

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Singapore Patient Conference 2021 Advocates the Importance of Healthcare Literacy to Empower Patients, Caregivers and the Community to Take Charge of Their Health and Wellness**

21 Recipients – Largest Group of Unsung Heroes Lauded for Their Selfless Contributions *at the Singapore Patient Action Awards 2021*

**Singapore, 19 November 2021** – Good health literacy and co-creating patient education between healthcare professionals, patients and caregivers are crucial for people to take charge of their health, become activated and care for one another. These are the key points that participants will take away at the Singapore Patient Conference (SPC) organised by Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Centre for Health Activation (CHA), in partnership with Central Health, National Healthcare Group, National Healthcare Group Polyclinics, Institute of Mental Health and Yishun Health.

Held online to the theme of "Empowering a Healthy Community Through Patient Education", the conference is in its 9<sup>th</sup> year and continues to be a dynamic platform for conversations and co-learning between patients, caregivers, volunteers, residents, health and social care partners.

"The complexity of modern health information can be difficult for anyone to process. This year's SPC focuses on improving the ease and accessibility of educational tools and resources to be available for individuals. This would enable and empower everyone to successfully find and access care, prevent certain health conditions, effectively manage those that occur, communicate their needs, understand their choices and make informed decisions" said Dr Tjan Soon Yin, Co-chair of the SPC 2021 Organising Committee, Senior Consultant, Rehabilitation Medicine, Tan Tock Seng Hospital.

Over the years, Tan Tock Seng Hospital's CHA has seen a growing interest in learning, sharing and co-creating health-related knowledge among event participants. From 2019 to 2021, there has also been a 25% increase in the number of participants aged 24 to 55 signing up for its fringe activities and programmes, ever since SPC was converted to a virtual platform in 2020.

As early as July 2021, fringe activities kicked off to culminate at SPC's Main Conference on 19 and 20 November 2021. Various wellness-related activities such as the Sustainable Caregiving 101 Seminar and Let's Get Cookin'! workshop were conducted. Invited guests, caregivers and volunteers shared their personal experiences and stories during the sessions to motivate others in their wellness journey.

To encourage and empower patients, caregivers and residents to make better and healthier lifestyle choices, more patient educational content was developed and made available to the public this year through TTSH's [online Health Library](#). The online resource portal provides

comprehensive information for patients to learn more about diseases, medical conditions, medication management, mental well-being and caregiving skills.

Caregivers are an essential part of the healthcare ecosystem. Whether new or seasoned caregivers, it can be challenging to learn different caregiving skills at once and to cope with the needs of the patient. To aid the increased number of caregivers, **Carer Matters** - a TTSH nurse-led caregiving training initiative was launched in 2019. Carer Matters is Singapore's first hospital-home caregiving framework that equips carers with the skillset and knowledge on day-to-day caregiving, preventive care and future planning. Caregivers will also learn coping strategies to better care for themselves. In addition, Carer Matters has developed a suite of useful online materials and virtual programmes for caregivers. As part of the fringe activities of SPC, Carer Matters conducted a seminar to better reach out to caregivers in the community.

### **Singapore Patient Action Awards 2021: Largest Number of Invisible Heroes Honoured in Last Seven Years**

21 inspiring individuals and groups who have contributed significantly to the healing journeys of patients and uplifting of community health will be honoured during the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Singapore Patient Action Awards (SPAA), which is held in conjunction with SPC. A total of 117 nominations were received this year. This has grown by 208% since its inauguration in year 2015 and it is by far the largest number of nominations received. This year, the Covid-19 pandemic prompted more nominations of community project initiatives focused on improving the well-being of socially isolated elderly individuals and migrant workers. The awards will be presented during SPC on 19 November 2021.

SPAA will be held online to acknowledge the invisible heroes in health and social care who have exhibited extraordinary qualities of courage, empathy, mental resilience and generosity of spirit, in the face of adversity. The five award categories are: "Singapore Patient Caregiver Award", "Singapore Patient Advocate Award", "Singapore Patient Support Group/ Volunteer Group Award", "Singapore Patient Engagement Initiative Award", and "Singapore Community Engagement Initiative Award".

***Singapore Community Engagement Initiative Award (Team-based)*** honours the work of successful neighbourhood-based initiatives that have contributed significantly to the improvement of care and overall well-being of residents and the local community.

**The Project Pencil Singapore @Yishun 71** was set up as a first responder to support needy families and those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is a by neighbours for neighbours initiative in Yishun with an aim to instil a sense of "kampung spirit" through socially engaging activities such as: block cleaning, exercise programme for elderly, food distribution, free tuition for children, field trips and providing support for the children's social and emotional development.

Operated by AMKFSC Community Services, the **Community Care Hub @ 414** is a by-residents-for-residents initiative that aims to build strong relationships among community members and facilitate an organic community of care. By fostering a spirit of collaboration and interdependence, the initiative mobilises residents to contribute their gifts and assets towards the well-being of marginalised neighbours, including individuals with financial problems, disabilities, and mental health struggles. In strengthening their social support and networks, Community Care Hub @ 414 creates a more resilient and cohesive community where no one is left behind.

**The Singapore Patient Caregiver Award (Individual)** honours caregivers for their strength, resilience, and unwavering dedication in caring for their loved ones amidst health and/or social care challenges.

Despite having children of her own, **Mdm Zainab Bte Baker** still manages to foster 10 children in her lifetime. Khai\*, one of her fostered son whom she has been caring for the past 17 years has quadriplegic cerebral palsy since he was about a year old. He is not able to walk or talk and relies on milk feed through a percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) button attached to his abdomen. But that did not deter Mdm Zainab from learning the necessary skills to care for his needs. Besides caregiving, she also accompanies him to school and appointments and pays out of her pocket to cover the huge cost of living for him.

\*Not his real name

**The Singapore Patient Advocate Award (Individual)** recognises individuals who are passionate about advocating for meaningful causes, and have contributed significantly towards improving care delivery.

**Ms Serlina Eng** is a Principal Case Manager at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) and an advocate for mental health. At work, she inspires her colleagues with her dedication to serve her patients based on personalised care, which she initiated in a Clinical Practice Improvement Project (CPIP). She also initiated the "Make yoU a Mask (MUM)" project which gave IMH patients an opportunity to learn a new skill and give back to the society by sewing masks for fellow patients, caregivers, and nurses during the Covid-19 pandemic. Outside of work, she devotes her time to raise funds for patients' non-medical needs, as well as for at-risk youths and athletes with disabilities in Singapore.

**The Singapore Patient Engagement Initiative Award (Team-based)** pays tribute to collaborative health and/or social care projects or initiatives within Singapore that contribute to the improvement of care and overall health and well-being of patients, caregivers, and/or the community.

The team of occupational therapists, nurses and clinicians at Yishun Health's Cognition 6th Vital Sign service designed **S.A.F.E (Stimulating Activities For Frail Elderly) Programme** to enhance the function and promote the overall well-being of patients with dementia or delirium in the inpatient wards. 'S.A.F.E Volunteers' were trained to understand the target patient group and learn how to actively engage them. Group reminiscence activities and therapeutic horticulture activities were also conducted for patients. After the programme was rolled out, the number of patients who sat out of bed to engage in activities increased from around 11% to 23%. There was also an increase in general alertness and pleasure, and a decrease in anxiety and fear and sadness among patients.

Please refer to the Annex for the full list of awardees and their stories.

SPC will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary next year. More details will be announced.

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**For media enquiries on press release:**

Ms Jasmine Chia  
Senior Executive, Communications  
Tan Tock Seng Hospital  
Tel: 6357 8038 | 9841 1634  
Email: [jasmine\\_cy\\_chia@ttsh.com.sg](mailto:jasmine_cy_chia@ttsh.com.sg)

**For media queries on the respective winners/ projects, please contact:**

Award Category	Name of Award Recipients	Institutions' Media POCs
<b>Singapore Patient Caregiver Award</b>	1. Ms Rima Rasif	Ng Wei Xuan Assistant Manager Apex Harmony Lodge Email: <a href="mailto:weixuan.ng@apexharmony.org.sg">weixuan.ng@apexharmony.org.sg</a>
	2. Mdm Lim Heo	Angela Tan Senior Medical Social Worker Assisi Hospice Email: <a href="mailto:angela.tan.sm@assisihospice.org.sg">angela.tan.sm@assisihospice.org.sg</a>
	3. Mdm Zainab Bte Bakar	Jemin Chua Communications Manager HCA Hospice Care Tel: 9744 0276 Email: <a href="mailto:jeminC@hcahospicecare.org.sg">jeminC@hcahospicecare.org.sg</a>
	4. Ms Suhaili Bte Maat	Jemin Chua Communications Manager HCA Hospice Care Tel: 9744 0276 Email: <a href="mailto:jeminC@hcahospicecare.org.sg">jeminC@hcahospicecare.org.sg</a>
	5. Mr William Lee & Mdm Winnie Loh	Poo Zhi Hui Manager, Corporate Communications KK Women's and Children's Hospital Tel: 6394 8558 Email: <a href="mailto:media@kkh.com.sg">media@kkh.com.sg</a>
	6. Mr Richard Ashworth	Alvyn Lim Ming Kai Manager, Communications Ng Teng Fong General Hospital Email: <a href="mailto:Alvyn_Lim@nuhs.edu.sg">Alvyn_Lim@nuhs.edu.sg</a>
	7. Ms Sally Soo Yoke Foong	Chia Ying Mei Senior Executive, Corporate Communications, Ren Ci Community Hospital Tel: 6355 6373 Email: <a href="mailto:yingmei_chia@renci.org.sg">yingmei_chia@renci.org.sg</a>
	8. Mdm Pung Geok Choo	Jason Ho Case Management Executive Singapore Cancer Society

		Email: <a href="mailto:jason_ho@singaporecancersociety.org.sg">jason_ho@singaporecancersociety.org.sg</a>
<b>Singapore Patient Advocate Award (Individual Award)</b>	1. Mr Lau Hing Tung & Mrs Lau Mak Choi Ming	Kathryn Joy Tan Supervisor Care Corner Seniors Services Ltd Email: <a href="mailto:kathryntan@carecorner.org.sg">kathryntan@carecorner.org.sg</a>
	2. Ms Serlina Eng Shi Lin	Illy Iman Executive, Corporate Communications Institute of Mental Health HP: 9843 2376 Email: <a href="mailto:illy_iman@imh.com.sg">illy_iman@imh.com.sg</a>
	3. Mr Jonathan Kuek	
<b>Singapore Patient Support Group / Volunteer Group Award (Team-based Award)</b>	1. Goldies Jukebox 金曲音乐盒	Stanley Ho Director, Advocacy and Communications Dementia Singapore Tel: 8223 6001 Email: <a href="mailto:stanley.ho@dementia.org.sg">stanley.ho@dementia.org.sg</a>
	2. Dover Park Hospice Ruby Group	Jenny Goo Manager, Communications and Outreach Dover Park Hospice Tel: 6500 7268 Email: <a href="mailto:jenny_goo@doverpark.sg">jenny_goo@doverpark.sg</a>
	3. Be Kind SG	Yam Jin Yeng Case Worker Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society (Moral Welfare Home) Tel: 6273 2239 Email: <a href="mailto:yamjinyeng@thkms.org.sg">yamjinyeng@thkms.org.sg</a>
<b>Singapore Patient Engagement Initiative Award (Team-based Award)</b>	1. Connecting Through ZOOM Parties	Illy Iman Executive, Corporate Communications, Institute of Mental Health Tel: 9843 2376 Email: <a href="mailto:illy_iman@imh.com.sg">illy_iman@imh.com.sg</a>
	2. No One Dies Alone @ IMH	
	3. NCIS Dream Makers	Nurul Ain Senior Executive, Operations & Administration National University Cancer Institute Singapore Tel: 93204478 Email: <a href="mailto:nurul_rasid@nuhs.edu.sg">nurul_rasid@nuhs.edu.sg</a>
	4. SAFE (Stimulating Activities for Frail Elderly) Programme	Marcus Sia Senior Executive, Corporate Communications, Yishun Health Email: <a href="mailto:sia.marcus.ws@ktph.com.sg">sia.marcus.ws@ktph.com.sg</a>

<b>Singapore Community Engagement Initiative Award (Team-based Award)</b>	1. Community Care Hub @ 414	Felicia Tan Executive, Corporate Communications AMKFSC Community Services Ltd HP: 9815 8257 Email: <a href="mailto:feliciatan@amkfsc.org.sg">feliciatan@amkfsc.org.sg</a>
	2. Project Pencil Singapore @ Yishun 71	Sarimah Amat Founder of Project Pencil Singapore Tel: 8388 4984 Email: <a href="mailto:projectpencilsingapore@gmail.com">projectpencilsingapore@gmail.com</a>
	3. Neighbourhood Care Networks at TOUCHpoint @AMK 433	Priscilla Toh Senior Lead, Strategic Communications TOUCH Community Services HP: 969 42364 Email: <a href="mailto:priscilla.toh@touch.org.sg">priscilla.toh@touch.org.sg</a>

### **About Tan Tock Seng Hospital**

Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) is the flagship hospital of the National Healthcare Group and part of Singapore's Public Healthcare System. As a pioneering hospital with strong roots in the community for over 175 years, TTSH is recognised as the People's Hospital, serving a resident population of 1.4 Million living in Central Singapore.

Together, with 70 community partners and 80 community health posts, it brings care beyond the hospital into the community as an integrated care organisation – Central Health.

As one of the largest multi-disciplinary hospitals in Singapore, TTSH operates more than 1700 beds with centres of excellence including the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID), Institute for Geriatrics & Active Ageing (IGA), NHG Eye Institute (NHGEI), TTSH Rehabilitation Centre, and Ang Mo Kio Specialist Centre (AMKSC).

TTSH's 600-bed Integrated Care Hub will be ready in 2022 to provide for subacute care and rehabilitation. As a healthcare leader in population health, systems innovation, health technologies and workforce transformation, TTSH hosts Singapore's largest purpose-built innovation centre for healthcare – the Ng Teng Fong Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI) and its Co-Learning Network of 37 local and international partners.

### **About the Centre for Health Activation**

Launched in 2017, TTSH's Centre for Health Activation (CHA) was set up to focus on Activation, Research and Training – also known as the ART of CHA. Its vision is to drive activation and build One Community of Carers (i.e. patients, caregivers, volunteers, residents and health and social care partners) who are equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to self-care, care for their loved ones and others in the community.

CHA's broader mission is to develop effective and relevant pedagogy in volunteerism, activation and social care, thereby forming a community of carers who are empowered to

take charge of their health and have the capabilities to support our Community Health Teams (CHTs) to care for the 1.4million population in the Central Zone.

Within the Hospital, CHA currently manages more than 300 active volunteers serving across 36 TTSH volunteer programmes and patient support groups. CHA has also collaborated with the Temasek Foundation – CHAMPS (Centre for Health Activation Mobilises Para-clinical Seniors) programme to train senior volunteers in para-clinical skills to enhance care for frail senior patients (these programmes are currently put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Moving from the Hospital and into the community, CHA collaborates with Central Health's partners to develop the CHArge Up! Learning Programme, which is one of CHA's community-enabling programmes. The programme aims to equip carers with the health skills and knowledge, such as managing chronic diseases and doing gait assessment. In doing so, these trained carers are better able to self-care (i.e. activation) and look out for others in the community.

Through CHA, we hope to inculcate a strong kampung spirit in our community – i.e. to activate the community to care for the community. Like our community health efforts within Central Health, the focus and direction of CHA's programmes will not just focus on our patients within our hospital, but to also address the needs of the 1.4 million population living in our Central zone, where 17% of the population is aged 65 years and above.