A/Prof Sim Tiow Suan, Outstanding Safety & Health Champion Award Recipient: Safety Leadership by Walking the Ground

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At the NUS Annual Safety and Health Award Ceremony on 15th April 2015, A/Professor Sim Tiow Suan was presented the Outstanding Safety & Health Champion Award by Professor Tan Chorh Chuan, NUS President. In this article, we feature the many contributions that A/Professor Sim has made to the University and Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine in safety and health.

A/Professor Sim’s safety journey started in year 2003, when she was appointed by the previous Dean, Professor John Wong to take on the role of Chairperson of NUS Medicine’s Research Safety Committee. Without hesitation she accepted the role and made it a personal mission to raise the safety standards in NUS Medicine. This was a very challenging task, considering at that time, lab safety practices in Singapore were under scrutiny due to a case of a laboratory acquired infection.

A/Professor Sim, together with her team, in a short period of time, made notable achievements in terms of safety programmes in NUS Medicine, such as, setting up of a compulsory safety training for all postgraduate students, instituted a regular regime of safety inspections (in which she personally participates), establishing safety packages for researchers (e.g. GHS labelling) and developing an application software for in situ standardized lab safety inspections. She and her team were also instrumental in ensuring safety was adequately addressed during the rapid expansion of NUS Medicine in the last few years, including, procurement, safe installation and commissioning of lab equipment in newly constructed research buildings – MD1, MD6 and MD 11. She is also the chair of the MD 1 Research Safety Committee and advisor of the MD 6 Research Safety Committee.

A/Professor Sim is deeply committed to ensuring every staff, student and visitor in NUS Medicine is safe and healthy. She works tirelessly, engaging and communicating with Heads of departments, department safety chairs, and faculty members on safety policies and practices. To ensure NUS Medicine’s Safety and Health policies are aligned with that of the University’s, she sits in NUS level safety committees, such as the Institutional Biosafety Committee and participated in key investigations and policy sub-committees. NUS is privileged to have A/Professor Sim championing safety in NUS Medicine.

Professor Sim’s key Safety and Health Appointments:

- NUS Medicine Research Space and Safety – Assistant Dean
- NUS Medicine Safety and Health Committee – Chairperson, since 2003
- MD1 Research Safety Committee – Chairperson, since 2015
- MD6 Research Safety Committee – Advisor, since 2012
- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) – member, since 2010
- NUS Medicine BSL3 Biosafety Committee (BBC) – member, since 2014