

Changi General Hospital's New Medical Centre enhances specialist outpatient care for eastern Singapore

SINGAPORE, 2 November 2018 – Changi General Hospital (CGH) officially opened its new Medical Centre today, with Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong as the Guest-of-Honour.

The launch was held in conjunction with an Integrated Multi-Disciplinary Care Conference at CGH that saw some 300 attendees engaged in sharing and learning from each other about how to develop integrated models of care for improved patient outcomes. The event also included a Roundtable, on Integrated Care in Asia, where regional healthcare leaders shared how they are enabling the delivery of integrated care in their respective countries.

Managing complex medical conditions in a more integrated way with Multi-Specialty Practices

The new CGH Medical Centre has been designed to care for patients with complex medical conditions. With nearly 190 consultation, treatment and procedure rooms, the Medical Centre combines care model and process innovations, to enhance specialist outpatient care for an ageing population in eastern Singapore.

A key feature of the CGH Medical Centre is organising care around 'Multi-Specialty Practices' (MSPs). In essence, MSPs are functional teams that cut across medical specialties and disciplines, focusing on particular complex disease conditions. MSPs utilise unified care protocols, with patients triaged into the most-appropriate care pathway. Actualising MSPs meant thinking deeply about the re-design of the MC's care spaces, incorporating clinic designs that would facilitate collaboration between healthcare professionals, as well as re-organising care processes with the necessary training and equipping.

MSPs have been implemented in the Digestive Disease Centre (DDC), Diabetes, Obesity, Metabolic and Endocrine (DOME) Centre and for Integrated Sleep Services (ISS). Through the MSPs, a patient is able to see two or more healthcare professionals - either jointly or sequentially. For example, if a patient registered at the DOME Centre requires a joint consultation by an endocrinologist, general surgeon, and dietician, this can be scheduled for the patient on the same day. Through an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach, medical specialists, nurses and allied health professionals can collaborate closely in the patient's outpatient care to make care decisions in a coordinated and timely manner

The infrastructure of the MC has been designed to support patient-centred care. For example, Specialist Outpatient Clinics of related medical specialties are sited close to each other to facilitate cross-speciality consultations as well as easier access for patients with related medical conditions. Allied health services supporting speciality services are also co-located within the clinic to facilitate patient care. For example, spirometry procedures are now provided within the Lung and Integrated Sleep Clinic, enabling patients to complete their investigations and consultations all within one clinic location.

“With an ageing population in eastern Singapore, care for our patients will become more complex, with more coordination needed,” explained Adjunct Professor Lee Chien Earn, Chief Executive Officer, CGH. “In designing and realising the CGH Medical Centre, we wanted to transform the care experience of our patients and their caregivers, with the aim of improving not just the quality of care but to also assure, enable and empower them.”

Improving patient experience through innovation

The processing of prescriptions at the Specialist Outpatient Clinics has been enhanced through process innovation and automation. The doctor’s prescription is sent electronically to the pharmacist. After the medication order is reviewed and confirmed by the pharmacist at the clinic the patient can make a single payment for all the services consumed at the Medical Centre in the clinic – consultation, procedures and medicine.

The prescription is then routed to the Outpatient Pharmacy Automation System (OPAS), to start the packing process even before the patient arrives at the pharmacy. The OPAS uses the automated storage & retrieval system (ASRS), to deliver the medication required with precision and speed. As a result, more than 50% of patients get their medications within 10 minutes, twice as much as before. The innovative storage and retrieval system also allows the pharmacy to save 50% of the space needed to store the items on shelves for picking.

Patients visiting the clinics at the Medical Centre can utilise mobile-application driven features on the SingHealth Health Buddy app. For example, Health Buddy’s eRegistration function enables patients to register for their medical appointments in the comfort of their homes, while the app’s ePayment function allows for one-stop payment to be made anywhere after a doctor’s consultation. Moving forward, the hospital is exploring other mobile app possibilities, for example, patient education or health tips that can be customised according to a patient’s condition, providing them with relevant and timely health information.

The Medical Centre’s opening advances the overall CGH Campus Vision, which is a concerted ‘whole of hospital’ approach to transform care based on patients’ and the community’s evolving needs.,

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About Changi General Hospital

Changi General Hospital (CGH) is an award-winning public hospital with over 1,000 beds serving a community of more than 1 million people in eastern Singapore. CGH offers a comprehensive range of medical specialties and services, helmed by a highly experienced and skilled team of healthcare professionals who consistently deliver excellent health outcomes and care for patients. CGH is a member of the SingHealth cluster of healthcare institutions.