Changi General Hospital and St. Andrew’s Community Hospital begin building first-of-its-kind healthcare facility in Singapore focused on optimised rehabilitation for patients.

The Integrated Building will feature comprehensive rehabilitation facilities within a home-like environment to help patients optimise their recovery and facilitate independent living.

10 November 2012, Saturday – Patients recovering from injury, illness or surgery will be able to benefit from a new model of care at The Integrated Building, a collaboration between Changi General Hospital (CGH) and St. Andrew’s Community Hospital (SACH). They will be rehabilitated in a conducive environment that will help optimise their recovery and independence to prepare them optimally for the transition back to home.

CGH and SACH held The Integrated Building’s Groundbreaking celebration today with Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong as the Guest-of-Honour. Located between CGH and SACH, the eight-storey Integrated Building comprising 280 beds is part of MOH’s Healthcare 2020 Masterplan to build up bed capacity, and will be completed by end 2014.

The building will integrate a range of acute and sub-acute rehabilitation facilities and services within a ‘home-like’ ward environment for patients and their families’ benefit.

Meeting the challenges
With an ageing and growing population, the number of patients with disabling conditions such as stroke and hip fracture is expected to increase substantially. At the same time, family and household sizes are getting smaller. As a result the number of elderly patients living alone or with an ageing caregiver will increase. It is thus crucial to enable patients to live independently and be able to work productively for as long as possible.

“Our model of care must evolve to help patients reach their highest rehabilitation potential and independence,” said Dr Lee Chien Earn, Chairman of the Hospital Planning Committee, and CEO of CGH. “We also need to empower patients to be active participants in their own recovery so that they can live independently with a good quality of life as much as possible.”

Comprehensive range of rehabilitation facilities
The 280-bed building will house a full range of rehabilitation features, facilities and services. Facilities include the Active Recovery and Therapy Centre, the Centre for Independent Living, the Geriatric Day Hospital, Therapy Gardens, and the Day Rehabilitation
Centre. They will collectively enable healthcare professionals to optimise the outcomes of treatment for a wide range of conditions from stroke, brain and spine injuries, traumatic injuries, to elderly frailty (more details at Annex).

The Therapy Gardens are landscaped, tranquil outdoor environments that will challenge patients to manoeuvre steps, curbs, slopes and ramps as part of their guided therapy. The Centre for Independent Living will help patients regain specific functions in their home and work life. It will include training for caregivers as well.

The home-like environment
Unlike a typical hospital ward setting where patients have meals and spend most of their waking hours in bed, wards in The Integrated Building are designed as ‘cluster housing’, incorporating a home-like environment with features that will enable patients to play an active role in their recovery.

Each ward will house three 10-bed clusters with each cluster equipped with a living room to facilitate interaction among patients and their families (see visual at Annex). Each ward will also have common dining and family areas for patients to have meals together or spend time with their loved ones. The idea is to encourage independence through home-like living to help patients transit smoothly when they return home.

Patients well enough to return home may still require some adjustment, such as those in wheelchairs or crutches. A fully-furnished and equipped mock three-room flat in the Centre for Independent Living is available to let them test their level of mobility in a home setting prior to discharge.

“The design vision when we came together to plan for this new building was to foster collaboration at every level of healthcare provision – between an acute and a community hospital through integrated care paths, among healthcare professionals in the sharing of facilities and common protocols, and among patients, caregivers and staff in wards designed like a home. The building also allows us to test-bed innovative ideas to make our healthcare facilities more age- and staff-friendly,” explained Ms Selina Seah, Assistant CEO (Development) of CGH.

Empowering patients to recover
Patients at The Integrated Building will receive more intensive therapy to meet their specific rehabilitation needs, and benefit from a more seamless journey from acute to sub-acute care to recovery.

“With this new model of care, our goal is for patients to receive a high quality of rehabilitation and resume, as much as possible, the activities that they enjoy. Even as our
population ages, it is vital that they have a good quality of life,” explained Dr Loh Yik Hin, CEO of SACH.

**Shared resources**
The Integrated Building will enable CGH and SACH to share facilities and resources such as pharmacy supplies, laboratory services, and even beds. Beds in The Integrated Building will be ‘acuity adaptable’ so that the respective number of beds for acute, sub-acute or rehabilitative care can be easily changed depending on their relative demand. Both hospitals will also work towards integrating processes and workflow for better efficiency and convenience for patients.

“The Integrated Building is a fine example of EH Alliance partners coming together to make care better and more convenient for our patients. This brings us one step closer to our vision of providing seamless, quality care,” said Mr T K Udairam, Group CEO of the Eastern Health Alliance. “The new model of rehabilitation will benefit our patients, and quite possibly help reduce the economic impact of disability for our society.”

(See Annex for a list of Partners and Consultants involved in The Integrated Building.)

**About Eastern Health Alliance**
The Eastern Health Alliance is the regional health system for eastern Singapore. It is a partnership of health service providers dedicated to delivering, through their combined expertise, the right quality care at the right time for each patient. Its founding members are Changi General Hospital, St. Andrew’s Community Hospital, SingHealth Polyclinics and The Salvation Army Peacehaven Nursing Home. For more information, visit www.easternhealth.sg.