



PRESS RELEASE

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Eye health, social support services in focus at Public Health Service 2019

Residents in need of social support can also approach care consultants from the Agency for Integrated Care to assess their needs.

Singapore, 12 October 2019 – Screening for advanced eye-related diseases and social support services will be available for the first time at the Public Health Service (PHS) taking place on 12 and 13 October 2019 at Canopy @ JLink.

Organised by the NUS Medical Society, the student body of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, the PHS is a student-led preventive health project. It is held annually and involves Singapore's three public healthcare clusters – the National University Health System, the National Healthcare Group and Singhealth. This year, PHS aims to reach more than 31,000 households through the annual health screening in collaboration with the Health Promotion Board.

The community screening this year – the 14th since it began in 2004 – will be graced by Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth.

The eyes have it

At this year's health screening, residents age 60 years old and above will also be screened for eye problems like glaucoma, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy and age-related macular degeneration at a mobile eye clinic on wheels that will be stationed on site at the Canopy @ JLink.

The mobile eye clinic will boost the eye screening services currently available at PHS and which focus on checks for basic visual acuity and refractive errors. Participants with abnormal results had to be contacted for a follow-up appointment for a more extensive eye screening at a Community Club and referred to a specialist institution where necessary. The addition of the

mobile eye clinic means residents will be spared the hassle of a trip to the Community Club, though a visit to a specialist would still be necessary if problems are detected with their eyesight.

Health screening reports available via new app

Leveraging technology to improve the screening experience this year, a new PHS Application will be available to help facilitate the screening flow. It provides participants with a health report immediately after screening to help them better understand the screening modalities they have gone through, and also areas in which they can improve their health. Participants will be referred to the relevant partners accordingly for personalised lifestyle advice, and also referred to a healthcare system for necessary follow-ups.

In another first for PHS, the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) will come on board as a partner to provide social support for residents in need of financial aid, caregiver help and other services.

Polytechnics Come On Board the Young Health Ambassadors' Programme

In line with PHS' focus on student engagement and involvement, the Young Health Ambassadors' Programme (YHAP) was launched in 2015 with the aim of promoting health education to students who would in turn become health ambassadors and advocate healthy living. Besides students from junior colleges and secondary schools, the programme has reached out to Polytechnic students enrolled in healthcare-related courses for the first time this year. As part of PHS 2019, the students will be showcasing an exhibition on metabolic syndrome and healthy ageing to enhance public awareness and understanding of these topics. YHAP has reached out to over 5500 students through talks, with an increase of about 80 student ambassadors since last year, bringing the total to 143.

Promoting collaboration among healthcare professionals, students and agencies

Over the 14 years of its run, PHS has expanded its scope to include more than 10 screening modalities. PHS employs primary and secondary prevention strategies which complement government initiatives to reinforce positive health behaviors and raise awareness of caring for one's own health through health education programmes.

Mr Lee Yong Qin, Project Director of PHS and a Year 3 student with the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine said, "PHS has grown from strength to strength over the years. Through our group of dedicated student volunteers, we aim to reach out to residents who live in 1 to 4-room flats, and rental blocks units. This year's topic is Metabolic Syndrome, which focuses on a cluster of risk factors that may increase the likelihood of having heart diseases and diabetes. We also want to actively encourage and educate residents to take a more active approach of one's healthcare."

Culture, Community and Youth Minister Grace Fu said, "I'm very heartened to see our future doctors, nurses and allied health professionals come together to serve the local community with their respective competencies. The partnership between PHS, healthcare providers and community groups is a clear illustration of how we can be elderly centric and bring care effectively to the community. With good planning and coordination, we can wrap the services around the

elderly so that they enjoy the maximum health benefits at minimum hassle, without extensive to and within the hospital.”

Beyond health screenings, the PHS aims to provide a platform for healthcare institutions to come together. The event also brings an estimated 780 student volunteers from different healthcare-associated courses (NUS Medicine, NUS Nursing, NUS Pharmacy, NUS Social Work; NTU Medicine; SIT Physiotherapy; Duke-NUS Medicine; and JC students), as well as over 150 external volunteers from various partner organisations together to provide the necessary support for the smooth running of PHS.

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About National University of Singapore (NUS)

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore’s flagship university, which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise.

NUS has 17 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 38,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives. NUS also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

NUS takes an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to research, working with partners from industry, government and academia, to address crucial and complex issues relevant to Asia and the world. Researchers in NUS’ Schools and Faculties, 30 university-level research institutes and centres, and Research Centres of Excellence cover a wide range of themes including: energy, environmental and urban sustainability; treatment and prevention of diseases common among Asians; active ageing; advanced materials; risk management and resilience of financial systems. The University’s latest research focus is to use data sciences, optimisation research and cybersecurity to support Singapore’s Smart Nation initiative.

For more information on NUS, please visit www.nus.edu.sg.

About the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (NUS Medicine)

Established in 1905, the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine is the first institution of higher learning in Singapore and the genesis of the National University of Singapore.

The School offers one of the finest undergraduate medical programmes in the Asia Pacific region and enjoys international recognition and respect. The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2019 by subject and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject 2019 list NUS Medicine as a leading medical school in Asia.

It admits 300 students to the MBBS degree programme annually and its principal missions are to educate and train the next generation of healthcare professionals, and foster research that will help to advance the practice of medicine.

The 18 NUS Medicine departments in the basic sciences and clinical specialties work closely with the Centre for Medical Education, the Centre for Biomedical Ethics, the Centre for Healthcare Simulation as well as the restructured public hospitals to ensure that teaching and research are aligned and relevant to Singapore's healthcare needs. The School is a founding institutional member of the National University Health System.

For more information about NUS Medicine, please visit <http://nusmedicine.nus.edu.sg>