



SingHealth Nurses' Week 2005

Special Issue

SINGHEALTH STAFF NEWSLETTER

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FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY



*Celebrating
120 years of
Nursing*

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More than a century ago, our nursing profession in Singapore began humbly with the arrival of French nuns to tend to the sick at the old Singapore General Hospital. Through the years, our nurses have followed in their footsteps of selfless dedication and beyond. As we celebrate Nurses' Week, I am pleased to witness the increasing growth and expansion of nursing roles today.

With Singapore's increasing importance as one of Asia's premier medical hubs as well as a global centre for advanced medical research, we depend on our skilled nurses and medical teams to deliver the best care in the region. SingHealth's training and enrichment courses, continuous learning programmes, skills development and growth initiatives present tremendous opportunities for nurses to excel in their profession. Nurses with Master of Nursing qualifications and advanced clinical skills are also adding a new dimension to nursing care. In addition, technological advancements and new evidence-based approaches are set to shape nursing practice in the years to come. In fact, the best is yet to be.

Nurses, your immense progress is shaping the future of nursing care. You are the professionals who have risen to the challenge and have made nursing a career of choice. There are exciting times ahead and I hope that you will be inspired to seek new skills, to innovate and take the profession to greater heights. We thank you for your commitment and take this opportunity to wish all of you a memorable Nurses' Week this year!

Mr Bernard Chen
Chairman, SingHealth

Thank You

Your caring hands and hearts lift us up!
We wish all of you a Happy Nurses' Week!



From left:
Ms Loke Wai Chan,
Ms Lee Heng Pheng,
Mdm Ho Shin Hiong,
Mdm Lim Swee Hia,
Ms Gwee Pek Hoon,
Ms Chua Gek Phin,
Mdm Ong Ah Khiew and
Ms Leow Suat Lay.

"Nurses' Week is indeed a special time to honour our nurses, and a time to reflect on our past achievements, successes and future advancement.

As nurses, we are united by our role as carers and our commitment to the health and well-being of the people we serve. Over the past months, we have spent much time, effort and resources to integrate our operations as we endeavoured to achieve our common goal of providing safe and quality patient care. I am personally very impressed and grateful for the exemplary team spirit amongst our nurses during the recent JCI audit at SGH.

Today, we are forging new creative paths for nurses. Our nurses are participating in research, public speaking, debates and have even recently published a pictorial book for patients with their own hand-drawn illustrations.

The setting up of the Alice Lee Institute of Advanced Nursing has helped us to share our resources and avoid duplication of programmes. As our nursing workforce becomes more educated, knowledgeable and skills-based, we look to work re-design to create a more satisfying and active role for our nurses.

It is my privilege to thank all our nurses for their wonderful work and dedication as we celebrate Nurses' Week. Each and every one of you have contributed to building the strong quality culture that is the pride and joy of Nursing. In recognising 120 years of nursing practice, I also want to especially thank our senior and retired nurses. Without their guidance, patience and commitment, we would not have the progress we enjoy today."

Mdm Lim Swee Hia
Nursing Director, Outram Campus

"Changes are inevitable. There are changes involving structure and processes, some are highly personal and it involves people. Most changes garner support from the top and are linked to the organisation's vision, strategic goals and desired culture. For change to happen, it should be well-managed.

Nurses are always in the hub of these changes. So here are some thoughts for our ever-so-hardworking, passionate, motivated and enthusiastic nurses who are involved in the change process...

- Implementing change is usually a lot of work, and will take time - weeks, months or longer! Plan for this.
- You must keep your vision and goals in sight at all times, especially if/when the going gets tough!
- You are unlikely to win everyone over - but you should aim high, and try to get enough of the critical mass with you.
- You must remember to review continuously, and modify the changes as required.

May you be energised, accept changes and enjoy what comes your way."

Mdm Ong Ah Khiew
DN, Changi General Hospital

"Every day, you face patients and their relatives who are at their most vulnerable and are dependent on you. Seeing them improve day-by-day is rewarding, though there will always be instances where their dependence manifests itself negatively. Through it all, you have soldiered on and persevered in providing quality nursing care. To all of you, my sincere appreciation for all that you have done. You are simply the best!"

Ms Lee Heng Pheng
DN, KK Women's and Children's Hospital

"In reaching its 120th year of service, Nursing has indeed come a long way. It has grown, evolved and developed from a mere job of providing care to a profession that requires not only compassion but also specialised training, commitment and sacrifice.

Nursing would not have come so far without the contribution of each and every nurse. I am proud to be a part of this profession and would like to salute all nurses of the past and present who have demonstrated compassion and sacrifice towards our patients.

I would also like to take this opportunity to specially thank all my NCC nurses. Cancer is not an easy enemy to combat but you have joined hands with our patients in this battle, applying your knowledge and skills and showing commitment, team spirit and professionalism. At the same time, you are also angels, showering them with love and care with unwavering dedication. You have made an indisputable difference to the lives of the patients. I salute you all!"

Ms Chua Gek Phin

DN, National Cancer Centre

"For the past 120 years, the nursing profession has persevered and progressed tremendously in tandem with the changing needs of healthcare. Our first nurses, the French nuns, had no proper training but through selfless dedication, they brought comfort to their patients. Today, our nurses and dental surgery assistants at National Dental Centre are well-trained and play multi-faceted roles as educators, researchers, counsellors and care providers. With exciting plans in the pipeline such as redesignation, nurses will be higher-trained and able to take on more challenging tasks and move up the value chain in their areas of responsibility. With determination to overcome all challenges, nursing will add a new milestone to its rich history. I salute all nurses for their tireless dedication to the profession."

Ms Leow Suat Lay,

SNM, National Dental Centre

"Since 1885, major changes have occurred within the healthcare industry. From the beginning, the nuns from the French Convent came forth to care for the sick although they had no proper training.

Today, nurses are professionals contributing to the healthcare and well-being of our people. As healthcare professionals, they often humbly go beyond their call of duties to comfort, encourage and support patients. Hence, as nurses, they can make a difference as they are the vital link that ensures the continuity of care for the patients.

Although advancements in technology may improve healthcare delivery, it will not be able to replace the role of a nurse. Only nurses are able to provide the smile and human touch needed by every patient.

I would like to take this opportunity to salute all our nurses for their dedication and strong commitment to patients and the public."

Ms Loke Wai Chan

DN, National Neuroscience Institute

"Compassion, Communication, Commitment, Collaboration and Consistency aptly describe genuine nursing care as they embody the core values that all nurses in SNEC believe in and practice as we deliver care to our patients.

As we celebrate 120 years of nursing in Singapore, we not only recognise the important role of nurses in our society but also the opportunities and challenges that the nursing profession needs to rise to.

Genuine care by nurses is an important facet of the Medical Excellence we strive to achieve together with our other colleagues in the medical field. While technology continues to improve lives, the 'heart-ware' in the delivery of nursing care is equally important in achieving better outcomes for patients.

The future of nursing is exciting. Increasingly, new avenues are available for nurses to upgrade clinical and management skills. We can look forward with excitement to the future where the role of nurses would not only be that of caregivers but also as critical members of care teams responsible for the total well-being of patients.

On this Nurses' Day, my Assistant Directors and I would especially like to thank all the nursing staff at SNEC for always "being there" for patients and their families, a daily and constant commitment that exemplifies what genuine care is.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all senior management and staff for their continuous support."

Mdm Ho Shin Hiong

DN, Singapore National Eye Centre

"I honour each and every one of you for your endless commitment and dedication. The clinical competence that you demonstrate in your capacity to care through your gentle touch, heartwarming smiles and kind words has brought much comfort to many patients. You have exuded confidence and steadfastness in whatever you do, placing your patients' needs far above your own, helping them to recover and start life anew, and this has made all the difference."

Ms Gwee Pek Hoon

DN, SingHealth Polyclinics



The Evolution of Nursing Practice over 120 Years

A profession that has progressed by leaps and bounds

Nothing is constant except for change. To keep pace with Singapore's economic progress, nursing practice has had to advance quickly to meet the needs of our growing population. It all began 120 years ago with a group of compassionate nuns from a French convent who answered the call to care for the sick at the old Singapore General Hospital. Today, nurses are trained professionals, applying their skills to provide better quality healthcare services, with advanced technology and better facilities.

The Changing Role of Nurses

Temperature nurse. Feed nurse. These terms, prevalent in the 1960's and 70's, reflect the task-oriented nature of the profession in the years when the multi-faceted responsibilities of nurses ranged from nursing care to clerical and housekeeping duties. Today, team nursing is a widely adopted practice as nursing care is now skewed towards a more patient-oriented and holistic approach to meet the sophisticated needs of patients and their families. In addition, nurses continuously strive for excellence to be a valuable partner of the healthcare team. Nursing skill levels have leapfrogged over the century allowing the adoption of expanded roles mainly in health assessment and health education. Today, our nurses can be found in every healthcare setting including emergency departments and disaster relief teams. Even nursing uniforms are no longer pristine white but are now in pleasant pastels and shades.



Traditional Feed Nurse



Our nursing team in their pastel uniform

Senior Midwife Wong Mui Mui used to work in the 'Labour Ward' at the old KK Hospital. The midwives then would monitor the foetal heart rate with the foetalscope and the rate of intravenous infusion was regulated manually. Today, the introduction of advanced medical technology equipment such as Cardiotocograph monitors and infusion pumps have replaced such manual processes in the Delivery Suite.

"All delivery requisites were 'sterilised' by boiling, and rubber gloves and glass syringes were recycled repeatedly after the boiling process. The boiling process was succeeded by steam sterilisation and the use of disposables. Gone are the days when the Treatment Room in the Labour Ward was steam-filled and had mouldy patches due to the condensation that could be seen on the outer wall of the Treatment Room." - Senior Midwife, Wong Mui Mui

From restrictive traction devices to the continuous gastric suction system, nurses used to devote much of their time to operating equipment. Nursing practice has today benefited from the advancement in technology and medical sciences.



Administering IV chemotherapy drugs

The Professionals

In 1956, the School of Nursing opened and heralded the start of formal training for nurses. Today, aspiring nurses can enrol for tertiary nursing education at the Nanyang and Ngee Ann Polytechnics and at the National University of Singapore. With the establishment of the Alice Lee Institute of Advanced Nursing (IAN) and through its scholarships, nurses are offered the opportunity to pursue a Bachelor, Masters or PhD programme at local and overseas universities. Hence the career path for registered nurses has evolved over the years. Nurses are now able to specialise through the Nurse Clinician Programme to care for patients with specific health conditions. A group of nurses are also being identified and developed to take on the role of Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) to provide and maintain the highest quality medical and nursing care possible. Outstanding achievements by nurses are recognised regularly by awards given by SingHealth. There are also the Ministry of Health Nurses' Merit Awards and the President's Award for Nurses.

"Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) are useful resource persons who can guide and share their expertise with other nurses. We are able to provide advanced health assessments and develop care plans for patients by interpreting assessment findings and investigation results," says Josephine Teo, one of the pioneer graduates of the Master of Nursing programme and a Senior Nurse Clinician at SGH.

“We don’t replace doctors but we are able to collaborate with them to blend the best of medical and nursing care. In time, our colleagues as well as the public will become aware of this new advanced role for the nursing profession and how the APN is an integral member of the healthcare team,” added Josephine.



Personalised post-natal care

The Future

Once upon a time, nurses used to attend to patients at clinic sessions held in old shophouses or coolie quarters; and midwives performed home deliveries and post-natal care for mothers. Today, there are public health education sessions and community care initiatives by hospitals and polyclinics. The traditional fear of a hospital/clinic visit is now replaced by a modern mindset where the public is encouraged to take responsibility for their own health to seek medical attention.



Nurses' Day celebrations of yesteryear



Public education is an integral part of patient care today

Nursing practice across SingHealth today is gearing towards evidence-based nursing i.e. nurses are being trained to help make more clinical decisions and solve problems using the best available research evidence and evaluating practices. Nurses are also leveraging on information technology to apply best practices from well-conducted research.

Staff Nurse Ang Shin Yuh is a witness to this revolutionary change in nursing. She has a Bachelor degree with Honours and an Advanced Diploma in Med-Surg. Shin Yuh sees evidence-based nursing as the way future nurses will be educated and the result will be nursing care that is more effective, efficient, streamlined and dynamic.

“Being a young nurse of the 21st century, I have to be savvy about treatment and care options, rising healthcare costs, and the great availability of information to the public. Nurses today are now taught to question our current practices, to search for the best evidence to achieve the best outcome, rather than depend on ‘how it has always been done’...” said Staff Nurse Ang Shin Yuh.



Leveraging on IT

Let us salute our nurses who continue their quest for excellence in patient care. Congratulations on your success and contributions. We look forward to more exciting developments in the years ahead.

Down Memory Lane...

A picture is a worth a thousand words. A look back at the old days when nurses wore white veils and sterilised medical utensils with hot water.

Past



A functional Labour Ward - clinical and bare. Note the crib at the foot of the bed for inspection of newborns.

Present



Today's modern Delivery Suite offers the best comforts.



Neat, military style. Observations were difficult with opaque cots.



The perspex cots give everyone a clear view of the newborns.



Children's Orthopaedic ward - a balancing act.



At least this bed is large and comfortable. No risk of falling out of bed here.



In the 1950s, poliomyelitis victims with respiratory problems were ventilated with the Iron Lung machine.



New advanced ventilatory support system for better patient care.



Quite a handful - forceps and dressing.



The art of dressing today.

From the
Management

A tribute to our nurses

From: Group CEO, SingHealth & CEO, SGH

To:
Our Nightingales
You are Beacons of light
in the lives of our Patients
You are deeply appreciated
Prof Tan Ser Kiat

From: Deputy CEO, SingHealth & SGH

Dear Nurses,
Thank you for being
the hands + hearts that
bring care + healing to
all! Warmest wishes,
Konark

NURSES are the heart and soul of healthcare.
All at NNI join me in saluting our nurses for the
dedication, perseverance and compassion they uphold
in caring for us and the community.

A/Prof Lee Wei Ling
Director, National Neuroscience Institute

Nurses are the heart and soul of Changi General Hospital.
Your professional skills delivered with a caring touch epitomises
our quality vision of making CGH a hospital that is good enough
for our own mothers without having to make special arrangement.
You are the torch that lights the way for the rest of the hospital
towards achieving this vision.

TK Udairam, CEO, CGH

To our wonderful nurses
- You are much
appreciated! -

W.
Prof Ivy Ng.
CEO, KK Women's and Children's Hospital

Daily, minute by minute, hour by hour
you touch those
who need your assistance & clinical skills.
We salute you for your dedication.
HAPPY NURSES' WEEK!

Geraldine Lee
Group HR Director, SingHealth

Nurses are at the frontline of healthcare delivery,
nursing our patients with increasingly high expectations.
All our doctors salute your dedication and patience.

Happy Nurses' Week!

Dr EH Tay
CMB, KK Women's and Children's Hospital

Let us make a toast to celebrate Nurses' Day.
Nurses have been very committed to serve the health and well-
being of the people and indeed will continue to earn the honour
of being the public's most respected and trusted professionals.

I salute each and every one of you for putting forth your spirit
of professionalism in patient care and the human touch. You have
helped make a difference to the patients' experience, giving your
best to them. Keep up your good work and determination.
Wishing all of you a Happy Nurses' Week!

Prof Koh Tian Hai
Medical Director, National Heart Centre

To Our Nurses,
Your dedication and compassion are
an inspiration to us all.
Thank you and Happy Nurses' Week!

Dr Kwa Chong Teck
Director, National Dental Centre



SingHealth Nurses' Week 2005 Celebration Highlights

Check out the variety of exciting events for Nurses' Week this year. Nurses can sign up for the professional development activities, join in the celebrations and take part in community outreach...

Professional Development

SingHealth Nursing Debate (Finals)

Topic: Today's Informed Patient - An asset or a liability?

Wednesday, 27 July, 3.30 - 5.00pm, CGH Auditorium

Teams: KKH vs Centres (NCC, NHC, NNI, SNEC, SHP)

Come and support our nurses as they engage each other on this 'hot' issue and see who emerges as the winning team, the best speaker and runner-up best speaker. The results will be announced at the 1 August Outram Campus Party. Each team consists of 4 members and 2 reserves. The judges for this debate are Prof Malcolm Paterson, (Scientific Director, SingHealth), Ms Peggy Tan (NYP) and Dr Miny Samuel (CTERU - Evidence-Based Medicine).

Public speaking is a skill that our nurses can take pride in. It helps build confidence, an analytical mind and clear delivery of thoughts. The topics chosen for the preliminary and final debates are related to current issues and

events surrounding nursing practices. In researching and understanding the topics, the speakers share findings that will add value to nurses' everyday care and communication with their patients.

The motions for the preliminary rounds were:

- "Nursing informatics play an important role in patient care".
CGH (proposition) vs Centres (opposition)
- "Evidence based practice promote critical thinking".
KKH (proposition) vs SGH (opposition)



Nursing Debate 2004

1st SingHealth Diabetes Nursing Seminar

Theme: Patient-centred Diabetes Nursing
Friday - Sunday, 5 - 7 August, CGH Auditorium

In conjunction with Nurses' Week, we have organised the first-ever Diabetes Seminar for Nurses. It is a great opportunity for nurses to gather, listen and learn from the experts and one another on the best practices for diabetic nursing.

The keynote speaker is Professor Patricia Lynette Dunning, from the University of Melbourne. She is the chair of the Australian Diabetes Educators Association and is a published author of numerous articles and books. The main seminar topics include the evolving roles and responsibility of nurses in diabetes care, food management, multi-media patient education, and diabetes care planning. Nurses can also participate in the pre- and post-seminar workshops.

Community Outreach

In the true caring spirit of our nurses, the celebrations for Nurses' Week would not be complete without extending a kind gesture to the community. This year, SingHealth has gone the extra mile to create a 2-in-1 celebration.

Charity Movie Screening - Fantastic Four

Tuesday, 26 July, 7pm, GV Great World City

As part of the Nurses' Week celebrations, our nurses made a special decision to use a portion of their celebration fund to reach out to and bring a spark and a warm smile to the less-privileged children in our community. So to 120 young children and youths from the Singapore School for the Deaf, Jervois School, and the Serangoon Moral Family Service Centre, 26 July will be a day of treats with games, delicious snacks and a special screening of the latest movie, Fantastic Four!

Launch of SingHealth in the Community Book - One Little Spark

Tuesday, 26 July, 5.30pm, GV Great World City

At the charity movie screening, SingHealth is also taking the opportunity to launch "SingHealth in the Community", a publication that pays tribute to the humanitarian spirit of SingHealth's staff. The book chronicles some of our staff initiatives in community outreach both locally and around the region. Guest of Honour, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, will be present to launch the SingHealth book and celebrate the evening with the 120 beneficiaries.

Special Treats for Our Nurses!

In appreciation of your care and commitment

Look out for more details provided through your institution's nursing administration.

Take A Break, Have A Cuppa on Us!

DOME Coffee/Tea Voucher

Valid till 31 Dec.

With compliments from SingHealth Foundation and DOME.

Polar Cafe

16% discount

with \$5 minimum purchase. Valid from 17 Jul - 15 Oct.

Prima Deli

\$1 off for every \$6 spent. Valid from 1 Aug - 4 Sep.

Dr Optics

\$30 Voucher

(no minimum purchase). Valid for 3 months from 1 Oct.

Le Meridien Cafe Georges

50% discount

on food & beverages for lunch, dinner and weekend high tea. Valid from 1 - 31 August 2005.

Book Launches

SingHealth Pictorial Communication Aid

SingHealth Language Cue Book

Outram Campus Celebration Party

1 August 2005, SGH Gamma Knife Carpark

Celebrating 120 Years of Nursing



Programme

10.00 ▶ **SGH Live Band Performance**

11.00 ▶ **SingHealth Dance Competition**

- Hindustani -
By Sweethearts from National Heart Centre
- Modern Jazz Dance -
By Hannah Jono from National Cancer Centre
- Indonesian Dance -
By Apa Saja from National Heart Centre
- Go With The Flow Of Your Heart -
By Golden Girls from National Dental Centre

11.30 ▶ **Welcome Speech by Mr Bernard Chen,**
Chairman, SingHealth

11.35 ▶ **Fun Challenge - "HAPPY NURSES' DAY"**

11.55 ▶ **What A Rap!**
Performance by SingHealth Nurses'
Debate Committee

12.00 ▶ **Speech by Mdm Lim Swee Hia,**
Nursing Director, Outram Campus

12.05 ▶ **Speech by Mrs Karen Koh,**
DCEO, SingHealth, and SGH

12.10 ▶ **Speech by Prof Tan Ser Kiat,**
GCEO, SingHealth, and CEO, SGH

12.15 ▶ **Presentation of Awards**

- SingHealth Nursing Debate Challenge Trophy
- SGH CEO Best Clinical Nurse Awards
- SingHealth-Lee Foundation Nursing Awards
- Alice Lee Institute of Advanced Nursing Scholarship Awards

1.10 ▶ **Walk Down Memory Lane**

1.20 ▶ **Cantonese Opera "Qi Yue Qi Ri Chang Sheng Jian"**
By Nurse Manager Fang Lai Mei, SNEC & Senior
Enrolled Nurse Foo Shook Mun, SGH

1.30 ▶ **Launch of SingHealth Community
Outreach Programme**
▶ **Presentation of Gift Hampers to Beneficiaries**

1.40 ▶ **Toast to the Nurses**
by CEOs, CMBs & Directors of Nursing, SingHealth

1.45 ▶ **Cake-cutting Ceremony**

1.50 ▶ **Results of SingHealth Dance Competition**

2.00 **Good Bye see you again next year!**

SingHealth Nurses' Week Celebrations

KKH NURSES' DAY CELEBRATION

Friday, 29 July 2005, 4pm
KKH Auditorium
Awards: KKH Annual Nursing Awards

SHP NURSES' DAY PARTY

Saturday, 30 July 2005, 1pm
Hard Rock Café

NNI NURSES' DAY DINNER

Saturday, 30 July 2005, 6.30pm

CGH NURSES' DAY CELEBRATION

Monday, 1 August 2005, 9am
CGH Auditorium
Award: CGH Nightingale Award

OUTRAM CAMPUS CELEBRATION PARTY

Monday, 1 August 2005,
10am - 2pm
SGH Gamma Knife Carpark
Awards:

- SingHealth Nursing Debate Challenge Trophy
- SGH CEO Best Clinical Nurse Awards
- SingHealth-Lee Foundation Nursing Awards
- Alice Lee Institute of Advanced Nursing Scholarship Awards