ISSUE 29.2025

NHG Polyclinics
NHG Health

Transforming PRIMARY & CARE

UP CLOSE WITH
THE HEAD OF SERANGOON POLYCLINIC REFLECTS ON THE JOURNEY THAT TRANSFORMED A VISION TO REALITY

IN AND AROUND
NHG POLYCLINICS' ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE 2025 HEALTHCARE HUMANITY AWARDS AND NATIONAL MEDICAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS, EXERCISE RAVEN, AND MORE



EXPANDING REACH, ENHANCING CARE

The opening of Serangoon Polyclinic strengthens efforts to deliver intergenerational care to patients of all ages.

2025 APEX AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE



EXPANDING REACH, ENHANCING CARE

The official opening of Serangoon Polyclinic on 29 November 2025 marked a key milestone as NHG Polyclinics commemorated 25 years of transforming primary care. As NHG Health's 10th polyclinic, Serangoon Polyclinic strengthens our efforts to promote overall health and well-being in alignment with national initiatives such as *Healthier SG* and *Age Well SG*. With approximately one in five residents aged 65 and above in Serangoon, the polyclinic will expand accessible preventive care across the age spectrum to care for residents.

In this issue's Cover Story, 'Providing Accessible Intergenerational Care to the Community', read about how Serangoon Polyclinic addresses the frailty challenges faced by seniors through STRIVE — a comprehensive framework that stands for **S**trengthening **T**he **R**esilience, **I**ndependence and **V**itality of s**E**niors. Oral health will be integrated into frailty care, where for the first time, dentists contribute their expertise as part of the multidisciplinary team managing frailty and Advanced Practice Nurses adopt the Oral Frailty-Five Item checklist to assess patients for oral frailty. We also introduced the family empanelment care model that extends NHG Polyclinics' Teamlet Care Model to families with chronic conditions, and the Continuity of Care in Children (COCC) programme to achieve well-controlled childhood asthma.

Apart from new initiatives, the polyclinic aims to meet patients' needs more holistically through technology-driven innovations including VIOLA (**V**accine **I**ntelligence **O**ptimised **L**ogistics with **AI**) for safe and efficient vaccine management, HealthVector Diabetes for chronic kidney disease risk prediction, and PRIME-CXR (**P**rioritisation and **R**edistribution of **I**maging for **M**edical **E**valuation of **C**hest **X**-**R**ay) for the triage of chest X-rays.

For a more in-depth look at preparations behind the scenes, turn to *Up Close With*. Dr Liu Changwei, Head, Serangoon Polyclinic, shares about the strong synergy that brought together diverse experience and expertise — from the nursing team's efforts in ensuring consultation rooms were properly equipped, to the operations team regularising workflows, to the Deputy Head mapping interprofessional communication processes. Dr Liu also highlights how the polyclinic team overcame challenges through open discussions and built strong bonds over the course of this journey.

Beyond an embodiment of NHG Polyclinics' ongoing commitment to accessible, person-centred, intergenerational care, the newest polyclinic represents our continued efforts in building a future-ready primary care ecosystem.

The Editorial Team

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(Left to right) Mr Seah Kian Peng, Adviser, Braddell Heights (Marine Parade-Braddell Heights GRC); Mr Tan Tee How, Chairman, NHG Health Board of Directors; Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies; Associate Professor Karen Ng, Chief, Primary Care, Population Health, NHG Health and Chief Executive Officer, NHG Polyclinics; and Dr Liu Changwei, Head, Serangoon Polyclinic at the launch ceremony.

PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE INTERGENERATIONAL CARE TO THE COMMUNITY

NHG Serangoon Polyclinic, the 10th polyclinic under NHG Health, is now open. In alignment with national initiatives such as *Healthier SG* and *Age Well SG*, the opening of Serangoon Polyclinic strengthens efforts to improve the health and well-being of residents and patients.

The official opening of Serangoon Polyclinic on 29 November 2025 marked a key milestone as NHG Polyclinics commemorated 25 years of transforming primary care.

With approximately one in five residents aged 65 and above, the Serangoon community is super-aged, ahead of Singapore's projection of a super-aged society in 2026. The polyclinic aims to strengthen preventive care across the age spectrum, and provide early intervention through integrated and intergenerational care, empowering residents to take ownership of their health.

ADDRESSING FRAILTY

Frailty, muscle loss and reduced bone density are becoming increasingly common as seniors age. These age-related conditions — often compounded by chronic diseases — can severely limit an individual's independence and mobility.

To address these challenges, NHG Polyclinics has consolidated its frailty management initiatives under STRIVE, a comprehensive framework that stands for **S**trengthening **T**he **R**esilience, **I**ndependence and **V**itality of s**E**niors.

Presently, patients at NHG Polyclinics aged 65 and above are screened for frailty, fall risk and osteoporosis. Patients who have a history of falls, or who are assessed to be pre-frail

or frail, will receive interventions to reduce fall risk, prevent the onset of frailty and reverse its progression, and enhance bone health. Frailty interventions include education on diet and exercise, and where needed, patients are connected to community exercise programmes. Those identified to be at risk of osteoporosis are offered Bone Mineral Densitometry screenings. Eligible patients are also referred to Day Rehabilitation Centres operated by community partners, for rehabilitation support.

Launched at Serangoon Polyclinic, STRIVE extends frailty interventions to include team-based care for seniors with mild to moderate frailty, addressing the interconnected challenges of frailty, falls and osteoporosis. These conditions are managed holistically by a multidisciplinary team of Family Physicians, Care Coordinators, Advanced Practice Nurses and dentists. The team provides interventions such as polypharmacy management, fall prevention strategies, home modification advice and tailored exercise plans — ultimately enhancing the standard of care and outcomes for elderly patients.



STRIVE integrates oral health into frailty care by including dentists into the multidisciplinary team caring for frail patients.

INTEGRATING ORAL HEALTH INTO FRAILTY CARE

Oral health is integral to healthy ageing. As Singapore's population grows older, more patients are showing signs of oral frailty, where the functions of the mouth deteriorate with age. Tooth loss from tooth decay and gum disease can lead to them consuming very soft or overcooked foods. Unable to chew properly, these patients struggle to maintain adequate nutrition, which in turn leads to sarcopenia and higher incidence of falls.

In a first for NHG Polyclinics, Serangoon Polyclinic is including dentists in the multidisciplinary team, caring for frail patients under STRIVE. This inclusion recognises the important linkage between oral health and overall well-being in seniors.

As part of assessments for elderly patients with mild to moderate frailty, Advanced Practice Nurses use the Oral Frailty Five-Item checklist to assess them for oral frailty. The nurse evaluates factors such as the patient's ability to chew and the adequacy of remaining teeth.

Those identified to be at risk of oral frailty are referred to the polyclinic's dental clinic, where dentists will identify and address pre-existing dental needs, and provide prosthetic rehabilitation in the form of dentures and crowns among others. Patients with complex prosthetic needs are referred to dental specialist clinics.

> Launched at Serangoon Polyclinic, STRIVE extends frailty interventions to include team-based care for seniors with mild to moderate frailty, addressing the interconnected challenges of frailty, falls and osteoporosis.



Associate Professor Karen Ng, Chief, Primary Care, Population Health, NHG Health, and Chief Executive Officer, NHG Polyclinics, speaking at the event.

These are in addition to NHG Polyclinics' existing dental processes, which include educating patients on ways to prevent tooth loss, and performing risk stratification to determine the frequency of their future dental check-ups. Through these processes, NHG Polyclinics aims to further prevent dental disease before complications occur.

CARING FOR FAMILIES TOGETHER

Providing accessible, intergenerational care is a core priority for NHG Polyclinics. Speaking at the opening of Serangoon Polyclinic, Associate Professor Karen Ng, Chief, Primary Care, Population Health, NHG Health and Chief Executive Officer, NHG Polyclinics said, "From seniors to our very young, Serangoon Polyclinic stands committed to supporting our patients and residents."

To ensure continuity of care for families living with chronic conditions, Serangoon Polyclinic is extending NHG Polyclinics' Teamlet Care Model to families with a new family empanelment care model. The Teamlet Care Model provides consistent, relationship-based care through a teamlet that comprises two Family Physicians, a Care Manager and a Care Coordinator. This extension will see family members with chronic conditions — such as parent and child, or spouses — being cared for, by the same teamlet. It not only offers greater convenience as they can receive care at the same polyclinic, but also builds trust for more efficient care. When family members attend appointments or receive education together, they are empowered to reinforce healthy behaviours, and help recognise health warning signs in one another.

> To ensure continuity of care for families living with chronic conditions, Serangoon Polyclinic is extending NHG Polyclinics' Teamlet Care Model to families with a new family empanelment care model.

For 61-year-old resident Ms Lee Hui Ling and her 90-year-old mother, this can potentially reduce the number of trips to different polyclinics. Ms Lee had been visiting Ang Mo Kio Polyclinic twice a year while her mother visited Hougang Polyclinic every four to six months. As the main caregiver, Ms Lee had to make multiple trips to both locations. With the opening of Serangoon Polyclinic, which is nearest to their house, both of them can receive care from the same dedicated team of healthcare professionals under the family empanelment care model.

The family empanelment care model also extends comprehensive care to the young through the Continuity of Care in Children (COCC)



Staff singers and My First Skool students kick-started the opening ceremony with a lively performance.

programme, aimed at achieving and maintaining well-controlled asthma in children. Under COCC, children aged 6 to 18 with mild to moderate asthma are managed by the same teamlet as their parents with chronic conditions.

Asthma affects about one in five children in Singapore[1]. Many mild to moderate cases respond well to education, regular monitoring and appropriate medications. With the implementation of COCC at Serangoon Polyclinic, doctors and nurses trained in paediatric asthma management can diagnose and manage childhood asthma, providing care for the whole family. The Care Manager assesses each child's asthma condition, works with the child and parents to identify potential trigger factors, and provides education on coping strategies, including inhaler use and the self-monitoring of daily symptoms.



Serangoon Polyclinic will deliver intergenerational care to the community, expanding NHG Polyclinics' capacity to serve the diverse health needs of residents and patients.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY TIES

Addressing residents' health needs holistically requires strong collaborations beyond the polyclinic. Working alongside community and General Practitioner (GP) partners, Serangoon Polyclinic is connecting residents not just to medical services, but also to resources that meet their physical and social needs.

Through NHG Polyclinics' social prescribing programme ENRICH (**EN**gaging and empowe**RI**ng our **C**ommunity for better **H**ealth), patients from Serangoon Polyclinic who require physical activity, social engagement or mental wellness support are connected to Active Ageing Centres (AACs) and Active Health Labs nearest to their homes. The type and level of activity is prescribed to ensure optimal engagement and participation. Among the centres that Serangoon Polyclinic is collaborating with, is the upcoming AAC (Care), managed by HNF-PCF Sparkle Care, and co-located within the building.

ENRICH has also been adopted by GPs in the Central North-Primary Care Network, enabling them to connect their patients to health and social interventions provided by community partners. This encourages more people to live active lives and stay healthy, in line with *Healthier SG*.

Additionally, Serangoon Polyclinic is partnering the co-located dialysis centre run by the National Kidney Foundation (NKF), to enhance care coordination for kidney dialysis patients who are also patients from the polyclinic. The polyclinic's care team will receive alerts and follow up with patients who present at the NKF dialysis centre with foot wounds or outstanding vaccination needs. This better supports kidney dialysis patients with chronic conditions.

The adoption of technology allows Serangoon Polyclinic to streamline care processes and optimise resources, ensuring more robust and sustainable healthcare.

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY FOR SMARTER CARE

The adoption of technology allows Serangoon Polyclinic to streamline care processes and optimise resources, ensuring more robust and sustainable healthcare. The polyclinic is enhancing vaccine safety and efficiency for optimal patient care through VIOLA (**V**accine **I**ntelligence **O**ptimised **L**ogistics with **AI**). This vaccine management system leverages Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the validation of vaccine selection against prescribed orders and alerts nurses when vaccines cannot be administered together. It also automatically prevents expired vaccines from being dispensed.

With a storage capacity of up to 800 doses for 17 vaccines, VIOLA utilises intelligent temperature monitoring with AI-powered sensors that maintain specific temperature conditions for vaccine efficacy. Using predictive analytics, the system supports stock planning and performance reporting while reducing energy use.

Other innovations implemented by Serangoon Polyclinic include HealthVector Diabetes — an AI-driven clinical analysis software that predicts a patient's three-year risk of developing chronic kidney disease, and PRIME-CXR (**P**rioritisation and **R**edistribution of **I**maging for **M**edical **E**valuation of **C**hest **X**-**R**ay), which enables chest X-rays with abnormalities to be prioritised for reporting by radiologists.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Serangoon Polyclinic's opening represents another milestone in NHG Polyclinics' 25-year journey in advancing primary care, marking a confident and progressive step towards the future. "With co-located services, innovative programmes and strong community partnerships, we aim to bring greater convenience and accessibility to our patients," Dr Liu Changwei, Head of Serangoon Polyclinic, affirmed. "We will work alongside patients, GPs and community partners to improve health outcomes and overall well-being for everyone in the community."



Ms Siti Noraisyah Sulaiman, Senior Staff Nurse, Serangoon Polyclinic, demonstrating the use of VIOLA to Minister Ong.

References:

1 https://www.healthhub.sg/health-conditions/common-childhood-illnesses-asthma



CENTRAL-NORTH PRIMARY CARE NETWORK QUARTERLY MEETING

The Central-North Primary Care Network's (CN-PCN) final Quarterly Meeting for the year took place on 11 October 2025, alongside the Singapore Health & Biomedical Congress (SHBC) General Practitioner (GP) Symposium organised by the Primary Care Academy. Over 130 GP partners heard from the symposium speakers on discussions that focused on tailored care for every patient, ranging from eczema, cataracts and heart failure to open access for oesophago-gastro-duodenoscopy and colonoscopy.

Dr Christopher Chong, Director, Primary Care Office, Population Health, NHG Health, and CN-PCN Admin Lead; and Dr Eng Soo Kiang, CN-PCN Clinical Lead, shared updates for 2026 and presented a review of the PCN's performance across various indicators. They also highlighted priority areas requiring focused attention, with key takeaways on how to continue deepening partnerships for the community's well-being.



Left: Ms Elane Zhang Yunxia (left) with Ms Lim Voon Hooi, Chief Nurse, Population Health, NHG Health and Chief Nurse, NHG Polyclinics. *Right:* NHG Polyclinics' ALERT team.

HEALTHCARE HUMANITY AWARDS 2025

Started in 2004, the Healthcare Humanity Awards honour healthcare professionals who embody qualities that represent the heart of care. At the awards ceremony on 6 November 2025, Ms Elane Zhang Yunxia, Senior Nurse Manager, NHG Hougang Polyclinic, was recognised for her commitment to patients and the community. From supporting her team through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to volunteering and helping families in need, Senior Nurse Manager Zhang went above and beyond in her services to others. The NHG Polyclinics ALERT (**A**do**L**escent **E**valuation and **R**apid **T**reatment of Mental Health) team was also recognised for supporting and providing timely and coordinated care to adolescents with mental health challenges, in collaboration with healthcare and community partners.

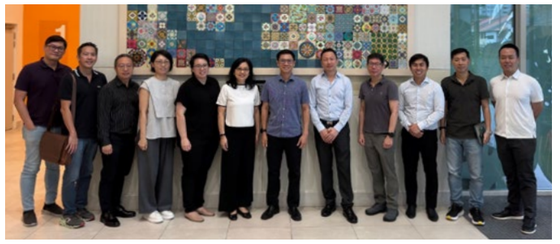
NATIONAL MEDICAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2025

At the National Medical Excellence Awards ceremony on 19 September 2025, the NHG Polyclinics & CN-PCN Healthier SG in Primary Care team received the National Clinical Excellence Team Award for its efforts in promoting better *Healthier* SG outcomes. Led by Associate Professor Karen Ng, Chief, Primary Care, Population Health, NHG Health and Chief Executive Officer, NHG Polyclinics; Dr Lim Ziliang, Head, NHG Yishun Polyclinic; Dr Kung Jian Ming, Family Physician, Associate Consultant and Assistant Director, Clinical Services; and Dr Eng Soo Kiang, Clinical Lead, Central-North Primary Care Network, targeted interventions were implemented across nine NHG Polyclinics and more than 200 General Practitioner clinics. The award, presented by Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies, recognised NHG Polyclinics' contributions to primary and preventive care transformation.



LEARNING VISITS BY LOCAL DELEGATIONS

On 2 December 2025, NHG Polyclinics hosted visits from the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and Singapore Chung Hwa Medical Institution (SCHMI) at NHG Kallang Polyclinic and Woodlands Polyclinic respectively. The SPF team was introduced to NHG Polyclinics' Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiatives such as speech-to-text tools and AI-enabled rostering, and how their implementation enhanced care delivery and efficiency. The visitors also observed a demonstration of the speech-to-text software by Dr Valerie Teo, Head, Kallang Polyclinic; and Dr Tan Yi Rui, Family Physician, Senior Staff, Kallang Polyclinic.



At NHG Woodlands Polyclinic, the SCHMI leadership team was brought on a clinic tour by Dr Quek Jing Sheng, Deputy Head, Woodlands Polyclinic, and given an overview of NHG Polyclinics' transformation efforts by Dr Kong Jing Wen, Head, Woodlands Polyclinic. This was followed by a discussion on integrating traditional Chinese medicine and western medicine for patient care. Both visits aimed to deepen understanding of Singapore's primary care landscape and facilitate knowledge-sharing.





HEALTHY COOKBOOK LAUNCH

To make healthy eating options more accessible for those living with diabetes and other chronic conditions, NHG Health and Tanoto Foundation launched the *I Can't Believe It Tastes So Good!* cookbook on 21 September 2025. The launch event at NHG Sembawang Polyclinic was graced by Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health, Coordinating Minister for Social Policies, and Adviser to Sembawang Group Representation Constituency Grassroots Organisations (Sembawang Central).

The healthy cookbook features recipes put together by NHG Polyclinics, patients and community volunteers, and Temasek Polytechnic. Alongside the launch event, Ms Lim Su Mei, Senior Dietitian, Hougang Polyclinic; and Mr Muneer Mohammed Haneefa, Co-chairperson, Patient Advisory Council, Sembawang Polyclinic, co-led a cooking demonstration using recipes from the cookbook. Ms Pauline Xie, Principal Dietitian and Assistant Director, Clinical Services, also shared that the recipes could be prepared in a short time, suitable for daily meals for working adults and the elderly.

EXERCISE RAVEN

Hougang Polyclinic demonstrated its emergency response capabilities during Exercise RAVEN on 27 September 2025, an exercise aimed at validating and strengthening NHG Polyclinics' ability to respond to civil emergencies. Nearly 300 participants from all three public health clusters, various ministries and tertiary students took part in simulated real-life scenarios. The successful completion of this large-scale exercise underscored the healthcare system's commitment to ensuring national safety in difficult situations.



OPENING THE DOORS TO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE

Dr Liu Changwei, Head, Serangoon Polyclinic, reflects on the preparation journey and teamwork that transformed a vision into reality at the 10th and newest polyclinic under NHG Health.

What makes Serangoon Polyclinic exciting and meaningful to the team? Serangoon Polyclinic's central location means it is uniquely positioned to enhance preventive health care in the community, and enable seniors to age healthily and gracefully.

Please share about the preparation journey for the polyclinic. Planning started way back in 2019, with team members contributing their expertise in their professional domains such as facilities, medical, dental, nursing and operations as well as IT. Key milestones that were necessary for the clinic's opening included completing the building's structure, obtaining the licence for operation and verifying digital systems prior to their implementation. Our Patient Advisory Council members also contributed valuable suggestions to improve wayfinding around the polyclinic and enhancing the patient experience.



Dr Liu Changwei (front row, centre) and the Serangoon Polyclinic team.

How did different team members' expertise complement one another? The nursing team led by Ms Elane Zhang, Senior Nurse Manager, ascertained that all nursing processes were in place, which included ensuring that the consultation rooms were well-equipped with medical diagnostic kits and bedside examination lights were properly installed for consultations. Such preparations took much effort and time to plan and actualise.

The operations management team, led by Mr Kee Cherng Yang, Senior Operations Manager, provided expertise by working with various departments, including diagnostics and allied health services to regularise operational workflows, and allocating room resources in the IT system.

The medical team, including Dr Loh Yi Bing, Deputy Head, Serangoon Polyclinic, and myself mapped out workflows across departments, especially in the aspects of interprofessional communication which is critical in patient care. These efforts were complemented by support and assistance from allied health, pharmacy, diagnostic and facilities departments. Most importantly, all staff familiarised themselves with the new clinic, participated in various drills prior to the clinic's opening, and exhibited teamwork in ensuring all rooms and equipment were ready for our patients.

What were some unexpected issues you faced, and how did the team work together to adapt to or overcome these obstacles? As many team members came from different clinics, there were naturally varying views on how things could be done. We addressed this by having open and constructive discussions, and collaborated to brainstorm and implement solutions that work.

To encourage residents to learn more about the polyclinic, the team explored meaningful ways to engage residents in the celebratory occasion. Dr Loh Yi Bing was instrumental in working with the corporate communications department and grassroots organisations to prepare learning trail and health education activities for residents, which received an overwhelming response on the day of the opening. It would not have been possible without the commitment and support from departments helming the learning booths, such as physiotherapy, podiatry, dental, operations and nursing services.

What were key success factors in this journey, and what lessons have you learned about collaboration and teamwork through this process? It is important to keep an open mind, come together promptly to discuss any issues encountered, and maintain continuous communication channels. This is key to effective teamwork, not only within the management team, but also in other forms of collaborative work within and among departments.

Share a moment from the opening period that exemplifies team spirit at Serangoon Polyclinic. The team worked late on multiple days in preparation for the opening event. This provided a great opportunity to bond over discussions and food from the nearby mall.