

Tan Tock Seng Hospital celebrates 180 years as the ‘People’s Hospital’ of Singapore

TTSH announces the Health for Generations Fund to make healthcare more sustainable for the future

19 July 2024, SINGAPORE - From its humble beginnings in 1844 as the Chinese Pauper Hospital for the sick and poor, being the main civilian hospital during the Japanese occupation, leading the fight against multiple outbreaks and pioneering the geriatric and rehabilitation medicine specialities in Singapore, TTSH has always stood by the nation.

Now 180 years on, the hospital is among the leaders in the fields of geriatric and rehabilitation care, the management of infectious disease threats and in the use of innovation to care for its patients and nurture its healthcare workforce. Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, President of the Republic of Singapore will grace the 180th anniversary celebrations at the Capitol Theatre as the Guest-of-Honour.

Celebrating the Commitment to Health

To mark this significant milestone, TTSH announced the set up of a new fund aimed at making healthcare more sustainable both within the hospital and the community. Named the Health for Generations Fund, the hospital’s charity arm, TTSH Community Fund aims to raise \$18 million over the next 5 years to support developments in key areas such as innovation, preventive healthcare and capability advancement.

The Health for Generations Fund will also support population health research projects, one of which will be the ‘Health4All@Toa Payoh’. This 5-year longitudinal study will enrol and track 4,000 Toa Payoh residents and understand their psychosocial and environmental factors influencing health. The results will help TTSH provide residents with personalised solutions for health literacy, self-care, and community support that were previously lacking or not present. Another innovative effort is the three-year ‘Predict-2-Prevent’ research that will study the 50,000 genes variants of 1,000 patients with high blood pressure, cholesterol or obesity. These will enable the research team to perform polygenic risk scoring and identify those who are at the highest risk of a heart attack and allow for more personalised and intensive intervention.

“We celebrate our remarkable journey but recognise that there is much to do as Singapore’s population ages and our healthcare needs increase. We must develop healthcare innovations and translate research from bench to bedside faster; our healthcare workforce will need to have the right skillsets to be agile and nimble and not to be burdened with labour intensive tasks. The hospital will need equitable care solutions that will help patients attain their full potential for health and well-being. The Health for Generations Fund will complement TTSH’s commitment in these areas and we are excited to partner potential donors towards sustainable healthcare for future generations,” said Dr Tang Kong Choong, Chief Executive Officer of TTSH.

Mr Tan Tee How, Chairman, National Healthcare Group (NHG) said, “We are immensely proud to celebrate the 180th founding anniversary of Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH). This historic milestone is a powerful testament to TTSH’s commitment to excellence in healthcare and its dedication to serving the healthcare needs of Singaporeans. Over the decades, TTSH has grown and evolved from its humble beginnings as a modest facility addressing the basic health needs of population, into a premier healthcare institution which has not only groomed generations of healthcare leaders but has also responded resolutely to the nation’s call in many healthcare crises, including SARS and COVID-19. TTSH’s continued commitment to clinical, teaching and research excellence and innovation is integral to NHG’s mission as the regional health cluster and population health manager for Central and North Singapore, and our vision of adding years of healthy life. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to all staff of TTSH, our patients and valued partners for their unwavering trust and support to TTSH.”

Celebrating the People

The Founder’s Day celebrations also paid tribute to staff members and teams with the annual Tan Tock Seng Awards. The awards are the highest honour conferred by the hospital in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the hospital’s legacy of care. This year, the Tan Tock Seng Awards also witnessed 4 individuals being conferred with the Emeritus title for their lifetime contributions to healthcare and being role models to the next generation of healthcare professionals. One of them is Professor Philip Choo, who has been a key driving force in the growth of geriatric medicine as a speciality in Singapore and more recently, as the Group CEO of NHG (2015-2023), he steered the transformation of NHG to take on a more holistic population health role in the public healthcare system.

A significant accolade – the Culture Transformation Award – was presented to the Total Workplace Safety & Health (TWSH) Council by President Tharman Shanmugaratnam for its exemplary efforts to reduce and prevent injuries in the workplace, introduce impactful programmes that promote staff

physical and mental well-being and support staff against abuse and harassment. The following awards were presented:

Culture Transformation Award	Total Workplace Safety & Health Council
Emeritus Conferment	3 Emeritus Consultants and 1 Emeritus Fellow
Milestone Awards	(1) The Integrated Diabetes Mellitus Care Collaborative (2) Specialised Unit for Acute Palliative Care
Staff Excellence Awards	34 staff and partners

The anniversary celebration was held at Capitol Theatre with a musical titled ‘Where Our Heart Beats’. Specially put together by award-winning actress and producer Tan Kheng Hua, and a talented local cast, including TTSH staff, the musical is inspired by real-life stories about TTSH and its people dedicating their work to make the hospital and Singapore a better place for health and healthcare.

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About Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) is one of the longest serving and largest multi-disciplinary hospitals in Singapore. Recognised as the people’s hospital, the 10,000-strong institution operates over 2,000 beds and covers more than 60 clinical disciplines. It anchors the 17-hectare HealthCity Novena, a strategic development to create an integrated community of healthcare, medical education and translational research.

Together with its centres of excellence – National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID), Institute for Geriatrics & Active Ageing (IGA), NHG Eye Institute (NHGEI), Trauma Centre and the TTSH Rehabilitation Centre – this leading tertiary institution is a pioneer in care, innovation and workforce transformation.

The flagship hospital of the National Healthcare Group, TTSH plays a pivotal role in creating new models of care and adding years of healthy life to the people of Singapore.