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A monthly e-newsletter by NUH GP Liaison Centre

Specialist in Focus



Dr Chao Siew Shuen

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Senior Consultant & Director of Clinical Services, Department of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery

Dr Chao brings with her a wealth of experience in the management of complex nasal and sinus pathology, and nasal allergy, having undergone advanced subspecialty training in Endoscopic Sinus Surgery and Allergy at the University of Iowa, USA in 2003-2004. She heads the Rhinology and Allergy Clinic, leading a team which provides a comprehensive service in the diagnosis and treatment of nasal allergy, including skin-prick and blood tests, counseling, and immunotherapy.

She is part of the Endoscopic and Skull-base Surgery Program at NUH, and provides surgical treatment to patients with nasal problems who had failed medical treatment. She also performs endoscopic and minimally invasive surgery in the treatment of nasal and skull base tumours. She was involved in the establishment of Endoscopic Lacrimal and Orbital Surgery, working closely with the oculoplastic team from the Department of Ophthalmology, to treat patients with nasolacrimal duct obstruction, thyroid eye diseases, etc with minimally invasive surgery, resulting in much better cosmetic results. Together with the oculoplastic team, she also runs the Lacrimal Clinic, which provides a one-stop service to patients with pathology such as lacrimal duct obstruction.

Dr Chao is a recognized expert in the field of rhinology and nasal allergy, and has been invited to lecture and conduct courses, workshops and surgical demonstrations at many regional institutions, including those in Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, and Myanmar. She has also presented scientific papers at numerous international meetings, and has won awards for her work. She has mentored junior doctors, many of whom have also won prizes for their research presentations under her supervision.

Clinical Updates

Screening placentas may save more babies

Substances in abnormal placentas, which can put women at high risk of miscarriages, have been identified as possible biomarkers in screening tests - paving the way for doctors to identify such women before their pregnancies run into trouble.

This finding came from a local study in which placentas - the nutrient-supply organ which connects mother to child - were collected from four groups of women just after they gave birth at National University Hospital (NUH).

One group was made up of six women with pre-eclampsia (pregnancy-induced hypertension), while another comprised nine pregnant women who previously had two or more miscarriages before the fifth month of pregnancy.

The miscarriages in these women were caused either by an overactive immune system which prevented the foetus – considered a foreign



body because it contains cells from the father – from attaching to the womb or by “sticky blood” syndrome in which clots clog up the blood vessels running through the placenta, cutting off blood flow to the baby.

In the study, published in the journal *Placenta* in February last year but was not released to the media until now, these two groups of patients were matched with healthy pregnant women of similar maternal and gestational age as controls.

The 15 women who were in danger of miscarriage received treatment and all 30 gave birth normally.

Click [here](#) to find out more about this finding.



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Happenings @ NUH

NUH offers ventilation care for kids at home

The National University Hospital (NUH) has started to formally offer home ventilation services for children – a move which will allow young patients to be treated in their homes and, also, free up precious bed space in hospitals.



With this, patients need not go to the hospital even for routine check-ups, which could be as frequent as once a month. The portable ventilator – a laptop-size machine connected to a tube – helps breathing by delivering air to the lungs.

Click [here](#) to find out more about the ventilation services offered.

Upcoming GP CME Events

Date	Topic
17 May	GP CME on Gynae Conditions
21 Jun	Aero-Digestive Disorders – “A consolidated approach to children with upper airway and gastrointestinal problems”

Please note that all CME events will be held at **the Seminar Room T1-01** under otherwise stated.

**NUHS Tower Block, Level 1
 1E Kent Ridge Road, Singapore
 119228.**

**Please CALL us @ 6772 5695 / 5079
 for registration & enquiries**

When a child dies

Last year, the National University Hospital (NUH) established bereavement support for parents whose children die there. Dr Noreen Chan, 49, a senior consultant at the National University Cancer Institute at NUH, was involved in setting it up.



PHOTO: ST FILE

At hospitals such as the National University Hospital, parents whose child has died there can look for bereavement support to cope with the grief.

The palliative care specialist noticed that parents of children with cancer routinely received such help from the Children’s Cancer Foundation. Yet there was no formal support system for those whose children died from other conditions.

Now, the hospital’s bereavement support focuses on two departments.

At the Children’s Emergency department, where death can be sudden, a medical social worker constantly mans a hotline for grieving parents.

At the paediatric Intensive Care Unit, parents whose children are slipping away are encouraged to hold and carry them, says senior staff nurse, Noorida Kairom, 43, who is in charge of bereavement support there

Like NUH, more hospitals have been providing ways to support bereaved parents, such as suggesting they take a handprint or a lock of hair from their child



The Official Opening of the NUH Medical Centre & National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS)

The new NUH Medical Centre was officially opened by Minister for Health, Mr Gan Kim Yong on Monday, 21st April.

This new building addresses the need for additional space to provide better patient care, research for better cure, and teaching the future generations of doctors at NUH. By integrating essential clinical facilities and services within the same building, we hope to provide our patients with a better coordinated experience and integrated multi-disciplinary care,” says Adjunct Associate Professor Joe Sim, Chief Executive Officer of the NUH.

One-stop integrated care

Patients seeking treatment for conditions which require medical expertise straddling multiple disciplines now experience greater convenience and more seamless care. At the Breast Centre, patients consult the breast surgeons, have their mammograms done and receive counseling all within the same location. At the multi-disciplinary Arthritis Clinic patients can consult the different Specialists including doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, such as podiatrists and



Located directly above the Kent Ridge MRT station, the 19-storey medical centre was completed in 2013 and started serving patients in July the same year.

The medical centre houses primarily specialist outpatient clinics and other facilities for subsidised patients, and has seen more than 120,000 patient visits to date. The medical centre is the latest and one of three buildings serving hospital patients within the NUH campus. It houses 190 consultation rooms, more than 200 treatment and procedure rooms, 10 day surgery operating theatres, as well as dedicated space for teaching and clinical trials. It is also home to the **National University Cancer Institute, Singapore** (Yong Siew Yoon Wing).



“The NUH Medical Centre will help us meet the increasing demand for healthcare services and the complexity of diseases and conditions.

occupational therapists, at the same visit instead of having to make multiple appointments.

Click [here](#) to read more of the press release.