

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

Singapore, 19 October 2024

NTU Singapore and Agency for Integrated Care to cultivate person-centred care and foster spirit of volunteerism in aspiring doctors

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and the **Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)** are collaborating to cultivate person-centred care, and foster a spirit of volunteerism among students from NTU's **Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine)** as they train to become doctors for an ageing population.

Under the agreement, AIC and LKCMedicine will work collaboratively to introduce AIC's Silver Generation Ambassador (SGA) programme in the first two years of NTU's Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree programme. AIC will provide curated training for medical students to deepen their knowledge on community resources that support active ageing, empathetic communication, and effective senior engagement.

The initiative is part of LKCMedicine's **Longitudinal Community Experience** programme, rolled out under the school's refreshed MBBS curriculum in August 2024.

The SGA programme aims to train NTU's medical students to be skilled communicators who understand the social determinants of health and can apply this knowledge effectively in patient care. Students will also learn how local communities can support patients, particularly the seniors, by leveraging available resources, services, and national schemes to enhance their health and well-being.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was exchanged between AIC's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Dinesh Vasu Dash, and LKCMedicine's Dean, Professor Joseph Sung, at the School's Art & Science of Medicine Festival 2024 on Saturday.

The ceremony was witnessed by **Guest of Honour and Minister for Health, Mr Ong Ye Kung**, Chief of AIC's Silver Generation Office (SGO), Dr Sng Hock Lin, and LKCMedicine Chief Operating Officer, Dr Serene Ng.



(L-R, front row) Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Dinesh Vasu Dash and NTU's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine) Dean, Professor Joseph Sung, at the signing ceremony which was witnessed by (L-R) Chief of AIC's Silver Generation Office (SGO), Dr Sng Hock Lin; Guest of Honour, Minister for Health, Mr Ong Ye Kung; and Chief Operating Officer, Dr Serene Ng on 19 October 2024.

At the Festival, Minister Ong Ye Kung was presented a book about LKCMedicine's benefactor, Lee Kong Chian, titled *“Lee Kong Chian – Educationalist, Entrepreneur & Philanthropist.”*

Professor Joseph Sung, NTU Senior Vice President (Health & Life Sciences) and Dean, LKCMedicine, said: “Due to our ageing society, the role of community care on the well-being and health of the population has become more important. By tapping on the expertise of the Agency for Integrated Care and its presence in the community, we hope to blend medical education with real-world communication experiences for our students, to ensure that they grow into empathetic doctors who have a comprehensive understanding of the various facets of patient care in Singapore, especially for the older population.”

Mr Dinesh Vasu Dash, Chief Executive Officer, Agency for Integrated Care, said: “We are delighted to work with LKCMedicine to nurture an appreciation and understanding of seniors among these budding doctors. With the training of our SGA programme, the students get to hone their communication and soft skills at the start of their medical journey. The knowledge will serve them well throughout their career to provide holistic care for patients. We hope to expand such meaningful partnerships with NTU and other like-minded organisations, to support Singapore’s seniors to live well and age gracefully.”

Experiential learning to reinforce person-centred care

The pioneering cohort of first-year medical students under the new Longitudinal Community Experience programme started their SGA training in September. The partnership will see each new cohort of LKCMedicine students onboarded as SGAs.

As trained SGAs, these students will engage with seniors in the community to address their physical and social needs. Through conducting door-to-door preventive health visits, they will interview seniors, recommend suitable active ageing activities and connect them to relevant community resources to promote health and well-being.

The collaboration between LKCMedicine and AIC offers students with invaluable opportunities to learn outside the classroom in the early stages of their medical training.

Through interactions with seniors from a diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, students will hone essential skills such as active listening and communication, which are crucial for building rapport and the practice of medicine.

Collaboration emphasises building of communication skills

Leveraging the school's strong clinical communication curriculum, a unique feature of the collaboration between AIC and LKCMedicine is the use of **Simulated Patients** - lay people trained to portray scripted scenarios and provide feedback to the students in SGA training sessions.

The communication session is co-developed and co-taught by the AIC team and LKCMedicine faculty.

Conducted at LKCMedicine, the session teaches communication skills and preventive health tips. Students are provided opportunities to practise interacting with seniors role-played by Simulated Patients. Such an approach will help improve medical students' communication skills in a controlled, realistic environment, effectively preparing them for real-life door-to-door visits.

Associate Professor Tang Wern Ee, Lead, Longitudinal Community Experience, Assistant Dean, Family Medicine, LKCMedicine, said: "This partnership with the Agency for Integrated Care provides our future doctors a unique early opportunity to engage in meaningful community work, cultivating essential skills and values for holistic, compassionate healthcare. By interacting with seniors in their home environments, students gain firsthand experience of the social determinants of health while benefitting from intergenerational learning. Insights gained through interacting with seniors and other Silver Generation Ambassadors, who are working adults or retirees from diverse backgrounds, will shape their approach to person-centred care and prepare them to be advocates and practitioners of holistic healthcare."

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About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 35,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Business, Computing & Data Science, Engineering, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, Medicine, Science, and Graduate colleges.

NTU is also home to world-renowned autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Earth Observatory of Singapore, Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources.

Ranked amongst the world's top universities, the University's main campus is also frequently listed among the world's most beautiful. Known for its sustainability, NTU has achieved 100% Green Mark Platinum certification for all its eligible building projects. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a medical campus in Novena, Singapore's healthcare district.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About the Agency for Integrated Care

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) aims to create a vibrant care community for people to live well and age gracefully. AIC coordinates and supports efforts in integrating care to achieve the best care outcomes for our clients. We reach out to caregivers and seniors with information on staying active and ageing well and connect people to services they need. We support stakeholders in their efforts to raise the quality of care, and also work with health and social care partners to provide services for the ageing population. Our work in the community brings care services and information closer to those in need.

For more about us, please visit <https://www.aic.sg>