



Quality Collaboration

DECONDITIONING is a decline in physical or psychological function following a period of inactivity, bed rest or sedentary lifestyle, which is often observed in older people.

In the long run, this can affect their mental well-being and ability to handle daily tasks, hurting their quality of life.

At IMH, [deconditioning](#) is a concern because of an increasing number of older adults in the long stay wards, who may also have to be on restraints.

To address this, the hospital's physiotherapy team – led by Mr Sumanth Venigalla Kumar – embarked on a quality improvement project to prevent deconditioning.

The project's good results landed it a Best Award in Developing a

Flexible and Sustainable Workforce at this year's NHG Quality Day, held on October 6 at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine auditorium with more than 400 participants.

By introducing an in-house Zumba video for nurses to encourage patients to exercise – as well as stratifying the patients

by [Elderly Mobility Scale \(EMS\)](#) to determine timely intervention visits by physiotherapists, occupational therapists, therapy assistants and nurses – the IMH project allowed one in five patients involved to be taken off restraints and allowed to walk independently.

The EMS is a validated tool for the assessment of frail seniors.

This led to faster patient recovery and better patient care, accruing more than \$11,000 in manpower savings for IMH.

The project – which was rolled out in May to four other IMH wards with frail elderly patients – was one of [20 Quality Improvement Award \(QIA\) winners](#) at Quality Day.



Mr Sumanth Venigalla Kumar from IMH received on behalf of his team a QIA Best Award from A/Prof Tai Hwei Yee.

They were selected from close to 100 submissions, up from 70 last year.

Separately, another 25 individuals and five teams were given the [Excellence In Action Awards \(EIAA\)](#), while eight [Exemplary Patient and Caregiver Awards](#) were also handed out.

This year's Quality Day took on added significance because it was the first major event following NHG's [formal cluster amalgamation](#) on October 1.

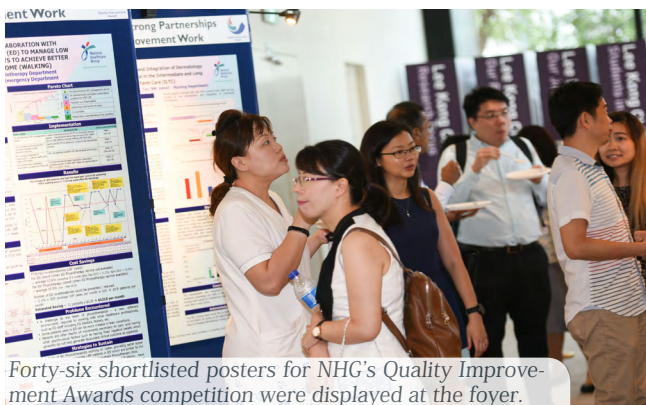
With the theme "Collaborative relationships: Co-creating value in communities", it was apt that senior management and staff from Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Yishun Community Hospital and Woodlands Health Campus – as well as NHG community partners – were part of NHG's annual celebration of quality.

Expressing excitement that NHG has grown, Guest-of-Honour and Acting Group CEO A/Prof

Quality Day Chairman Dr Tung Yew Cheong and Mr Timothy Yeo from NHG GORM receiving balloons from an audience member after their 'mystery performance' on Quality Day.



Attendees having a go at the games booth.



Forty-six shortlisted posters for NHG's Quality Improvement Awards competition were displayed at the foyer.



NHGQ EPCA winners Mr Rajiv Vishwanathan and Ms Ritika Kak with their award nominator. They were joined by patient Mr Koh (centre) and his care coordinator.



Quality Day Chairman Dr Tung Yew Cheong playing a game of thumb wrestling with keynote speaker Dr Mary Ann Tsao. The objective is to pin your opponent's thumb down, but the game also showed that by collaborating instead of competing, both players got more points.

Chua Hong Choon told the audience that we see ourselves as part of an integral healthcare and social system with our community partners.

“That is the big NHG family and that’s the way things should be... We’re all in this together,” he said.

The event also had its share of surprises, including a “mystery performance”.

It turned out to be a live rendition of [James Arthur’s “Say You Won’t Let Go”](#) by Quality Day chairman Dr Tung Yew Cheong, which got some members of the crowd on their feet.

The song was meant to showcase the importance of human touch and collaboration in healthcare.

Underlining the importance of collaboration in healthcare, Group Chief Quality Officer A/Prof Tai Hwei Yee shared an African proverb in her closing remarks: If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together.

“I hope that we can keep this in mind as we go forward in our healthcare improvement journey,” she said. ☺

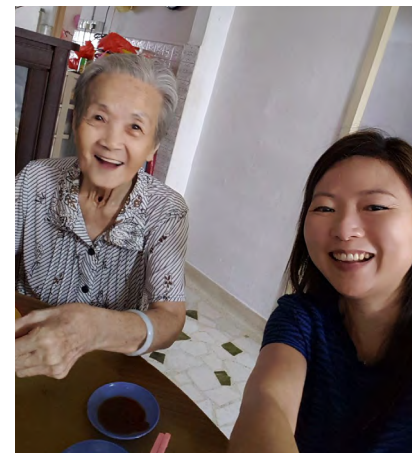
“We see ourselves as part of an integral healthcare and social system with our community partners... That is the big NHG family.”

NHG Acting Group CEO
A/Prof Chua Hong Choon



See you at Quality Day 2018!

The organising committee and helpers for Quality Day 2017 celebrate the event's successful completion.



Ms Vivian Yap (centre) received the EPCA for her unwavering dedication in caring for her late mother-in-law (above). With her at Quality Day were her husband and award nominators Dr Martin H'ng (far left), APN Quek Poh Seo and Dr Yap Kim Hoong (far right).

WHEN the late Madam Kong Ah Yuen was diagnosed with lung cancer last year, her daughter-in-law Ms Vivian Yap cared for her tirelessly.

The 48-year-old administrative clerk re-arranged her work schedule so she could devote time to being her primary caregiver.

Almost every day, she would travel to her mother-in-law's

“I was driven by the thought that I wanted my mother-in-law to be out of the hospital so that she could have better quality of life,” said Ms Yap.

For her unwavering dedication, Ms Yap along with eight other volunteers, caregivers and patients, won the NHG Exemplary Patient and Caregiver Award at this year's Quality Day.

This year marks the first time

at that time.

When performing the drainage procedure, she diligently adhered to infection control practices such as hand hygiene, said Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) Quek Poh Seo from TTSH, one of her award nominators.

Eventually, Ms Yap also taught other family members how to do the procedure.

“Even with multiple family

Model of Care

place to keep her company and take care of her needs.

Despite not having healthcare training, she also learnt how to perform [pleural fluid](#) drainage for Madam Kong, a patient at TTSH.

This was crucial because fluid was accumulating in Madam Kong's chest causing her breathing difficulties.

Doctors said Madam Kong required a long-term catheter to be inserted into her chest so the fluid could be drained.

that the eligibility criteria were extended to nominees involved in RHS projects and indeed one winning pair – Mr Rajiv Vishwanathan and Ms Ritika Kak—were volunteers from the [NHG Neighbours Programme](#).

Award recipients demonstrated desirable behaviours, actions and attitudes, and had attributes of service ambassadors.

In Ms Yap's case, what stood out about her was that she readily volunteered to be the caregiver for Madam Kong who was 77

members partaking in the drainage procedure, the patient never once developed an infection and eventually, comfortably passed on with the progression of her disease,” said APN Quek.

APN Quek hopes Ms Yap's example would help correct the perception that the procedure can only be performed by staff who are medically trained. “With Vivian's case, it proves that a seemingly challenging procedure can be learned by anyone willing to be trained.” ☺



Keynote speaker Dr Mary Ann Tsao (left) receiving her token of appreciation from NHG Acting GCEO A/Prof Chua Hong Choon. The calligraphy means "united in a concerted effort".

'Collaboration is key'

- » Be ready with a well thought-out concept
- » Identify key external stakeholders – ministry, NHG, grassroots, service providers, community
- » Understand their readiness for collaboration
- » Build relationships and understand their needs
- » Define shared objectives and ensure a win-win process for all

BETTER TOGETHER

ALTHOUGH paralysed waist-down, 61-year-old Mr Ng was able to lead a fairly independent life. The former seaman, who lived on his own, went for rehab, continued to meet friends and years later, even got married.

All of this, however, would not have been possible without the efforts of the community, said [Dr Mary Ann Tsao](#), chairwoman and founding director of the [Tsao Foundation](#) – a non-profit dedicated to aged care and ageing issues.

"He went on to have life. Otherwise, he would have been in a nursing home and I'm not sure how long he would have lasted there because his spirit would have died."

Delivering the keynote address at NHG Quality Day – entitled "Developing Collaborative Relationships in the Community" – Dr Tsao cited the case of

Mr Ng as a positive example of what could be accomplished if community stakeholders came together.

Mr Ng's wheelchair, for instance, was donated by Hua Mei Seniors Clinic while counselling centre Shan You helped build a ramp for him to get in and out of his flat.

There are three lessons that can be learnt from this experience, said Dr Tsao.

First, it is important to look at social determinants and how it impacts people's social lives and the delivery of services.

Second, there is a need to create systems so that patient needs can be met collectively.

"We were very lucky at that time – we were able to instigate a community caring network and all of us working in the central area came together," said Dr Tsao.

"That's such a wonderful thing because we don't feel so lonely... When we think together, we can solve a lot of problems."

And lastly, without collaboration, it would not have been possible to achieve what was done for Mr Ng.

Dr Tsao added that the job of a healthcare community is more than just "fixing the body".

It is also about maintaining and promoting good health, and ensuring health and well-being.

In 2015, the Tsao Foundation launched the Community for Successful Ageing (ComSA) in Whampoa, which adopts a whole community approach in helping the elderly age in place.

"Collaboration is really intrinsic," she said.

"We all know that healthcare is very complex, particularly those working with older people." ☺

HELPING HANDS



TODAY'S complex healthcare systems mean that patients often have to be "handed off" from one care provider to another. The problems that could arise led two CPIP groups to embark on projects to improve the processes involved.

They shared their projects and lessons learnt on Quality Day, which included the CPIP graduation ceremony for 95 participants from the 40th to 42nd batches.

The first team from IMH – led by senior consultant psychiatrist A/Prof Chiam Peak Chiang and infrastructure and support services deputy director Mr Lim Chee Ming – sought to speed up the process of diagnosing

[ment by IMH staff](#), from 46 to 30 days.

Through creating a phone app and rounds of Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles, they increased the percentage of patients assessed within 30 days of screening from 39 per cent to 77 per cent.

One lesson they learnt is that the practice of each healthcare partner is unique.

"A solution for one partner may not work for another," noted team member and consultant psychiatrist Dr Yao Fengyuan. "Don't be in a rush to spread."

Meanwhile, the second CPIP team from TTSH brought together anaesthetists and cardiologists, who worked together

achieving 100 per cent in 12 out of 23 weeks. Average weekly appropriateness levels were close to 90 per cent, up from a baseline of 30 per cent.

This improved the timeliness to surgery, clinician and patient satisfaction, and reduced waste, translating to potential savings of \$16,000 a year.

"Cherish the small successes. There will be days when you hit your targets and days you don't," said Dr Yuan. "We must have the patience to allow the whole trend to build up and carry on."

Group Chief Quality Officer A/Prof Tai Hwei Yee praised the work of the two groups for examining what matters to a patient and looking beyond their own safe boundaries to work with others.

"The secret to successful collaboration is not only to work toward common goals but to develop deep relationships where there is collegiality, mutual respect and spontaneous proactive support for each other."



"A solution for one partner may not work for another... Don't be in a rush to spread."

IMH consultant psychiatrist Dr Yao Fengyuan

"Cherish the small successes. There will be days when you hit your targets and days you don't."

TTSH consultant anaesthetist Dr Flora Yuan



dementia and depression in the community, so cases can be treated early.

Collaborating with the [Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre \(AMKFSC\)](#), they aimed to shorten the time from initial screening by AMKFSC staff, to [assess-](#)

to improve the pre-operative process of cardiology referrals.

Led by consultant anaesthetist Dr Flora Yuan and consultant cardiologist Dr Chia Yew Woon, the group managed to increase the proportion of appropriate referrals significantly,

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Moments captured from this year's NHGP Quality Day themed "Our Quality Culture - Sustainability and Spread"

Quality all around

October was a busy month as several NHG institutions held their own quality-themed events to celebrate and learn more about quality work.

KTPH/YCH

KTPH and YCH staff were reminded of the importance of mindfulness – putting our hearts into what we presently do – at their Quality Convention on October 4, which was opened by KTPH and Yishun Health CEO Ms Chew Kwee Tiang.

The benefits of being mindful lead to better and safer patient care.

As such, mindfulness should be a daily practice in our lives, said the convention's keynote speaker [Dr Saamdu Chetri](#).

The executive director at [Bhu-](#)

[tan's Gross National Happiness Centre](#) told the audience that we tend to live in the past or future, instead of the present.

We are constantly connected to work and technology in our busy lives, but not to ourselves. Embrace contentment and gratitude, he urged.

The event also acknowledged staff service champions and presented Nike sneaker "medals" to their Just-Do-It winners, which recognises staff who take the initiative to own and resolve problems, or respond to situations beyond the call of duty.

NHGP

NHGP held its Quality Day on October 4 at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, with the theme "Our Quality Culture – Sustainability and Spread", aimed at spreading improvement projects and initiatives to other polyclinics that might benefit from transformation in primary care.

Some 70 staff participated in a quality improvement workshop on "Sustainability and Spread", facilitated by NHG Group Chief Quality Officer A/Prof Tai Hwei Yee.

Separately, guest speaker [Ms Yuko Nakahira, managing director of 3M Singapore](#), shared how 3M fostered a quality culture of innovation within a supportive environment of collaboration, to spread and build on promising ideas and invention.

Seven team and 14 individual awards were also given out in six award categories at the event.

NSC

The logo for NSC's Quality Day this year, which took place on October 17, depicts four arms working hand-in-hand to provide the best care plan for patients. They represent different stakeholders – healthcare, patients, families and community partners – and echo NHG's Quality Day theme this year of "Collaborative Relationships".

For NSC's healthcare transformation, the institution will con-

tinue to strive in four areas, said director A/Prof Tan Suat Hoon in her opening address at NSC's Quality Day on October 17.

These are: appropriate care; improvement in patient safety and care quality; job redesign; and high quality research.

In FY2016, NSC had built staff capability by extending quality improvement courses to all departments and reduced waiting time for new subsidised clinic appointments, said assistant director of clinical governance and quality Adj A/Prof Leow Yung Hian.

NSC also presented three staff with the Star award, eight with the gold award and 15 with the silver award at its Service Champion Awards ceremony on the same day.

TTSH

Ever thought of challenging a

silly work-related rule but afraid to do so? In TTSH, staff were encouraged to do that and point out rules that hindered them in delivering value-based care.

It was part of the TTSH's Value Festival on October 16, which aimed to celebrate clinical, process and service improvements; share improvement initiatives and engage staff in continuous improvement; and to showcase capability in integrating design thinking in lean.

Besides "Challenge-A-Rule", staff also took part in an "Amazing Race" where they learnt about quality improvements at four pit stops along a patient journey. Other activities included MyCare's 10th anniversary ceremony, a Quality Improvement project competition and "Makeathon", which aims to inculcate an innovative design and prototyping culture. ☞



TTSH staff (left) worked with partners to create a prototype of a visitor chair during the Value Festival's Makeathon while NSC director A/Prof Tan Suat Hoon (above) delivered the opening address at NSC's Quality Day. Keynote speaker Dr Saamdu Chetri (below) spoke about mindfulness at this year's Quality Convention organised by KTPH and YCH.

