



Guests, both in person and virtual, celebrating the efforts of outstanding clinicians, clinician scientists and other healthcare professionals at the Ministry of Health's National Medical Excellence Awards. PHOTOS: LIANHE ZAOBAO

## Clinicians, healthcare professionals lauded at medical excellence awards

### Clara Chong

A familiar name in news reports over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic and internationally recognised infectious diseases expert Dale Fisher received the National Outstanding Clinician Award yesterday.

Professor Fisher, a senior consultant at the National University Hospital's (NUH) Division of Infectious Diseases, began his career in Singapore during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sars) outbreak in 2003.

He was among the four individuals and two teams to receive the Ministry of Health's National Medical Excellence Awards (NMEA) this year.

The NMEA recognises the efforts of outstanding clinicians, clinician scientists and other healthcare professionals.

Among his numerous contributions, Prof Fisher is also one of three founding members of NUH's Division of Infectious Diseases.

His aggressive stance against Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infection saw its infection rates in NUH and nationally drop significantly.

On winning the award, Prof Fisher said he felt flattered and humbled: "You can't help but re-



Professor Dale Fisher receiving the National Outstanding Clinician Award from Health Minister Ong Ye Kung yesterday. He was among the four individuals and two teams to receive the National Medical Excellence Awards.

flect on all the people that have supported me... through my career and continue to do a lot of work, such as my infectious disease colleagues, who have covered a lot of my hospital duties to enable me to do my other sort of national and international roles."

He also works with international organisations such as the World Health Organisation.

He was involved in the Ebola response in Liberia from 2014 to 2015, and has assisted governments in several countries during

H1N1 influenza outbreaks for over a decade.

He was one of 12 international experts selected for the first WHO-China Joint Mission on Covid-19 to China early this year to investigate and advise on interventions to guide the global response.

Another award winner was Professor Chong Siow Ann, a senior consultant in the research division and department of psychosis at the Institute of Mental Health. He won the National Outstanding

### Clinician Scientist Award.

Prof Chong initiated the first Singapore Mental Health Study in 2007, which provided a comprehensive insight into the mental health status of adults aged 18 and above in Singapore.

The three-year study established the prevalence of common mental disorders here, their associated factors, the treatment gap of the disorders, as well as the help-seeking behaviour of the local population.

In the international arena, Prof Chong led a team of researchers from Singapore, the United States, Australia and Hong Kong, on a cutting-edge five-year Translational Clinical Research in schizophrenia and related psychoses in 2008 to identify the biomarkers for this group of disorders.

The findings of this \$25 million project provided significant insights into schizophrenia and related psychosis, and also placed Singapore on the world map.

Other winners were Associate Professor Wong Kok Seng from SingHealth Community Hospitals, who won the National Outstanding Clinician Mentor Award, and Professor Tan Hak Koon from KK Women's and Children's Hospital, who picked up the National Outstanding Clinician Educator Award.

The Covid-19 Research Workgroup from the National Centre for Infectious Diseases and the team behind the GPFIRST Programme from Changi General Hospital both won the National Clinical Excellence Team Award.

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