with OSA reject or are non-compliant to CPAP.

Individuals with symptomatic OSA who are CPAP-intolerant may opt to undergo upper airway reconstructive and ablative surgery. Multiple surgical procedures that modify soft tissues of the pharynx either by tissue reduction, stabilisation or advancement are available with an overall surgical success rate of 66.7%.

However, these procedures do not address the lack of muscle tone to maintain airway patency during sleep.

#### WHAT IS HYPOGLOSSAL NERVE STIMULATION?

Hypoglossal nerve stimulation (HGNS) is achieved through the Inspire™ Upper Airway Stimulation (UAS) system, which gained FDA approval in 2014 for its use in OSA treatment. The system comprises an implantable pulse generator (IPG), sensing lead and stimulation lead.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/medadvance/a-new-therapy-for-obstructive-sleep-apnoea-hypoglossal-nerve-stimulation>

## A 'PACEMAKER' FOR THE BRAIN

When Parkinson's disease (PD) medication is no longer effective, deep brain stimulation may be a treatment option for some people with PD. Dr Wan Kai Rui, Associate Consultant, Neurosurgery, NNI, explains more.



Medication and rehabilitation are the initial 'go to' treatments for Parkinson's disease (PD). They help in managing patient symptoms such as tremors, stiffness and slowness of movement. However, as the condition worsens over time, the number and type of medications will need to be increased.

It is common for people in the moderate to advanced stage of PD to take up to 15 to 20 pills a day. However, this may still not be enough to provide relief from the symptoms. In addition, high doses of PD medications may cause distressing side-effects such as uncontrollable jerky body movements, cognitive changes including hallucinations.

Deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgery may be an additional treatment for a selected group of patients with PD.

DBS is a surgical procedure to insert electrodes (small wires) into specific deep structures within the brain. This is usually done while the patient is awake.

The electrodes are connected to a battery (similar to a heart pacemaker) that is placed under the skin just beneath the collarbone. The battery provides a continuous electrical current that stimulates the selected brain structures and alter the abnormal messages of the brain.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/patient-care/a-pacemaker-for-the-brain>

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

## LUNG SURGERY AND NAVIGATIONAL BRONCHOSCOPY

**Navigational bronchoscopy is the newest and latest addition to the Minimally Invasive Thoracic Surgery Programme at NHCS, that allows more accurate surgery of lung nodules.**

Between 2013 and 2017, there were close to 8,000 lung cancers diagnosed in Singapore which was about four cases a day<sup>1</sup>. Lung cancer has a higher fatality rate as compared to breast or colon cancer; with more than three deaths a day. While smoking is found to be the main risk factor for lung cancer, there has been an increase in lung cancer for nonsmokers, especially in the Asian population. Unfortunately in lung cancer, there are generally no symptoms during its early stages, and it is often only picked up through health screening or body check. Nonetheless, surgery can offer a chance of a cure if treated in its early stages.



#### VATS for Lung Cancer

Keyhole lung surgery, or also known as Video-Assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery (VATS) is a less invasive technique for lung surgery, and has become the standard of care at NHCS, as it helps to reduce postsurgery pain and aid in faster recovery.

NHCS performs about 600 cases of VATS annually with majority for lung cancer. Traditionally, lobectomy (surgery to remove one of the lobes of the lung) or major resection of the lung is needed for treatment of lung cancer. However, recent research 2-3 suggests a lesser resection for smaller lung cancer could result in equivalent cure rates and increase preservation of lung function.

In traditional bronchoscopy, a small light and camera are mounted on a thin, flexible fibre-optic cable to check the airways of the lungs through the patient's nose or mouth. The procedure provides direct visuals of the throat and airways.

In navigation bronchoscopy, a special cable is used with the combination of real-time electromagnetic navigation (GPS-like technology) and computed tomography (CT) images, to locate even the smallest lung nodules, and allow more accurate localisation of the cancer. During a surgery, doctors will use navigational bronchoscopy to virtually map out the patient's airway, and plan a pathway to the cancer. Once they 'navigate' their way precisely to the lung cancer, they will mark it with a special fluorescent dye to locate the exact site of the cancer. Through this, doctors are able to make precise resections of the lung and avoid cutting excessive lung tissue to remove the cancer, thus preserving more lung for the patient.

Read more at: <https://www.sgh.com.sg/news/murmurs/lung-surgery-and-navigational-bronchoscopy>



## EVENTS OVERVIEW

## CHAMPION CYCLISTS



[Completed: 201km] We did it! After more than 14hrs, our Champion Cyclists are back at where they've started, SGH Bicentennial Garden. We started at 5am, cycling round the island.

It has been a grueling journey but we wouldn't have done it without your support. You have helped us raised more than \$30,000 today for our needy patients and we can definitely do more. Every dollar of your generous support will go directly towards helping these patients.

You can support our needy patients here: <https://give.asia/campaign/sghb200#/>

*Source: SGH Facebook*

## SINGAPORE HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT 2022



Bringing together more than 1,000 local and overseas healthcare professionals, administrators and thought leaders from the field of healthcare management, supply chain management and more, the Singapore Healthcare Management 2022 opens its doors at the Sands Expo & Convention Centre once more.

We were honoured to have Minister of Manpower Dr Tan See Leng grace the Opening Ceremony, and we look forward to an informative two days of learning and discussions with industry experts from organisations such as Northwell Health, Patek Philippe and the Maritime And Port Authority Of Singapore, among others.

*Source: SingHealth Facebook*



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## October 2022

**12TH**

### **SGH Lunchtime Q+A with GPs**

Presented by Dr Suraya Bte Zainul Abidin, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, SGH  
Dr Pamela Sandriany Partana, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, SGH

**26TH**

### **SGH Lunchtime Q+A with GPs**

Presented by Dr Tan Si Ying, Department of Breast Surgery, SGH  
Dr Zhu Ling, Department of Endocrinology, SGH

## November 2022

**01ST**

### **GPCME Webinar: Thyroid\***

**04TH**

### **Urology GP Webinar\***

**09TH**

### **SGH Lunchtime Q+A with GPs**

Presented by Dr Melvin Tay, Department of Respiratory & Critical Care Medicine, SGH  
Prof Gopal Iyer, A/Prof Natascha Ekawati, Dr Rahul Nagadia, Department of Head & Neck Surgery, SGH

**14TH**

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### **Singapore Hyperbaric and Underwater Medicine Course\***

**18TH**

**16TH**

### **GPCME Webinar: ENT-HNS\***

**23RD**

### **SGH Lunchtime Q+A with GPs**

Presented by Dr Khor Shao Nan, Department of Colorectal Surgery, SGH  
Dr Darren Chua, Department of Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery, SGH

## December 2022

**08TH**

### **GPCME Webinar: Renal Transplant\***

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

# SGH LUNCHTIME Q+A WITH GPs

Have burning questions pertaining to medical care?

Join our clinicians at the SGH Lunchtime Q+A with GPs that takes place on Wednesday from 1pm to 2pm. Each session, we have our specialists from 1-2 disciplines online to take your questions live.

For more information on the upcoming sessions and to register and pre-submit your questions, please click on the below link (internet access required):

<https://ihis.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJErfu-trDMjHtQ7m2fzvFOdXdCS6u3hXtnn>



## ***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](mailto:alumni@sgh.com.sg)

**SGH ALUMNI NEWSLETTER**

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