

IN COMMEMORATION OF  
THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL'S  
25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**25**

**y**

**ears**

PATIENT CARE • OUR FOCUS  
RESEARCH • OUR CORNERSTONE  
TEACHING • OUR TRADITION

# 24 Jun

The National University Hospital was born, opening our doors to **180** staff, serving **50** outpatients and **4** inpatients.



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9

8

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25

**Ye**

**ars on.**

We have over **5,500** staff serving more than **670,000** outpatients and **59,000** inpatients.

**In**

**20**



# O10

The NUH is now a major referral centre for a comprehensive range of medical and dental specialties. It is also the principal teaching hospital of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and the Faculty of Dentistry.

**MESSAGE**  
from the  
**Senior  
Minister**

The National University Hospital (NUH), Singapore's first restructured hospital, opened on 24 June 1985 at the Kent Ridge university campus. However, its genesis goes back to the late 1960s, when the idea of a university hospital was first mooted.

Today, NUH's close links with the National University of Singapore set it apart from other hospitals. The unique identity of a teaching hospital continues to be a key attraction for clinicians who aspire to do more than practise tertiary medical care. The hospital offers an environment where research and education are an integral part of medicine. Research has flourished, which in turn has led to better treatment and care for those who are ill. It laid the foundation for many of the clinical breakthroughs which not only bring hope and better treatment to patients, but also enhance Singapore's reputation for medical excellence.

Indeed, NUH has made significant contributions to healthcare in Singapore by spearheading many quality initiatives. In 2004, NUH became the first Singapore hospital to receive the Joint Commission International accreditation, an international stamp for excellent clinical practices in patient care and safety. This accreditation has since become a benchmark for patient care and

safety for hospitals in Singapore. Since 2006, NUH has also published its clinical outcome data on its website, thus providing greater transparency for benchmarking against international outcomes. Through these initiatives, Singaporeans can be assured of the effective and high-quality care that they receive from NUH.

A key member of the National University Health System since 2008, NUH is embarking on an exciting phase as an academic medical centre to develop as an integrated centre of excellence in healthcare service, research and teaching. I am confident it will continue to excel in the search for better treatment and in nurturing the next generation of healthcare professionals.



**Goh Chok Tong**  
Senior Minister, Singapore

# MESSAGE

## from the Minister for Health

When I was told to get a new hospital in Kent Ridge up and running, I seized the opportunity. I gathered a team of “rebels”: people who were familiar with public hospitals but had been critical of the status quo. I told them: “now is your opportunity to correct the “wrongs” and make public hospitals better. Let’s make a difference.” They did not disappoint.

We made the most progress where the clinical heads were supportive of change. I remember Prof Foong Weng Cheong who was then the Head of Surgery. We introduced and promoted “day surgery”, knowing that hospitalisation was costly to the patients and many surgeries could be carried out safely as outpatient procedures. When we

started, day surgery made up less than 10% of all surgeries. Today, more surgeries are being carried out on outpatients than inpatients.

I remember the late Prof Chan Heng Leong, the Head of Medicine. We renovated and furnished a day chemotherapy suite, to enable cancer patients to receive chemotherapy as outpatients in more home-like environment. Not all medical treatment needed to be carried out in hospitals. We became the first hospital to conduct kidney dialysis in the community. A bit inconvenient for the doctors, but a lot more convenient for the patients and their family members. This is now the norm.

The late Prof S S Ratnam was another legend. He had a fertile mind and wanted to push infertility and obstetric care to higher level but was constrained by civil service rules. I worked closely and productively with him and made a lot of headway.

We were never shy to learn from others and copy good ideas readily. From Thomson Medical Centre, I copied the concept of allowing husbands into delivery suites, to share the joy of birth with their loved ones.

We made progress not just in traditional clinical areas. We had also innovated in laboratory medicine, radiology, clinical pharmacy, physiotherapy and many other areas. I was fortunate to have sensible and creative rebels heading each of these areas.

We also set out to make hospitals less hospital-like. Hospitalisation was such a traumatic experience that we thought patients would welcome a less intimidating and a more cheerful encounter. We converted the entrance lobby and brought in relevant commercial tenants to complete the service to our patients and visitors: bank, restaurant, florist, hair dresser etc. When NUH opened, many visitors commented that it looked more like a hotel.

Little details made a lot of difference: hospitals used to smell, well, like hospitals. We consulted a hotel housekeeper and replaced the floor cleaning disinfectant that was then used in all hospitals. We also worked with the McDonald's to do up an X-ray Suite so that children no longer fear going for X-ray.

It was an exciting opportunity to make patients' hospital experience better, less stressful, and cheaper. We seized such an opportunity and made a difference.

At 25, NUH must never lose that spirit of adventure, and must remain perennially motivated to want to make life better for our patients.

There is always a better way to do things and always assume that the status quo is never perfect. In particular, continue to talk to patients, get their feedback, listen to their suggestions: they have much to teach us. Talk to staff: doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, housekeepers; look out for "rebels", support them and try out new ideas.

The best is yet to be for Singapore healthcare, and NUH must always be out there in the lead.

Happy 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!



**Khaw Boon Wan**  
Minister for Health, Singapore

**MESSAGE**  
from the  
**Chairman**

The National University Hospital (NUH) has come a long way. Its emphasis on research and education, besides clinical care, reflects its patient-centred approach to healthcare and its commitment to medical excellence.

Since its inception, NUH has been the place where aspiring doctors learn and improve the science and art of healing. Our doctors have also been active in teaching and nurturing these aspiring doctors who take care of Singapore's healthcare needs.

I am happy that the three-pronged focus on clinical care, research and education has been strengthened as a result of the formation of the National University Health System in 2008. This groups the NUH with the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and the Faculty of Dentistry under a common governance.

This provides a good platform for people to work together as a team. We now have a good organisation structure and environment for scientists and clinicians in search of cures for diseases. More can be done and will be done to encourage translational and clinical research.

Working closely with other healthcare providers such as the Jurong Health Services, Alexandra Hospital, St Luke's Hospital and the polyclinics, NUH is poised to provide better integrated care for patients in the western part of

Singapore. Through collaborations with other healthcare providers and partners, we aim to advance healthcare through impactful research, excellent care and teaching.

I first joined the NUH Board in 1985 and I am happy to be back to serve my third term on the Board, having "retired" twice before. What truly heartens me as we celebrate this silver jubilee is to see so many of our staff, friends and colleagues who joined us from the first year still with us today. I thank all of you in NUH for your contributions and wish you many more satisfying years with us.



**Lim Yong Wah**  
Chairman, National University Health System

**MESSAGE**  
from the  
**Chief**  
**Executive**  
**Officer**



Since the National University Hospital (NUH) opened its doors 25 years ago, it has been running like clockwork through the collective and unflinching effort of every staff, past and present.

As we celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I would like to extend my gratitude to our pioneers and predecessors for the solid foundation they have laid through their hard work and dedication. My heartfelt appreciation also to those who have been with the hospital for 25 years, for their commitment and contributions.

This book, produced in commemoration of our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, is apt as it showcases the complexity and myriad of details that go into running the hospital, both frontline and behind the scene. A pictorial compilation that seeks to provide a glimpse into the various patient care, research activities and teaching at the NUH within a day, it conveys that even though each staff is responsible for different aspects of the hospital's operation, we share and are bounded by our common focus – our patients.

Many of the photographs were taken by a team of talented photographers comprising clinicians, nurses and allied health professionals – the same people who work on the ground and are most familiar with the nuances and

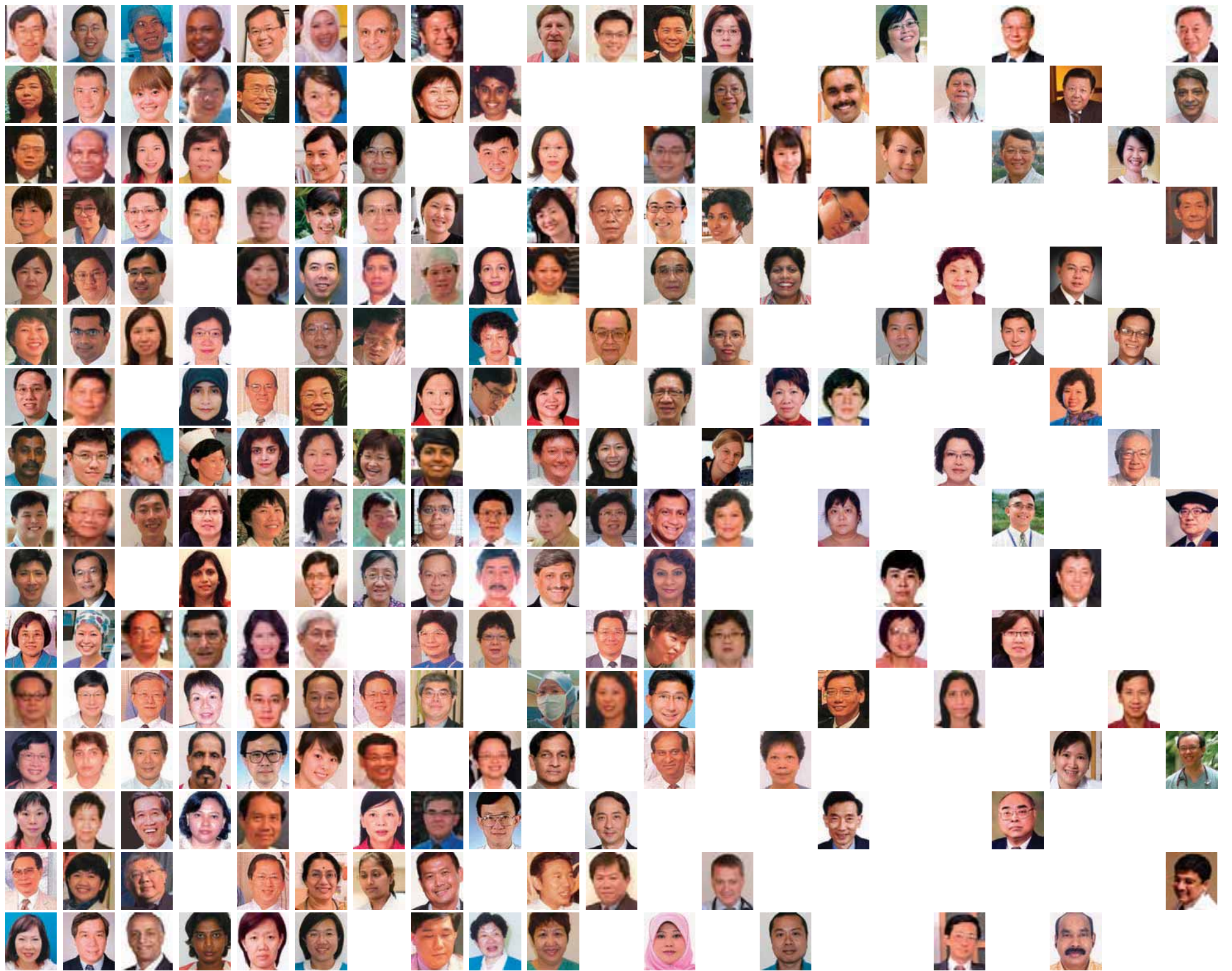
workings of the hospital. The result of seven months of hard work is a special publication that tells the story of the NUH: the hospital, our patients and our staff.

Our road ahead will be challenging but fulfilling as we further our aspirations as an academic medical centre. However, our patients will remain our focus in all that we do. We endeavour not only to provide quality medical treatment and cure for diseases, but also to provide relief and comfort always to each and every one of our patients.

We will build on the firm foundation laid by our predecessors, guided by our mission to deliver quality and safe care to our patients, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



**Joe Sim**  
Chief Executive Officer, National University Hospital





**It is because of you**  
we are here today and  
have the confidence to  
go beyond.

As we celebrate our  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, catch  
a glimpse of the action  
that takes place over  
24 hours at the NUH.

18 24/7

The time is



## A life hangs in the balance

**QUICK ACTION** by our team extends a lifeline to the patients who pass through the NUH everyday.





Every minute counts



**PROMPT  
PRIORITISATION**  
based on the severity of the patients' conditions ensures that the most life-threatening conditions are given immediate medical attention.



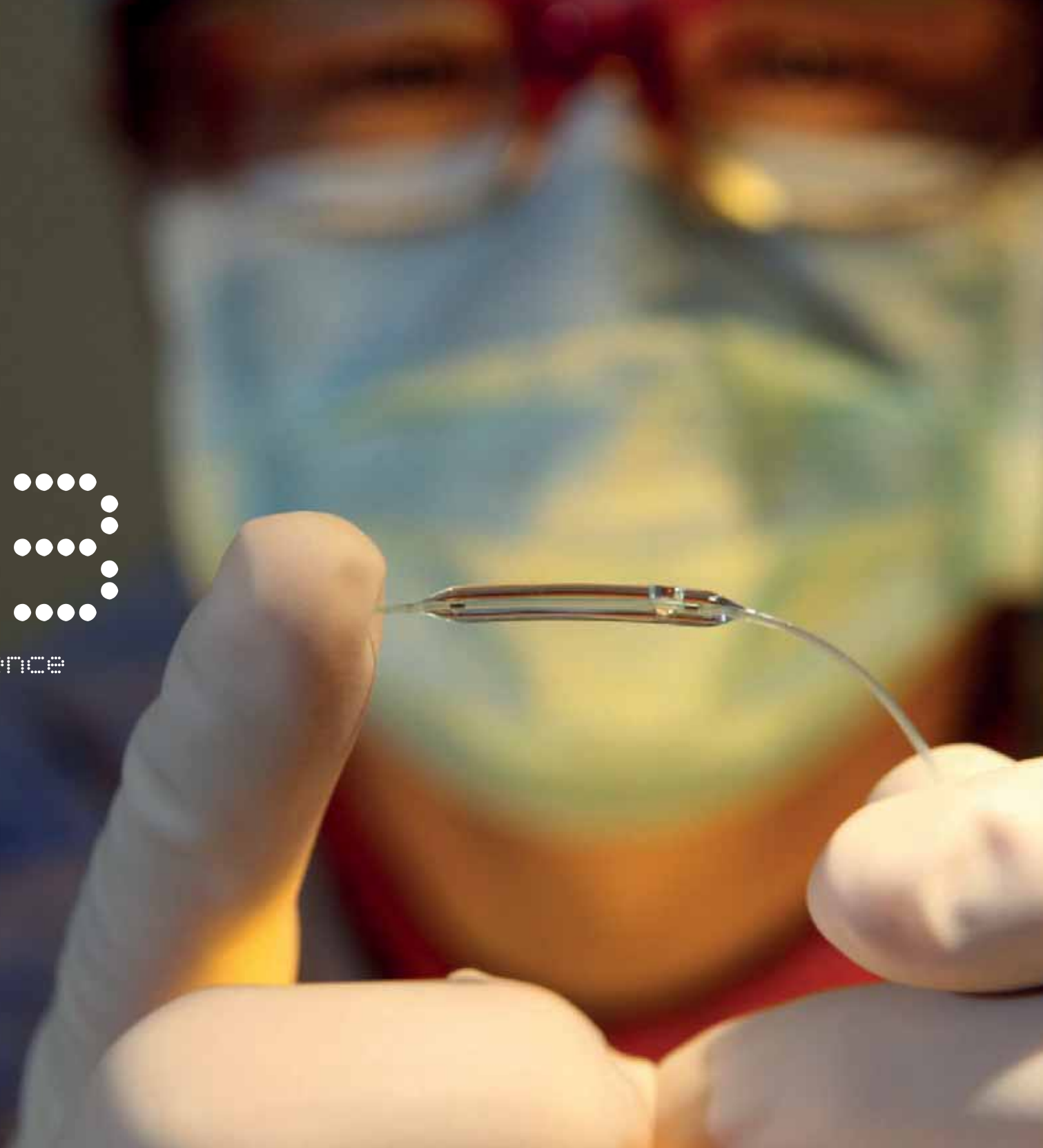
**SPEED, CLINICAL EXPERTISE,  
TEAMWORK AND PREPAREDNESS**  
meld into a blur of coordinated movement as our team races to save lives. At the Accident & Emergency Unit, fast medicine is the order of the day, everyday.

20 <sup>24/7</sup>

01:15

Time is of the essence

**SPEED IS CRUCIAL** when it comes to saving patients with heart attack. Our door-to-balloon time of 58 minutes during an emergency coronary angioplasty has surpassed the international norm and set a new benchmark. For our patients, we race to win.



15 minutes later

01:29



**BEHIND EVERY  
PATIENT** is  
a team hard  
at work.



1985

**The heart and soul of healthcare...**





09:31

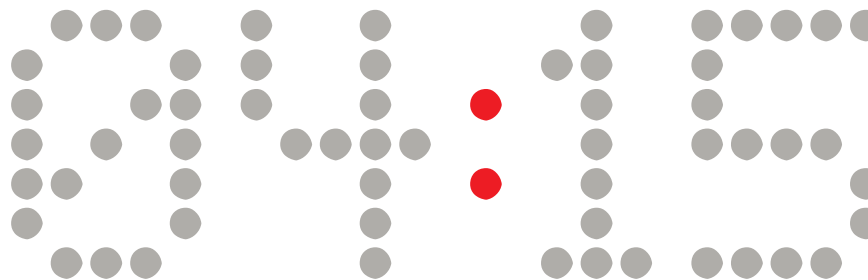
..unwavering through  
the times

**IT MAY BE EARLY HOURS**, but doctors and nurses are on call; ready to respond to the needs of the sick. This is what we do, and will continue to do – providing the best care for our patients, always.

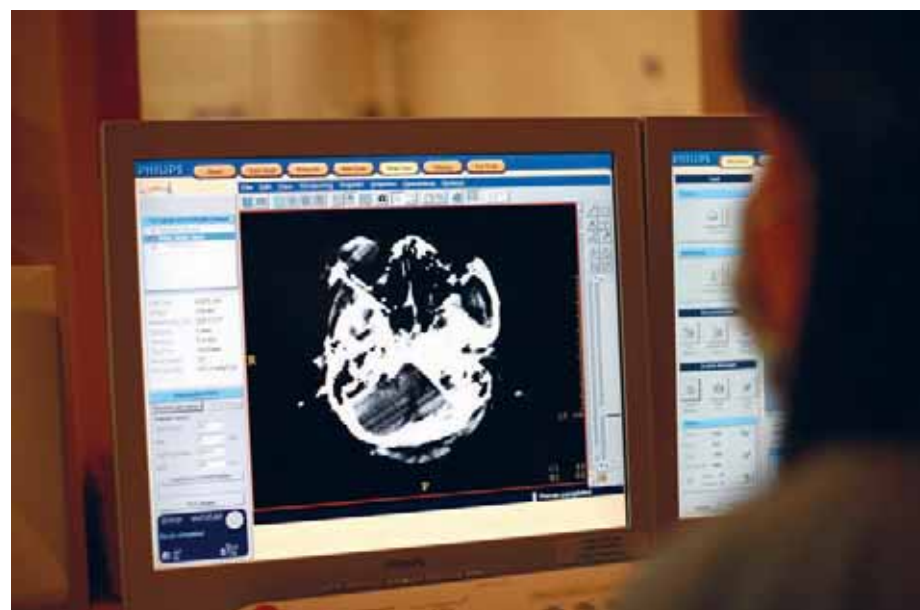


BLOOD PRODUCT USE

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## A picture tells a thousand words



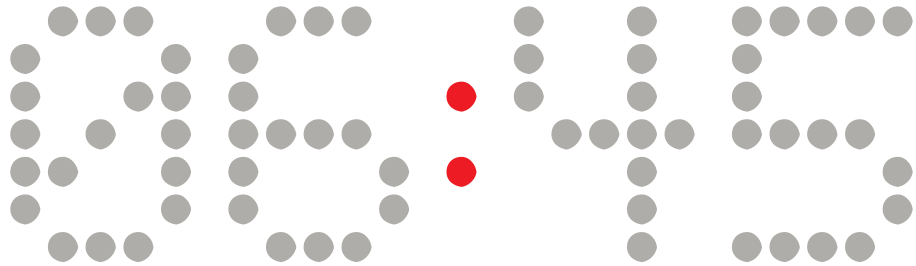
**IN THE FORM OF AN ULTRASOUND,** MRI, X-ray, CT scan or PET scan, the picture goes beyond words. These shine light into the dark recesses of our bodies and enable our doctors to see what troubles our patients.

## Scientific detectives

**KNOWING THE ENEMY** is half the battle won – that is why the quest to find clues, explanations and answers to what ails our patients involves expert scientific minds in our laboratories. Working alongside our doctors and nurses are allied health workers like radiographers and technologists, who quietly but assiduously tease and ferret out the facts from biological specimens.

26 <sup>24/7</sup>

It is only



**but we are  
already in the  
thick of action**





**THE DEXTEROUS HANDS** of our surgeons, the precision of our anaesthetists, the alertness of our nurses, the unspoken chemistry among the teams and a shared tenacity to do our best for our patients at all times.

07:00 Time for change



**DAILY SHIFT HANDOVERS** centre on thorough updates of information regarding patients. The night nursing team may have been replaced by the day team, but the caring for our patients does not change.



## Nurses are the heartbeat of healthcare

**COMPETENT NURSING** is the backbone of quality patient care. Our Advanced Practice Nurses are rigorously trained and equipped with expert knowledge and clinical competencies that enable them to make complex decisions and provide better care for our patients.





**DISPENSING MEDICINE** is an open-and-shut case at the NUH, which is the first hospital in the Asia-Pacific region to implement a computerised, close loop inpatient medication system. This ensures our patients get the right medicine in the right doses at the right time.

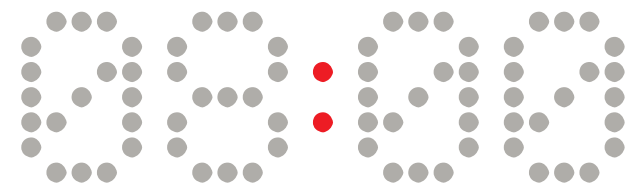




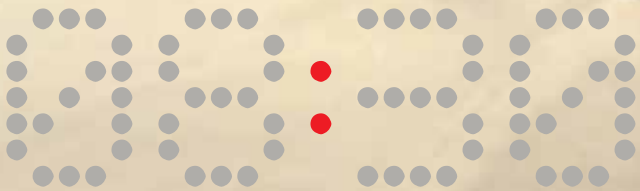
1989



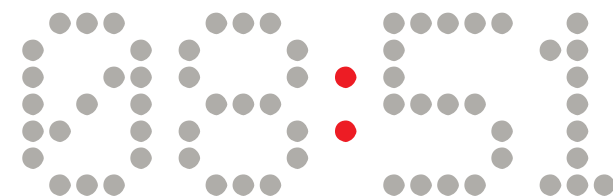
**THE PERSONAL TOUCH** still counts in the way our patients are cared for. Technology has become a mainstay in healthcare over the years, but it will never replace the warmth of human contact.



Medicine time!



Healing hands



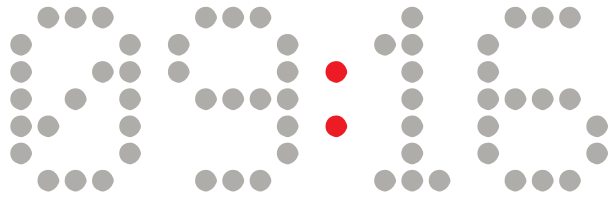
## Empowering our patients



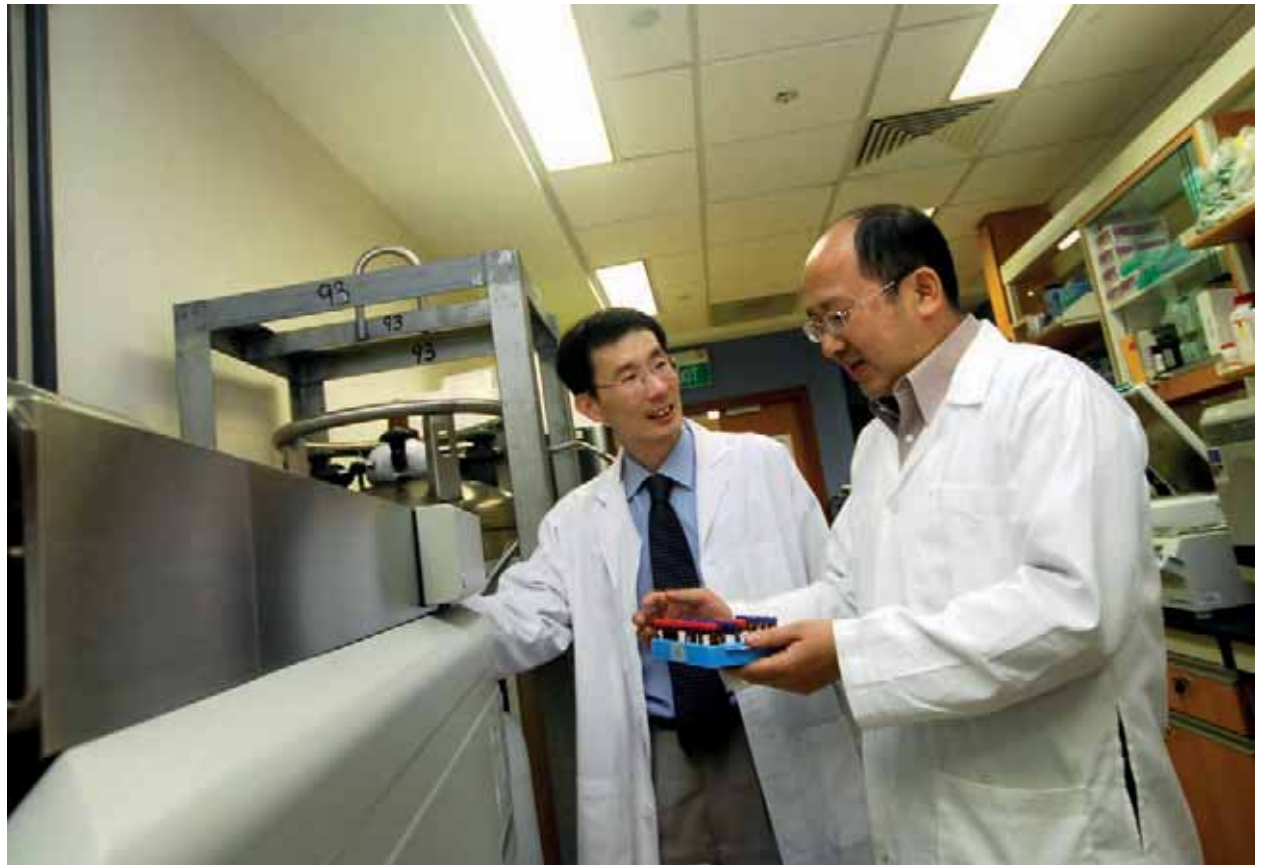
**PATIENT CARE** reaches a new height as we leverage technology to help our patients take care of their health. For example, through an in-house developed Computer-Aided Anti-Coagulation Therapy, our patients on warfarin can now do their blood tests at home and text their results to our staff for drug titration. This reduces unnecessary hospital trips for our patients.

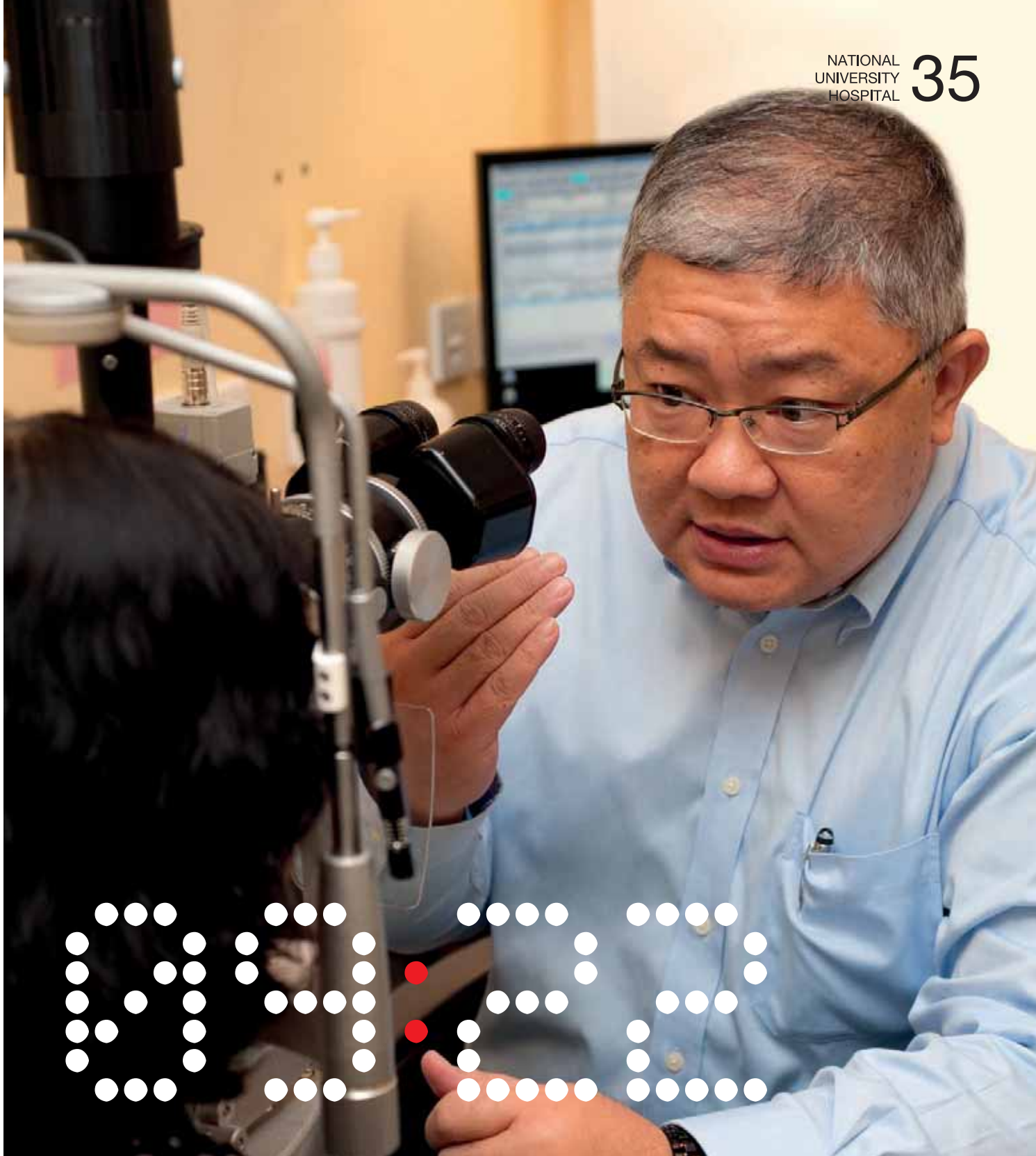
## Research is in our blood

**MADE POSSIBLE** through our partners – patients and volunteers.



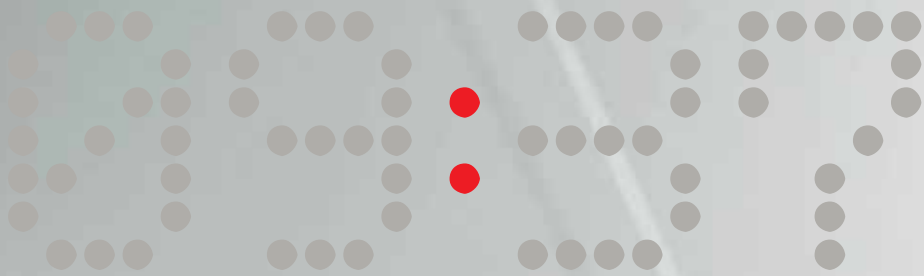
**PHARMACOLOGY** – the interaction between humans and drugs – is an exact science. Research and state-of-the-art equipment allow the exact measurement of the concentration of a drug in the blood, so that we can understand their effects more precisely and dose the patients better.





**An eye  
for detail**

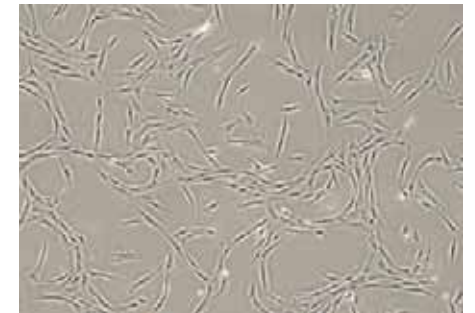




**Exploring the mysteries  
of cell renewal and  
regeneration**



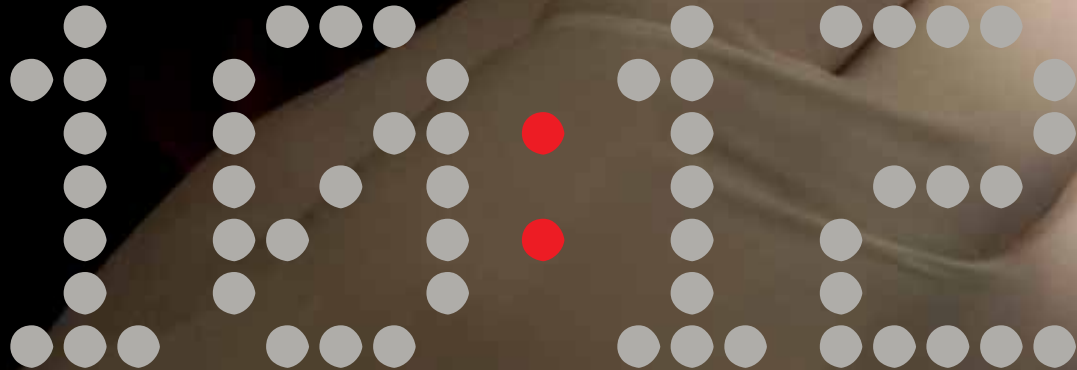
**THE NUH IS THE FIRST HOSPITAL  
IN SINGAPORE** to have a Good Manufacturing Practice laboratory. The laboratory grows patient stem cells to repair and rejuvenate damaged tissues like cartilage and engineer donor stem cells to harness our body's immunity to fight diseases such as cancer. This potentially opens doors to an entirely new avenue of treatment to complement existing therapy. The laboratory will be cultivating even more types of stem cells to benefit more patients.



Close up of cells

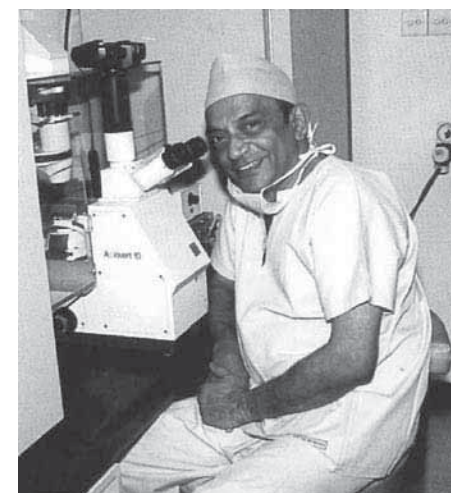
# Pearly gatekeepers

IF EYES ARE WINDOWS TO THE SOUL, then healthy smiles are the gatekeepers to the heart. Our dentists provide basic and tertiary level care to help our patients keep smiling.





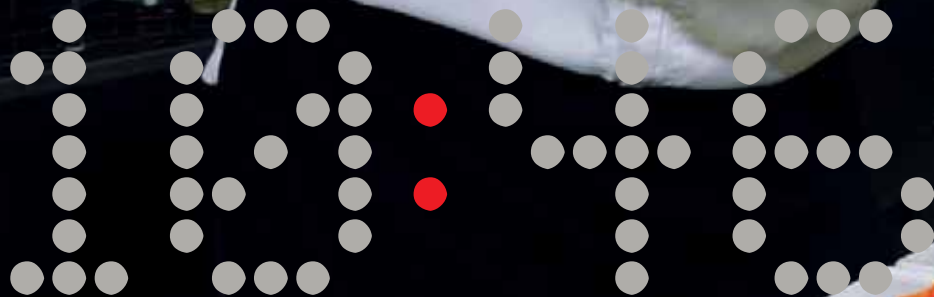
1925



**The ART of  
conception**



Meal time!



## Preparing 2,400 meals a day runs like clockwork



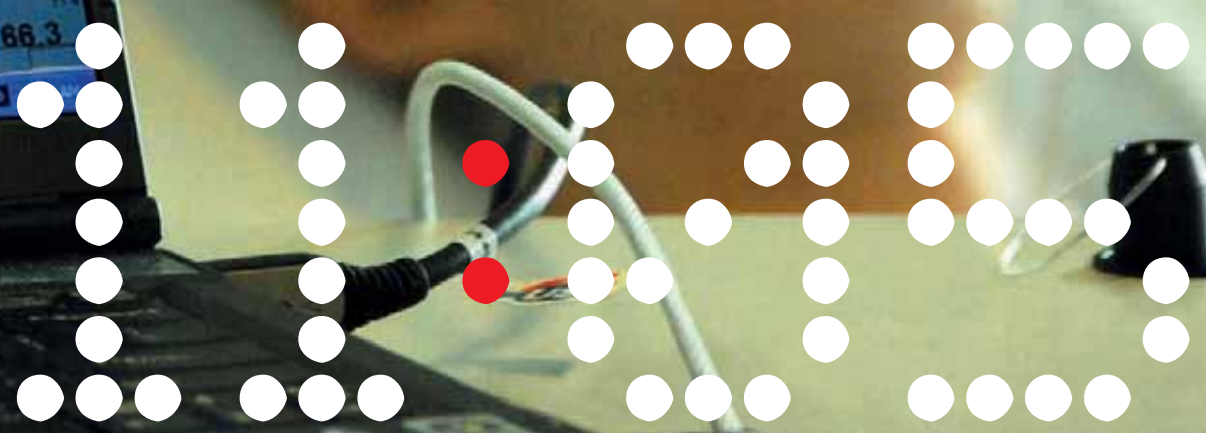
**YOU WILL NOT FIND CHOLESTEROL-FORMING**, heart-stopping fare like laksa or fried carrot cake on our hospital dining menu. But the catering team does serve up hearty, tasty and healthy fare that is nutritionally balanced and planned to help our patients get well and back on their feet again.

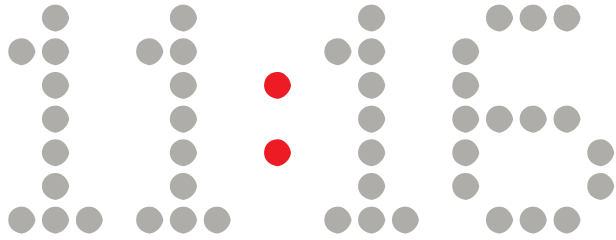
# Our fight against diabetes and obesity begins with the air we breathe



**THE NUH IS HOME TO A METABOLIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME**

that investigates our body's natural response to various types of stimuli, such as different foods, exercise and weight loss. We have a comprehensive suite of capabilities to assess appetite regulation, body composition, energy expenditure and responsiveness to insulin. These studies help us understand why some people develop diabetes and heart disease, and help us develop new medications for the treatment and prevention of these conditions.





## The art and science of healing begins with listening

**EVERYONE** – colleagues, patients and their families – has stories to tell and lessons we can learn from. At the NUH, we are all ears.



44 24/7

Bed 35

150

It is play time!





**WHILE THE WORK DAY IS LONG**, we will always find the time for a quick game or two with our young patients...especially when it helps them to feel better and heal faster.

46 <sup>24/7</sup>



It is time for home!

**SATISFACTION AND A JOB WELL DONE** is to see a patient recovering and going home to his family and loved ones.





## Meet our specialists-to-be



**OUR FIRST BATCH OF RESIDENTS** from the National University Health System Residency Programme. The programme identifies and grooms clinical leaders as early as possible during their training, with potential leaders mentored through structured training programmes. As part of character building, our Residents will also have the opportunities to serve in the wider community through humanitarian programmes.

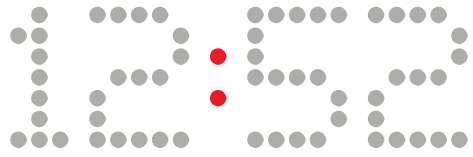
1240

# The fight against disease starts when great minds meet

**BEING PART OF AN ACADEMIC MEDICAL CENTRE** means the NUH hosts some of the best and brightest medical and scientific brains. Our scientists and clinicians work hand-in-glove to achieve major advances in patient care, in areas ranging from cancer to heart disease to neurological illnesses and infectious diseases. Such findings translate into new drugs and devices benefiting our patients.

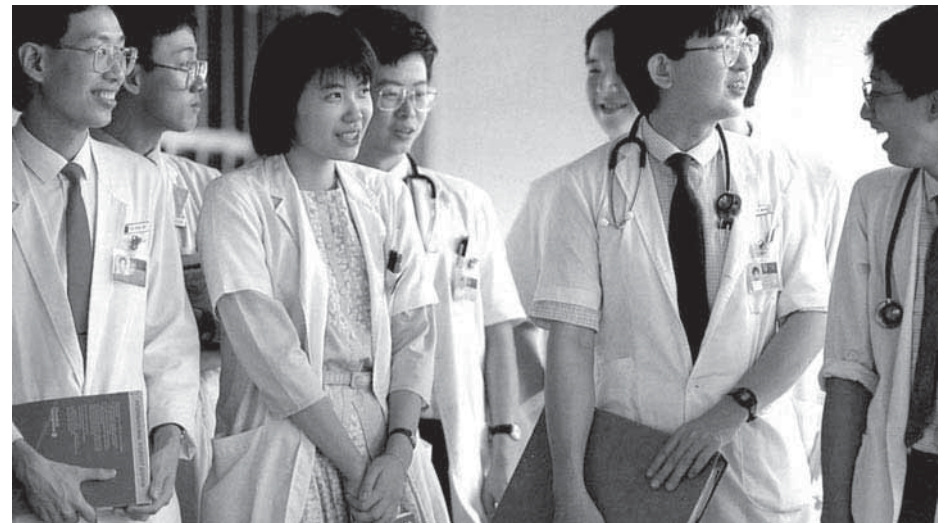


50 <sup>24/7</sup>



## At the NUH, some things never change

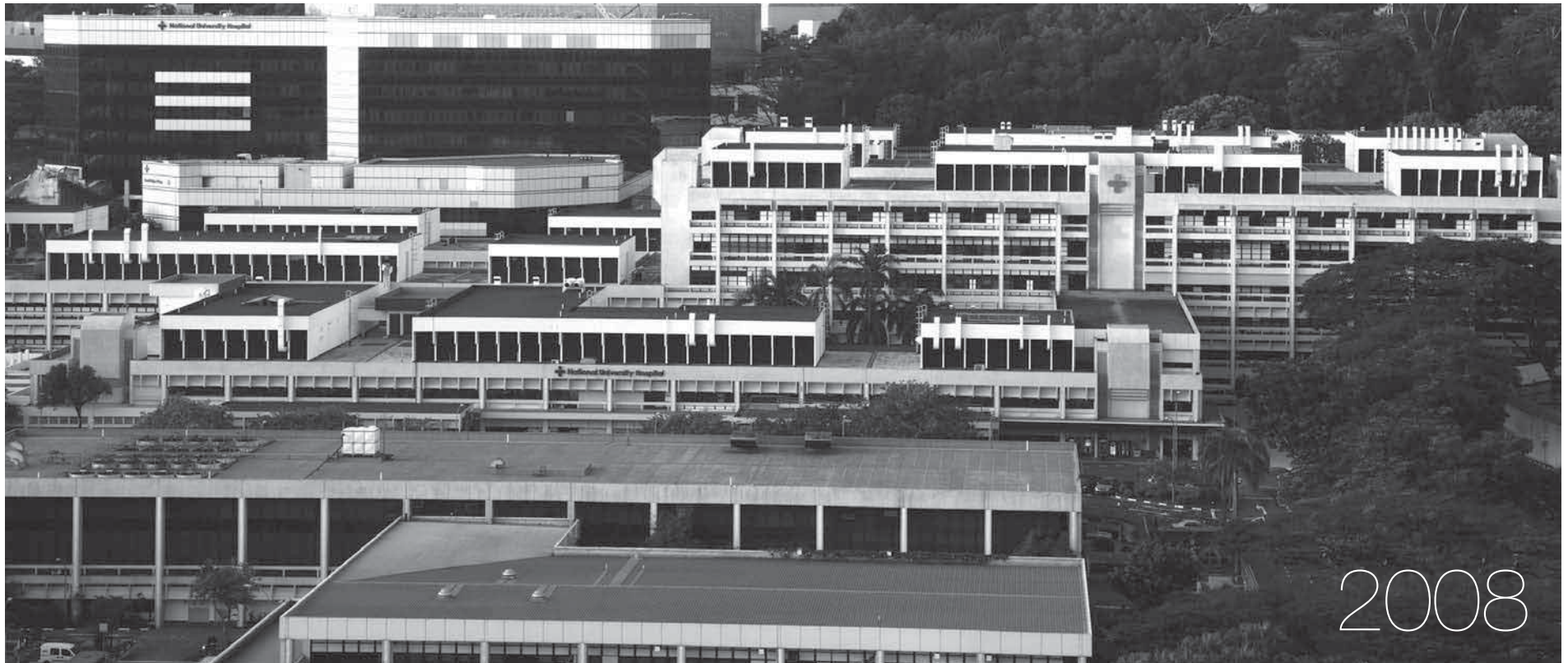
AS THE PRINCIPAL TEACHING HOSPITAL of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and the Faculty of Dentistry, NUH upholds the time-honoured tradition of mentoring and teaching medical and dental students and is proud to play a leading role in nurturing Singapore's future healthcare professionals.



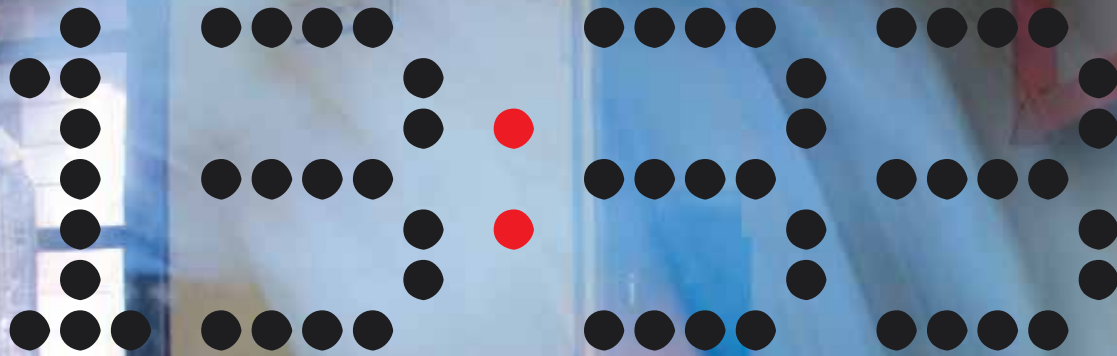
1986

## From hospital to Singapore's first academic medical centre

**THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SYSTEM** which consists  
of the NUS Yong Loo Lin  
School of Medicine and the  
Faculty of Dentistry leverages  
each institution's strengths;  
providing quality healthcare,  
delivering excellent medical  
and dental education and  
conducting meaningful  
research into illnesses and  
medical conditions afflicting  
Singaporeans.

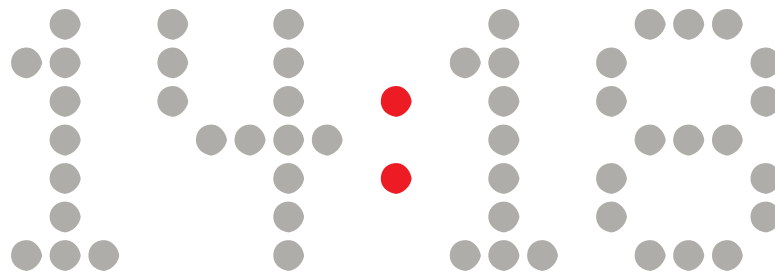


2008



## Spin cycle

11,000 PIECES of linen washed everyday.




Tinely trim



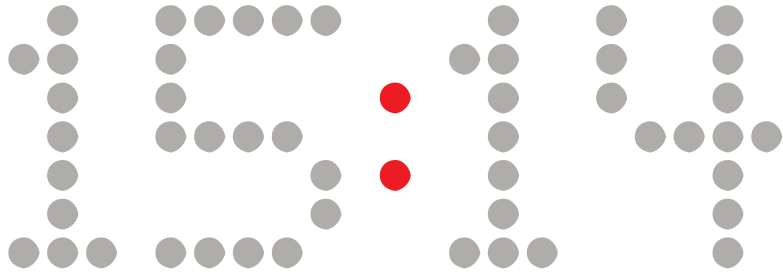
**COURTESY OF OUR ENTHUSIASTIC AND DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS** who befriend and chat with our patients. It is their way of showing our patients they care.







**MORE THAN 5,000 PRESCRIPTIONS** are processed daily. It is work done by experts who understand the drugs and chemicals and are deeply aware of the healing properties in the medication they are dispensing. Like their medical and nursing colleagues in the wards and clinics, our pharmacists take pride in being part of a holistic, multi-disciplinary team that is dedicated to the care and well-being of our patients.



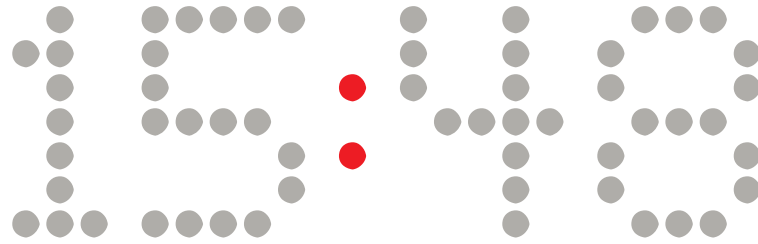
**We make  
no bones  
about  
giving  
the best  
to our  
patients**



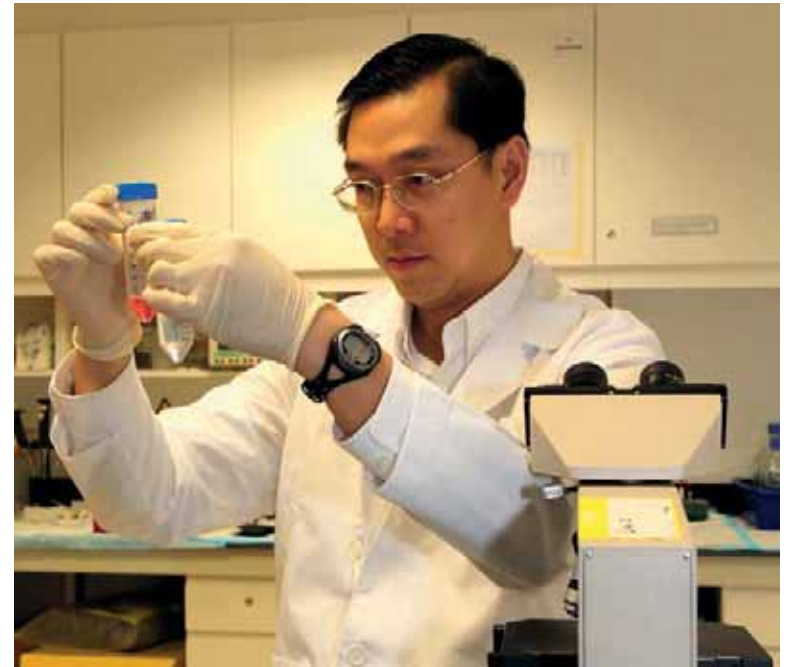


Catching  
it early

**STOMACH CANCER** kills 250 people every year. Since 2007, our doctors and researchers have screened 2,880 people, including 10 people with early stage cancer that would not have been detected on routine care.



**From bench...**



**...to bed**

**OUR PATIENTS ARE AMONG THE FIRST** to reap the benefits of scientific investigative work to develop new treatments for illnesses plaguing Singaporeans. In the process, they are our partners in pushing the frontiers and ushering in a new era of medicine. That, is translational medicine in action.



Time to go paperless

**WITH APPROXIMATELY 57 MILLION** pages of patient information in our safekeeping, we are progressively moving towards an integrated electronic medical records system. Soon, patient data can be retrieved at the click of a button.

## Building on the foundation of a rich legacy

**THE NUH'S STRONG CLINICAL FOUNDATIONS** were laid by many dedicated clinicians who were also members of the University's teaching staff at the medical and dental schools. Among those still with us today are Professor Lim Pin, University Professor and Emeritus Consultant (seated, fifth from left), Professor Cheah Jin Seng, Emeritus Consultant (seated, fifth from right), Emeritus Professor Chia Boon Lock, Emeritus Consultant (seated, fourth from right), Associate Professor Thai Ah Chuan, Senior Consultant, University Medicine Cluster (seated, second from right) and Associate Professor Evan Lee, Senior Consultant, University Medicine Cluster (standing, fifth from right). They are among many of our distinguished clinicians who embody the finest traditions of Singapore Medicine.

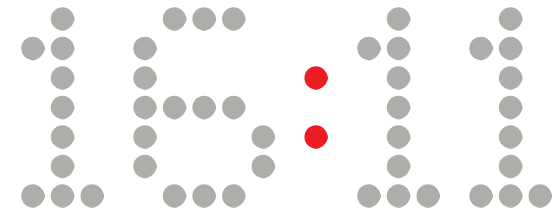


1988



**“To reckon all who have taught me this art equally dear to me as my parents and in the same spirit and dedication to impart a knowledge of the art of medicine to others.”**

- THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH



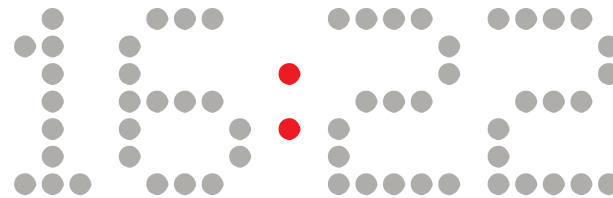
Time to learn

**THE CALL TO SHARE** and pass on medical knowledge has always been a tradition at the NUH. In teaching the science of medicine, our clinicians also impart an understanding and appreciation of the ethos, art and artistry that animate and ennoble the practice of medicine.



## A little bit of medical history is made at the NUH everyday

**WARD ROUNDS** in the morning. Laboratory work in the afternoon. It is all in a day's work for our clinician-scientists. The long hours pay off when they find meaningful solutions to our patients' medical conditions.



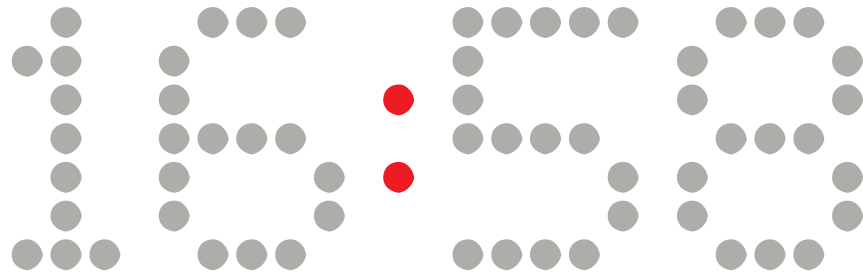
## First in man

**THE NUH IS ALSO HOME** to very early drug development studies in cancer, and has completed several first-time human Phase I trials. This means patients have early access to novel and innovative drugs which are tested under clinically rigorous processes.









## The circle of knowledge



**OUR DOCTORS TEACH AND LEARN** from those they instruct. The tradition of learning, sharing and discovering runs deep here at the NUH.

## Those who can, teach

**OUR NURSES** also play an active role in training and nurturing nursing students. Every year, hundreds of these students are trained at the NUH to become competent and knowledgeable professionals.



66 <sup>24/7</sup>

17:20

## Because our patients believe we can

**OUR KIDNEY AND LIVER  
TRANSPLANT TEAMS** continue  
to overcome the odds to  
give our patients a new  
lease of life.



## Thank You!

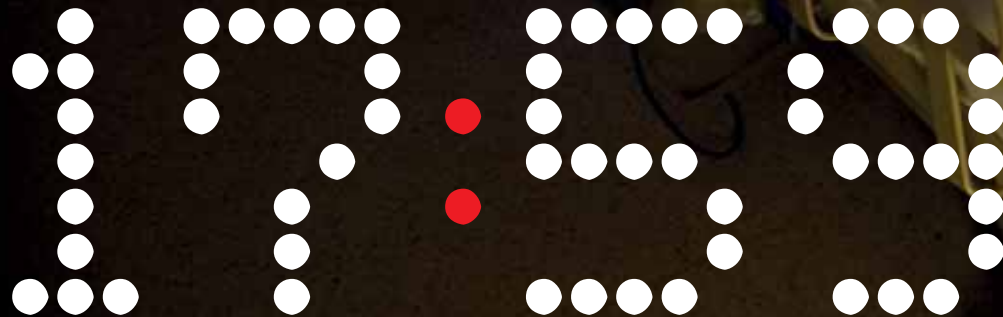
**NOTHING BEATS** that glow  
of deep satisfaction, when  
patients and their family  
members take the time to  
tell our staff that they are  
appreciated.



68 24/7



As real as it gets



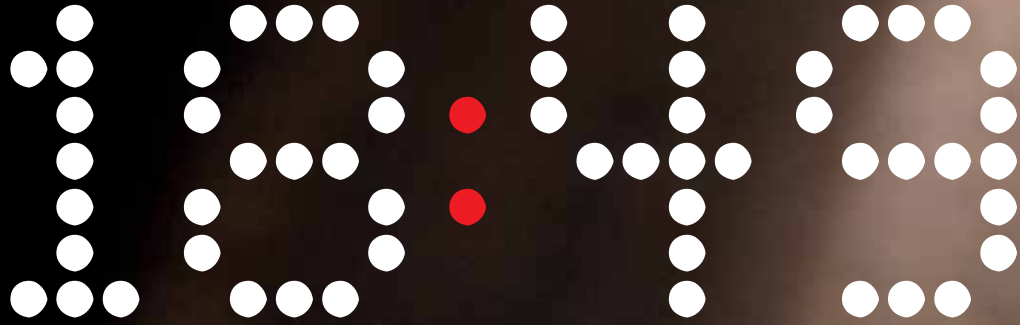


**THE FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND.**

Modelled after the High Dependency wards and Intensive Care Units, the Mrs Lee Kong Chian Critical Care Nursing Simulation Laboratory houses an intelligent mannequin that mimics a patient's vital statistics and physical reactions in response to the "treatment" rendered by nurses.

70 <sup>24/7</sup>

Banking on the future





**THE NUH-NUS TISSUE REPOSITORY** stores thousands of tissue specimens from patients who have consented to contribute their body tissue for research. These are carefully preserved for research work, paving the way for future treatments and cures.

72 <sup>24/7</sup>

2003



**CRISES COME AND GO:** SARS in 2003; H1N1 in 2009. Through it all, our team at the NUH has stood shoulder-to-shoulder and weathered storms. Lessons have been learned and applied today. Together, we stand ready for the next challenge.

**Team spirit in tough...**



**and fun times**

**WE BELIEVE THAT HEALTHY,  
HAPPY AND CONNECTED STAFF**  
are able to better care for our  
patients. That is why we work  
hard and play hard!



## Touching and changing lives in Singapore...



2008

**THE NUH HOUSES SINGAPORE'S**  
**FIRST** national centre for dialysis  
and treatment for children  
with renal conditions. Our  
21-year-old Paediatric Renal  
Replacement Programme sees  
close to 3,000 children with  
kidney diseases every year.

## ...and beyond the border

**OUR MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM**  
performed Indonesia's first  
paediatric liver transplant in  
one of the largest government  
hospitals in Central Java,  
Indonesia. More than just  
saving lives, our doctors also  
shared knowledge and skills  
with their counterparts there,  
enabling them to continue the  
good work.



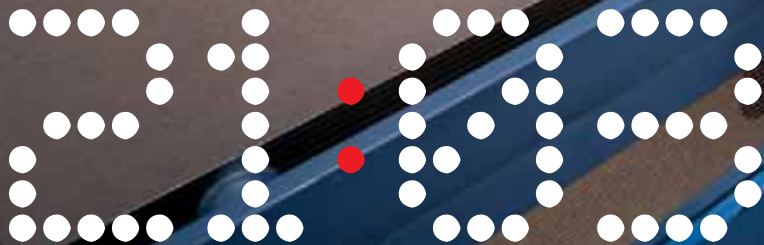
2006

**I want to  
be just like  
you when  
I grow up!**

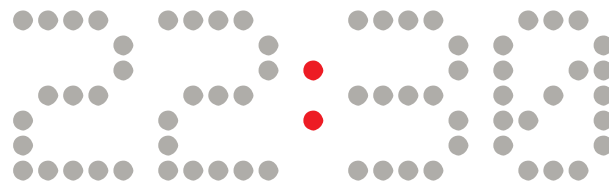
**SAVING LIVES** takes skills. Touching  
lives takes compassion.



Keeping clean  
at all times



AT THE NUH, we keep the hospital spick and span to allow our patients to rest and recuperate in a clean and healthy environment.



Working round the clock

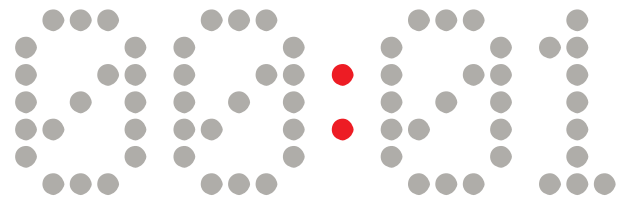
**The day comes  
to a close but  
the hospital  
never sleeps**



## A life is born

CHILDBIRTH IS ONE OF THE MOST ENRICHING life experiences and we at the NUH are proud to walk this pivotal journey with parents who are embarking on this new and significant chapter in life.





A new day dawns...

**... and with it,  
new hopes and  
aspirations**



**WHILE MOST PEOPLE** are fast asleep, our maternity wards are busy caring for mothers and their little ones.

# Acknowledgements

It started with pure passion for photography.

Associate Professor Chen Fun Gee and Dr Kao Pao Tang had always wanted to build a library of photographs reflecting the bustle of activities in the NUH. This came to fruition when they shared their idea with the hospital's Corporate Communications team. The idea evolved into a special publication to commemorate the hospital's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Simply named "24/7", the book is a compilation of photographs depicting what goes on in the NUH – everyday, 365 days a year – painstakingly picked and put together over seven months. The result is 64 pages of photographs showcasing the people who strive to provide our patients with the best care and what differentiates the NUH as a University hospital.

To all who are named here as well as those whose names we may have inadvertently left out – thank you for your time, support and assistance to make this project possible.

We hope you will enjoy the book as much as we do.

## Photographers

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# About the NUH

The National University Hospital (NUH), a member of the National University Health System (NUHS), is a tertiary hospital that provides advanced, leading-edge medical care and services. Equipped with state-of-the-art facilities as well as dedicated and well-trained staff, the NUH is a major referral centre that delivers specialist care for a wide range of medical and dental specialties including Cardiology, Gastroenterology & Hepatology, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Paediatrics and Orthopaedic Surgery.

With combined resources from the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and Faculty of Dentistry, the NUH is meeting the healthcare needs of patients, training future generations of doctors more effectively, and helping to develop solutions to our healthcare problems through research.

In 2007, the NUH was tasked by the Ministry of Health to develop two new national centres, the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) and the National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS) to meet the growing needs for cardiac and cancer

treatment. The NCIS offers a broad spectrum of cancer care and management covering both paediatric and adult cancers. The NUHCS brings together cardiac specialists and experts from a multitude of medical and surgical disciplines to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to the treatment of heart problems.

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.

For more information, please visit [www.nuh.com.sg](http://www.nuh.com.sg)

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