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Built with patients in mind – the new NUH Medical Centre brings better care and helps in meeting the increasing demand for healthcare services

The new NUH Medical Centre was officially opened by Minister for Health, Mr Gan Kim Yong today.

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 the 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. 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 Care Centre, patients consult the breast surgeons, have their mammograms done and receive counselling 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 occupational therapists, at the same visit instead of having to make multiple appointments.

- National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (Yong Siew Yoon Wing)

The NUH Medical Centre is also home to the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (Yong Siew Yoon Wing) which provides one-stop, comprehensive care for both adult and paediatric oncology patients - the only public cancer centre in Singapore to do so. The Centre is fully integrated with support services like imaging, dietetics, pharmacy, clinical laboratories and a health resource centre, designed to provide patients holistic care.

Increasing efficiency with the use of technology

Today, the hospital is making a push to go paperless, which will enhance communication and information flow between different departments and medical professionals, ultimately leading to better care for its patients.

Over at the pharmacy, an ¹Outpatient Pharmacy Automation System (OPAS) comprising robotic arms that can pick, pack and label medications, is being tested. Once operational, this will cut waiting time for medication and improve medication safety.

¹ The OPAS is a collaborative project with the Health Ministry's IT arm - Integrated Health Information Systems (IHIS), National Healthcare Group Pharmacy, and Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Greater accessibility and convenience

Coming for appointments at the NUH Medical Centre have become easier for patients, with the direct link to the Kent Ridge MRT station. Once out of the MRT station and into the building, patients can generally get to their destinations in no more than three turns.

To make it more intuitive and elder-friendly, alpha-numeric identifiers are used to help patients locate their clinics and consult rooms easily.

Therapeutic environment

Building features such as greenery, warm colours and large glass windows provide patients a more comfortable and soothing experience when they visit the NUH Medical Centre.

Enhancing patient care

“My son has been a patient with the NUH for nine years. As his condition needs regular follow-up at the NUH, I have witnessed how the hospital campus transformed over the years. It is now much more convenient to move between the various clinics and facilities, unlike before when we had to move around the campus, sometimes between buildings. For example, going for the consultation at the Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre and collecting medication at the Pharmacy is just a few steps away now that there is a satellite pharmacy on the same floor. Waiting time to get the medication is also shorter. Going for diagnostic imaging services, if necessary, after his consultation at the clinic is just a lift-ride. The brighter and more spacious environment also makes the entire experience of having to visit the hospital a lot more pleasant,” says Mrs Marianne Lim, whose son, Joel Lim, is now 16 years old.

Not just for patients of today, the NUH Medical Centre is built to cater to the growing ageing population and anticipated increase in demand for healthcare services.

Teaching facilities are embedded within the clinics at the new medical centre to provide young doctors with the opportunity to learn early to be good doctors.

Dedicated space close to or within the clinics provide patients participating in clinical trials more privacy. The NUH Medical Centre is home to several research programmes where patients can get access to drugs years before they are commercially available, giving hope to patients who have exhausted existing options.

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About the National University Hospital

The NUH is a tertiary hospital and major referral centre for a comprehensive range of medical, surgical and dental specialties including Cardiology, Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Paediatrics, Orthopaedic Surgery and Hand and Reconstructive Microsurgery. The Hospital also provides organ transplant programmes for adults (in kidney, liver and pancreas) and is the only public hospital in Singapore to offer a paediatric kidney and liver transplant programme.

Staffed by a team of healthcare professionals who rank among the best in the field, the NUH offers quality patient care by embracing innovations and advances in medical treatment.

In 2004, the NUH became the first Singapore hospital to receive the Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation, an international stamp for excellent clinical practices in patient care and safety. Today, patient safety and good clinical outcomes remain the focus of the hospital as it continues to play a key role in the training of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, and in translational research which paves the way for new cures and treatment, offering patients hope and a new lease of life.

A member of the National University Health System, it is the principal teaching hospital of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and the NUS Faculty of Dentistry.

For more information, please visit www.nuh.com.sg

About the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore

The National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) offers a broad spectrum of cancer care and management covering both paediatric and adult cancers, with expertise in prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. The Institute's strength lies in the multi-disciplinary approach taken to develop a comprehensive and personalised plan for each cancer patient and his or her family. NCIS draws on the expertise of its specialists in the fields of haematology-oncology, radiation oncology, gynaecologic oncology, paediatric oncology, surgical oncology, oncology nursing, oncology pharmacy, palliative care, pathology, radiology, medical specialties including gastroenterology and hepatology, infectious diseases, pulmonary and critical care, psychiatry, epidemiology and public health as well as other allied health sciences. NCIS's strength in research allows patients to access drugs and devices before they are commercially available. NCIS is also closely affiliated with the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore, National University of Singapore.

For more information about the NCIS, please visit www.ncis.com.sg