

# Public healthcare sector to be reorganised into 3 integrated clusters, new polyclinic group to be formed



Singapore's public healthcare sector will undergo a major restructuring, and a new polyclinic group will be formed in the west. PHOTO: ST FILE

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SINGAPORE - Singapore's public healthcare sector will undergo a major restructuring in the coming year.

Today, there are six regional health systems. They will be regrouped into three integrated clusters, a process that is expected to be completed by early 2018.

A new polyclinic group, based in the west, will be formed too.

With the changes, each of the three clusters will offer a fuller range of services, encompassing acute hospital care, primary care and community care. Every cluster will also have a medical school.

Patients can go about using public healthcare facilities as per normal, as the transition will not impact them. In the long run, patients can expect more seamless care, said the Health Ministry, which announced the move on Wednesday.

It added that the changes are being made to strengthen the system for future challenges, such as dealing with an ageing population and more people with chronic ailments.

The process involves three healthcare groups merging with the other three groups.

- Singapore Health Services (SingHealth) will merge with the Eastern Health Alliance, which oversees Changi General Hospital.
- The National Healthcare Group (NHG) and Alexandra Health System will join forces. The latter operates Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, among others.
- The National University Health System will be paired with Jurong Health Services, which runs facilities such as Ng Teng Fong General Hospital.

In line with the three new clusters, the polyclinics will be reorganised.

Currently, SingHealth and NHG run nine polyclinics each. Several of their polyclinics will be changing hands to form the new National University Polyclinics group, to be managed by NUHS.

After the transfers, National University Polyclinics will have five polyclinics - Bukit Batok, Choa Chu Kang, Clementi, Jurong and Queenstown.

The newly formed polyclinic group will also take charge of the upcoming Bukit Panjang and Pioneer polyclinics after these facilities are built.

Referring to the reorganisation, Health Minister Gan Kim Yong said in a statement: "I am confident that we will be able to better optimise resources and capabilities, and provide more comprehensive and patient-centred care to meet Singaporeans' evolving needs."