



## **NHG POLYCLINICS, IMH AND KTPH, COLLECTIVELY PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH IN THE COMMUNITY**

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN THE COMMUNITY**

More patients with common mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety are being managed closer to home through a collaboration between National Healthcare Group Polyclinics (NHGP), Institute of Mental Health (IMH), and Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH). This care arrangement reduces stigmatisation and encourages patients and caregivers to seek help in the community.

### **INTEGRATING PRIMARY AND SPECIALIST CARE FOR PATIENTS' CONVENIENCE**

2. Early diagnosis and interventions are critical in helping people with mental health conditions. Between October 2015 and September 2017, some 2,800 patients received timely interventions and effective care at Ang Mo Kio, Woodlands and Yishun Polyclinics, with over 80 per cent of them having shown improvement. The collaboration between NHGP, IMH and KTPH enables patients to be managed and treated in a primary care setting, and cared for holistically in one care setting. This coordinated and integrated approach also means that Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOCs) can now cater to patients with more severe mental health conditions.

3. Dr Winnie Soon, Family Physician, Consultant at NHGP, said, "The advantage of this collaboration is that it allows patients presenting with chronic and mental health conditions to be cared for in primary care instead of being treated in multiple care settings."

4. "Since 2012, the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) has been instrumental in developing networks with our primary and community care partners to open up accessibility of mental health services in the community. IMH's key role is to train and build the capability of our partners, and we have done so through talks, multi-agency case conferences for discussion of cases, co-consultations and clinical attachments at IMH to learn from the specialists. These are enhanced with the Mental Health-GP Partnership Programme which includes twice yearly workshops on mental health for GPs and polyclinic doctors. The option of attending the one-year Graduate

Diploma in Mental Health training programme is also made available to them,” said Dr Wei Ker-Chiah, Senior Consultant, Regional Chief, West Region, IMH.

5. “THRIVE-ASCAT at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH) is privileged to be a part of this initiative to form community partnerships, train more primary care doctors in providing psychiatric care and improve access of mental health services to the public. It is rewarding to work towards breaking down the barriers in healthcare,” said Dr Chan Keen Loong, Senior Consultant, Department of Psychological Medicine, KTPH.

6. Added Dr Chan, “The average appointment time for new cases to see a psychiatrist is shortened. But there is a system for rapid access, should the polyclinic diagnose cases that are urgent. These initiatives have resulted in better right-siting and appropriate care.”

### **HOLISTIC CARE MANAGEMENT AT POLYCLINICS**

7. Patients with common mental health conditions treated at NHG Polyclinics are supported by a multi-disciplinary team of Family Physicians, care managers, psychologists and medical social workers who ensure that their care needs are managed more holistically. This also allows patients, especially those with chronic conditions, to be cared for within the polyclinic instead of in multiple care settings, adding to their convenience and better continuity of care.

8. Added Dr Soon, “The multi-disciplinary approach has allowed patients to benefit from the individual strength of each healthcare professional. Patients are able to build rapport and trust with their healthcare team, thereby empowering them to manage their own health.”

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### **About National Healthcare Group**

The National Healthcare Group (NHG) is a leader in public healthcare in Singapore, recognised at home and abroad for the quality of its medical expertise and facilities. Care is provided through an integrated network of six primary care polyclinics, acute care and tertiary hospitals, national specialty centres and business divisions. Together they bring a rich legacy of medical expertise to our philosophy of integrated patient-centred care.

NHG's vision is "Adding Years of Healthy Life". This vision goes beyond merely healing the sick to the more difficult and infinitely more rewarding task of preventing illness and preserving health and quality of life. With some 18,000 staff, NHG aims to provide care that is patient-centric, accessible, seamless, comprehensive, appropriate and cost-effective.

As the Regional Health System (RHS) for Central Singapore, it is vital for NHG to partner and collaborate with stakeholders, community advisors, and voluntary welfare organisations. Together with our patients, their families and caregivers, we aim to deliver integrated healthcare services and programmes that help in Adding Years of Healthy Life to all concerned.

More information is available at [www.nhg.com.sg](http://www.nhg.com.sg).

### **About National Healthcare Group Polyclinics**

National Healthcare Group Polyclinics (NHGP) forms the primary healthcare arm of the National Healthcare Group (NHG). Its six polyclinics serve a significant proportion of the population in the central and northern parts of Singapore.

NHGP provides a comprehensive range of health services for the family, functioning as a one-stop health centre providing treatment for acute medical conditions, management of chronic diseases, women & child health services and dental care. The focus of NHGP's care is on health promotion and disease prevention, early and accurate diagnosis, disease management through physician led team-based care as well as enhancing the capability of Family Medicine through research and teaching.

Through the Family Medicine Academy and the NHG Family Medicine Residency Programme, NHGP plays an integral role in the delivery of primary care training at medical undergraduate and post-graduate levels. With the Primary Care Academy, NHGP provides training to caregivers and other primary care counterparts in the community sector.

NHGP has also been awarded the prestigious Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation under the Primary Care Standards.

### **About Institute of Mental Health**

The Institute of Mental Health (IMH), a member of the National Healthcare Group, is the only tertiary psychiatric care institution in Singapore. Located on the sprawling 25-hectare campus of Buangkok Green Medical Park in the north-eastern part of Singapore, IMH offers a multidisciplinary and comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and therapy services in hospital-based and community-based settings. The 2010-bedded hospital aims to meet the needs of three groups of patients – children and adolescents (age below 19 years), adults and the elderly. Besides providing clinical services, IMH also leads in mental health research and training the next generation of mental health professionals in Singapore. For more information, please visit [www.imh.com.sg](http://www.imh.com.sg).

### **About Khoo Teck Puat Hospital**

Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH), a 590-bed general and acute care hospital, opened in June 2010. Serving more than 800,000 people living in the northern sector of Singapore, KTPH combines medical expertise with high standards of personalised care, set within a healing environment, to provide care that is good enough for our own loved ones. From intuitive wayfinding to logical clustering of services, KTPH's design is focused on providing a hassle-free experience for patients. The hospital has been designed with patients' comfort in mind. Since its opening, the building has garnered numerous awards for its green and energy efficient design. Patients can enjoy comfortable accommodation in different categories of wards with views of greenery and naturally cool air from improved ventilation. KTPH also provides a wide range of outpatient specialist services.

## **CHINESE GLOSSARY**

Dr Winnie Soon Family Physician, Consultant National Healthcare Group Polyclinics	孙淑文医生 家庭医生，顾问 国立健保集团综合诊疗所
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## ANNEX

### **THRIVE-ASCAT at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH)**

THRIVE-ASCAT is the Assessment and Shared Care Team based in the north of Singapore. It is a multi-disciplinary physician-led team that provides treatment and care for patients with mental health issues through an accessible service network in the community. Comprising psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and case managers, THRIVE provides easy access to integrated care; develops community networks and partnerships; and builds capabilities of community partners through regular training and professional support.

At THRIVE, we provide the following for our community:

- Building a tiered system to provide a spectrum of mental healthcare catering to our patients in our community.
- Providing educational and self-help resources.
- Training professional, governmental, community agencies and public in mental health issues, and reducing the stigma of mental illness via road shows, talks, and training seminars.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ktph.com.sg/psychmed/thrive>.

### **Training programmes at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH)**

#### **Mental Health – GP Partnership Programme**

The Mental Health – GP Partnership Programme trains GPs to manage patients with stable mental health conditions. Under this programme, GPs undergo a half-day attachment at IMH where they sit in during clinic sessions with the GDMH Programme Director at Clinic B for a one-to-one clinical teaching session. IMH also conducts twice yearly workshops on mental health for GPs.

For more information, please visit [www.imh.com.sg/clinical/page.aspx?id=688](http://www.imh.com.sg/clinical/page.aspx?id=688).

#### **Graduate Diploma in Mental Health (GDMH)**

The Graduate Diploma in Mental Health (GDMH), offered by the Division of Graduate Medical Studies (DGMS), National University of Singapore (NUS) in conjunction with Institute of Mental Health (IMH), aims to increase the capability of general practitioners (GPs) in mental healthcare by training them appropriately to be able to detect and treat minor mental health conditions in the community.

The course is made up of 6 modules, completed over a period of 1 year. It is highly interactive with case formulation through video & live supervisions, journal discussions and case vignettes. Course reading materials are also provided for self-study. Clinical attachment opportunities are also arranged for participants to gain valuable experience in handling patients with mental health conditions.

Upon successful completion of the course, learners should be able to:

- Identify types of basic psychiatric disorders and prescribe basic treatment
- Be familiar with the principles of treatment approach in different psychiatric cases
- Apply assessment methodology to different mental disorders
- Learn management skills and prescriptions of basic psychiatric medication

For more information, please visit <https://www.imh.com.sg/education/page.aspx?id=673>.

For a listing of information on Community Mental Health Support and Services including GPs providing mental health care, please visit <https://www.silverpages.sg/resource-library/Quick%20Facts%20on%20Mental%20Health>.