



PRESS RELEASE

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NUS Medicine launches VK Rajah Professorship in Medical Ethics

Professorship honours former Attorney-General and Judge of Appeal

Singapore, 15 November 2024 — Today, the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore (NUS Medicine) announced the establishment of the VK Rajah Professorship in Medical Ethics in a tribute to the former Attorney-General and Judge of Appeal, whose judicial decisions have been cited by various courts in common law jurisdictions and published in many international law journals.

The Professorship aims to advance the study and practice of medical ethics, a field of growing significance in the rapidly evolving healthcare landscape. An NUS alumnus, Mr VK Rajah SC is renowned for his significant role in transforming Singapore's legal landscape.

His extensive career has led him to engage with ethical considerations in various capacities. He served as Managing Partner of Rajah & Tann, Southeast Asia's largest law firm, from 1987 to 2003. In 2004, he was appointed a High Court Judge, followed by his elevation to Judge of Appeal in 2007. In 2014, he became Attorney General. He also held a directorship at the Monetary Authority of Singapore from 2015 to 2020. Since 2019, Mr Rajah SC has been Chairman of Singapore's Advisory Council on the Ethical Use of AI and Data.

During his tenure as Attorney-General and a Judge, his legal writings covered constitutional law, civil rights, justice reforms, and ethics. A central theme of Mr Rajah SC's work has been upholding legal and ethical standards in the professions and commerce. His career embodies a deep respect for the rule of law, emphasising equal application of laws while ensuring transparency and accountability in governance.

When he retired from public service in 2017, then Prime Minister of Singapore Mr Lee Hsien Loong in a valedictory letter noted, "In every appointment, you have carried out your duties with dynamism and commitment. You have improved our legal system, and made a difference to future generations of lawyers."¹

Mr Rajah SC said of the Professorship, "I am truly honoured to have a professorship in medical ethics established in my recognition and to be associated with the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. This distinction also reflects the invaluable contributions of many colleagues and mentors who have shaped my journey. Upholding the highest standards of medical ethics is crucial for all in Singapore. Given that sound ethical guidelines protect research subjects and support equitable resource allocation, they also serve to consolidate trust in the healthcare system. In an era of rapid medical advancements, ethical decision-making ensures the

¹ <https://www.pmo.gov.sg/Newsroom/valedictory-letter-pm-lee-hsien-loong-attorney-general-v-k-rajah-sc>

preservation of human dignity, the protection of patient rights, and unwavering confidence in the integrity and capability of the medical profession.”

The latest in a series launched to recognise outstanding Singaporeans, the VK Rajah Professorship in Medical Ethics will be vested at NUS Medicine and will catalyse the formation of partnerships with experts from various disciplines to address ethical medical practice and other challenges of the day, and spur important discourse to improve the practice of healthcare to serve the population in Singapore and beyond.

Professor Chong Yap Seng, Lien Ying Chow Professor in Medicine, Dean of NUS Medicine, said, “The Professorship will build on Mr Rajah SC’s contributions by advancing ethical discourse and education in healthcare. Medical ethics is essential in helping healthcare professionals navigate complex moral dilemmas, and foster trust and accountability within the system. Through this professorship, we aim to promote ethical medical practices that uphold fairness, justice, and informed decision-making among healthcare practitioners.”

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About National University of Singapore (NUS)

The National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore's flagship university, which offers a global approach to education, research and entrepreneurship, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise. We have 16 colleges, faculties and schools across three campuses in Singapore, with more than 40,000 students from 100 countries enriching our vibrant and diverse campus community. We have also established more than 20 NUS Overseas Colleges entrepreneurial hubs around the world.

Our multidisciplinary and real-world approach to education, research and entrepreneurship enables us to work closely with industry, governments and academia to address crucial and complex issues relevant to Asia and the world. Researchers in our faculties, research centres of excellence, corporate labs and more than 30 university-level research institutes focus on themes that include energy; environmental and urban sustainability; treatment and prevention of diseases; active ageing; advanced materials; risk management and resilience of financial systems; Asian studies; and Smart Nation capabilities such as artificial intelligence, data science, operations research and cybersecurity.

For more information on NUS, please visit <http://www.nus.edu.sg/>

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

The NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine is Singapore's first and largest medical school. Our enduring mission centres on nurturing highly competent, values-driven and inspired healthcare professionals to transform the practice of medicine and improve health around the world.

Through a dynamic and future-oriented five-year curriculum that is inter-disciplinary and inter-professional in nature, our students undergo a holistic learning experience that exposes them to multiple facets of healthcare and prepares them to become visionary leaders and compassionate doctors and nurses of tomorrow. Since the School's founding in 1905, more than 12,000 graduates have passed through our doors.

In our pursuit of health for all, our strategic research programmes focus on innovative, cutting-edge biomedical research with collaborators around the world to deliver high impact solutions to benefit human lives.

The School is the oldest institution of higher learning in the National University of Singapore and a founding institutional member of the National University Health System. It is one of the leading medical schools in Asia and ranks among the best in the world (Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024 by subject and the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by subject 2023).

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