NHG Polyclinics
NHG Health

**UP CLOSE WITH**
The co-chairs of NHG Polyclinics' GREEN Committee, Dr Gloria Khoo and Mr Iven Chen, share their perspectives on environmental sustainability in healthcare.

**IN AND AROUND**
GovInsider Festival of Innovation Awards, Minister of State for Health Visits SPARk Clinic, and more.

Transforming
# PRIMARY CARE

ISSUE 30 | 2026




# Driving Sustainability Through Action

By transforming sustainability goals into everyday practices, NHG Polyclinics contributes to environmentally responsible care delivery at the primary care level.

2025 APEX AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

## CONTENTS


**3** COVER STORY
Committed to Go Green

**8** IN AND AROUND
- GovInsider Festival of Innovation Awards
- NHG Health GP Lohei and CN-PCN Quarterly Meeting
- Visit by Singapore Cancer Society
- Minister of State for Health Visits SPARk Clinic
- Lunar New Year Healthy Cooking Workshop
- Cultivating Positive Medication Habits

**10** UP CLOSE WITH
Championing Green at the Heart of Care



**Editorial Team**
Johnson Seah
Rachel Tan
Guo Qianping

**Contributors**
Mr Iven Chen
Dr Gloria Khoo
Dr Vivian Wong

**Our Polyclinics**
Ang Mo Kio • Geylang • Hougang • Kallang • Khatib
Sembawang • Serangoon • Toa Payoh • Woodlands • Yishun

Transforming Primary Care is a publication by the NHG Polyclinics.


© All rights reserved. No part of this publication can be reproduced in any form or by any means without the prior permission of the publisher.


For all editorial queries and feedback, please email to **nhgp.corpcomms@nhghealth.com.sg**.

Stay connected with us on

**Publishing & Design Consultant**
ARTNEXUS DESIGN




ISSUE 30 | **2026**




## DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ACTION

Environmental health and public health are inextricably connected. Sustainability has become an imperative in ensuring primary care can fulfil its public health mission. By embracing environmentally responsible practices, the well-being of patients, residents and staff can be safeguarded.

This issue's Cover Story, 'Committed to Go Green', highlights NHG Polyclinics' dedication to integrating eco-friendly enhancements across its operations and facilities. From NHG Serangoon Polyclinic being the first operational polyclinic in Singapore to receive the Green Mark Platinum Super Low Energy certification, to clinical and facility adaptations aimed at reducing energy, water and resource consumption, NHG Polyclinics' green initiatives are wide-ranging and purposeful. Coupled with the positive habits of staff that are amplified through the work of the NHG Polyclinics GREEN Committee, the organisation is making a substantial collective impact on its sustainability journey.

These efforts are driven as much by vision as by action. In *Up Close With*, the spotlight is turned onto the co-chairs of NHG Polyclinics' GREEN Committee: Dr Gloria Khoo, Family Physician, Associate Consultant, NHG Hougang Polyclinic, and Mr Iven Chen, Deputy Director, Infrastructure and Facilities Management. Bringing together complementary clinical and operational perspectives, they reflect candidly on what it takes to embed sustainability as a shared way of working rather than a set of targets. They also share the successes and challenges along the way, as well as their hopes for the coming years.

Every sustainable choice and innovation is an investment in the long-term vitality of the community that NHG Polyclinics serves. The work highlighted in this issue demonstrates that the commitment to delivering quality primary care and advancing environmental stewardship not only coexist but also reinforce each other. Together, this creates a more resilient healthcare system that supports the needs of the present and future generations.

*The Editorial Team*



# COMMITTED TO GO GREEN

The link between planetary health and human health is irrefutable. As a key member of the public healthcare ecosystem in Singapore, NHG Polyclinics is committed to reducing its environmental footprint by weaving sustainable practices into the fabric of care delivery.




▲ **Participants of NHG Polyclinics' first Environmental Sustainability Fair gained a better understanding on how climate-conscious actions can lead to significant health co-benefits.**

On a Saturday morning, the Health and Wellness Studio at NHG Sembawang Polyclinic bustled with activities. Patients, staff, and members of the public browsed stalls about recycling, healthy eating, and climate-conscious habits. Interactive workshops ran alongside talks, and the buzz was of a community that was not only interested, curious – and perhaps even a little surprised – to find conversations about sustainability happening in a polyclinic.



Titled 'Healthier Earth. Healthier Me', the event held in March 2025 was NHG Polyclinics' first Environmental Sustainability Fair. Not just a catchy slogan, the theme expressed the conviction that the health of the planet and the health of the people who live on it are inseparable, and that sustainability belongs at the heart of good primary care. "Meaningful environmental change starts with awareness and collective action. This event represents an opportunity for participants to come together, learn about practical sustainability solutions, and discover how each of us can contribute to a greener future," says Dr Gloria Khoo, Family

***"Meaningful environmental change starts with awareness and collective action. This event represents an opportunity for participants to come together, learn about practical sustainability solutions, and discover how each of us can contribute to a greener future."***

***Dr Gloria Khoo***
*Family Physician, Associate Consultant, Hougang Polyclinic and Co-chair of the GREEN Committee*




▲ **Proper disposal and recycling of clinical packaging in polyclinics helps reduce waste and supports greener healthcare operations.**

Physician, Associate Consultant, NHG Hougang Polyclinic and co-chair of NHG Polyclinics' GREEN Committee.

## THE CASE FOR ECO-FRIENDLY HEALTHCARE

The connection is hard to ignore. A healthcare system that contributes significantly to carbon emissions is also contributing to the conditions that will drive future demand for care. Addressing this issue has thus become a clinical responsibility and strategic priority.

Globally, healthcare systems account for 4 to 5 per cent of carbon emissions. In Singapore, the sector generates an estimated 4.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent annually[1]. The effects of climate change are accelerating conditions such as respiratory illnesses, heat-related diseases, vector-borne infections, and the impact on mental health from extreme weather – all conditions that primary care clinicians manage on a daily basis.

Singapore's public sector has formalised its commitment to sustainability through GreenGov.SG, which supports green initiatives. It sets targets for all government agencies and public institutions including a 10 per cent reduction in energy and water use and a 30 per cent reduction in waste disposal, all measured against a baseline derived from past years and to be achieved by 2030[2].

For NHG Polyclinics, these targets translate into tangible goals throughout its operations. Sustainability in healthcare builds upon the fundamental mission of caring for patients. By reducing resource consumption and going with treatments and facilities with reduced environmental impact, system durability is strengthened, and health outcomes in the community are improved. As Mr Iven Chen, Deputy Director, Infrastructure and Facilities Management and the GREEN Committee's other co-chair puts it, "Our operational decisions today have a direct impact on the healthcare environment tomorrow. Every action contributes towards protecting the community we serve."

## BUILDING GREEN FROM THE GROUND UP

NHG Polyclinics' commitment to sustainability is visible via its physical structures. NHG Serangoon Polyclinic, which opened at the end of 2025, is the first polyclinic under NHG Health and the first in operation in Singapore to receive the Green Mark 2021 Platinum Super Low Energy (SLE) certification from the Building and Construction Authority. This makes it one of the most energy-efficient buildings in Singapore and aligns with the national goal of greening 80 per cent of the country's building stock by 2030.

The engineering that earned this certification is remarkable. The polyclinic utilises an Integrated Energy Management System with advanced submetering to monitor electrical and water usage in real time. Its LED lighting system achieves 55 per cent of energy savings compared to conventional fluorescent tubes. Occupancy sensors in rooms and light sensors in common areas adjust the lighting according to whether rooms are in use or to ambient lighting levels. Solar panels with a capacity of approximately 40 kilowatt-peak help cut carbon emissions by as much as what 1,140 mature trees absorb each year.

> ***"Our operational decisions today have a direct impact on the healthcare environment tomorrow. Every action contributes towards protecting the community we serve."***
>
> ***Mr Iven Chen***
> *Deputy Director, Infrastructure and Facilities Management, and Co-chair of the GREEN Committee*



▲ **Chemical savings are achieved via the use of anti-microbial film on the surfaces of booths and iPads at Serangoon Polyclinic.**

Operational logistics, too, have sustainability in mind. Autonomous cleaning robots are water-efficient and fitted with HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filtration systems. High-touch surfaces on Patient Self-Service Booths and iPads are covered with antimicrobial film, reducing the need for chemical cleaning agents while maintaining strong infection control. Serangoon Polyclinic, along with the other NHG Polyclinics, has also achieved PUB (Singapore's National Water Agency) Water Efficient Building certification.

NHG Polyclinics' green approach is extended to infrastructure across all its polyclinics. Fluorescent tubes have been progressively replaced with LEDs as part of improvement works by the Infrastructure and Facilities Management department. Motion sensors have been installed in staircases and toilets. Solar panels are operational at NHG Serangoon, Kallang and Khatib Polyclinics, and a feasibility study is underway for broader solarisation. Khatib and Sembawang Polyclinics have also achieved Green Mark Platinum certification.

Creative sustainability solutions have been implemented at NHG Toa Payoh Polyclinic. In the Annex Block Infectious Disease Module room, which is used to treat and isolate patients with highly contagious diseases, the clinic uses a portable, plug-and-play air management system as opposed to a conventional Air-Conditioning and Mechanical Ventilation system to control airflow and maintain safe air quality. Deployed within days, the mobile solution costs significantly less and achieves monthly energy savings for the 30-square-metre room. When Toa Payoh Polyclinic relocates to the Toa Payoh Integrated Development, the system can be transferred to other clinics. This project called 'Innovative Portable Air Management Solution for Infection Control' was recognised at the NHG Recognition Awards in October

## HOW DAILY HABITS PROPEL CHANGE

Not every act of sustainability requires a policy change or a capital investment. Some of the most consistent progress has stemmed from the accumulation of practical, everyday habits from staff across the organisation.

At Hougang Polyclinic, the dental team had set up their own procedures for recycling waste prior to the introduction of recycling bins at all polyclinics. At Serangoon Polyclinic, plastic waste from medical packaging – including dressing sets, syringes, vaccine containers, handwash and handrub bottles – is collated and sent for recycling alongside printer ink cartridges and batteries from clinical appliances. At clinic entrances, microfibre cloth dryers now replace the disposable plastic sleeves that patients once used to dry their umbrellas.

Patients, too, have been brought into the loop. Hougang and Ang Mo Kio Polyclinics have set up insulin pen recycling bins in collaboration with a pharmaceutical company, providing a responsible disposal route for used pens. Similar arrangements for inhaler plastics are in the works.

Many of these initiatives began as individual efforts driven by personal conviction. Recognising the need for sustainment, the NHG Polyclinics GREEN Committee comprising representatives from every department was formally established in November 2024. Today, it serves as the connective tissue that turns one clinic's good idea into network-wide practice, and ensures that momentum, once built, is not lost.



▲ A dental staff member disposing of empty sterile water bottles in the recycling bin as part of NHG Polyclinics' efforts to reduce waste.







▲ Tele-Health services provide patients with convenient, accessible care while contributing to a more sustainable healthcare system.

2025 with the NHG Innovate Award for Excellence in Healthcare Sustainability.

### INTEGRATING CLINICAL PRACTICE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Upgrades to facilities can be readily observed, but the more subtle changes are those that shape and guide clinical decision-making and service delivery.

In a project started in April 2025, NHG Polyclinics aimed to reduce prescriptions of Metered Dose Inhalers (MDIs) in favour of Dry Powder Inhalers (DPIs) where clinically appropriate. The environmental stakes are real: MDIs use hydrofluorocarbons as propellants, a group of synthetic gases with a higher greenhouse effect compared to carbon dioxide. By switching patients to DPIs where their condition allows, this footprint is eliminated entirely. This approach aligns with recommendations for preferential use of DPIs in appropriate patients, as outlined in references such as the Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention 2024 report. Between 2024 and 2025, MDI prescriptions across NHG Polyclinics declined by 1.5 per cent while DPI prescriptions for preventer therapy rose by 13 per cent.

The same approach also guides efforts to reduce unnecessary test and procedure ordering, such as urine cultures for uncomplicated urinary tract infections or X-rays for non-specific back pain. Improving resource management in this way helps reduce the carbon footprint associated with laboratory processing and medical equipment use.

Tele-Health services enable patients to connect with healthcare professionals remotely to monitor their health, such as Tele-Consultations for those with stable chronic conditions, and Primary Tech-Enhanced Care (PTEC) programme for patients with hypertension and diabetes. These services reduce travel, ease facility load, free up clinic capacity and lower carbon emissions associated with transport and facility operations. Patients can also access digital medical certificates and e-receipts by default through the NHG Health App, reducing paper consumption and printing-related energy use.

### BUILDING A SUSTAINABILITY MINDSET

Successful interventions are sustained only when the individuals understand the purpose and value behind their work. For this reason, NHG Polyclinics has invested in building a sustainability mindset in tandem with its operational initiatives.

Staff education is a deliberate priority, with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the topic. Examples include NHG Polyclinics' bi-monthly medical forum addressing environmental sustainability in healthcare in May 2025, and NHG Family Medicine conducting a dedicated talk on the subject in January 2026.

***Successful interventions are sustained only when the individuals understand the purpose and value behind their work. For this reason, NHG Polyclinics has invested in building a sustainability mindset in tandem with its operational initiatives.***

Courses offered by NHG Health's Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI) Sustainability Academy are available to staff keen to explore further.

NHG Polyclinics also connects with the community through events such as the Environmental Sustainability Fair at Sembawang Polyclinic, during which Dr Khoo delivered a public talk on how sustainable healthcare practice connects to the broader climate picture.

The framework for sustainable value is aimed at improving health outcomes for patients and the population while minimising negative impact on the environment, society, and long-term finances. This is an extension of value-based care, which has been shaping primary care thinking for years. Says Dr Khoo, "We often think of sustainability and good medicine as being in tension. But they align very naturally. Choosing the right inhaler, avoiding unnecessary tests, and reviewing whether a medication is still needed – these are what clinicians have been doing. Sustainability gives us another reason to be more intentional about it." Caring for people, and caring for the planet, turns out to be more similar than not.

1. *Ministry of Health, Delivering Quality Care Sustainably in Singapore Report, September 2025. https://www.moh.sg/others/resources-and-statistics/delivering-quality-care-sustainably-in-singapore/*
2. *Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment, GreenGov.SG Report FY2024, October 2025. https://www.mse.gov.sg/latest-news/greengov-sg-report-fy2024/*




## GovInsider Festival of Innovation Awards

The NHG Polyclinics Diabetes Reversal team, led by Associate Professor Tang Wern Ee, Family Physician, Senior Consultant and Director, Clinical Research Unit, NHG Polyclinics, clinched the Moon Shot Award at the GovInsider Festival of Innovation Awards on 4 March 2026. The award, given to public sector agencies for impactful and innovative initiatives, recognised the team's pioneering efforts in advancing Type 2 diabetes care. Supported by NHG Health and Tanoto Foundation, their multi-site remission clinical trial on weight reduction for successful diabetes reversal represented a transformative breakthrough in Singapore's primary care setting.

## NHG Health GP Lohei and CN-PCN Quarterly Meeting



The Central-North Primary Care Network (CN-PCN) held its first Quarterly Meeting of the year on 7 February 2026, in conjunction with the NHG Health General Practitioner (GP) Chinese New Year Lohei and CME Luncheon. Over 170 GP partners gathered alongside NHG Health senior leaders, reflecting mutual appreciation and shared commitment to healthcare improvement. Aligning with CN-PCN's dedication to timely patient care, the meeting included announcements of key service enhancements such as expanded community screening for Diabetic Retinal Photography and Diabetic Foot Screening, as well as the introduction of a new appointment booking platform to streamline operations.

## Visit by Singapore Cancer Society

NHG Polyclinics welcomed Mr Tan Kwang Cheak, Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Cancer Society, and his delegation to NHG Serangoon Polyclinic on 19 March 2026. Hosted by Associate Professor Karen Ng, Chief, Primary Care, Population Health, NHG Health and Chief Executive Officer, NHG Polyclinics, and Dr Liu Changwei, Head, Serangoon Polyclinic, the delegates were introduced to the clinic's infrastructure and its collaborations with community partners. They also heard from Dr Kung Jian Ming, Family Physician, Consultant and Assistant Director, Clinical Services, NHG Polyclinics, on NHG Polyclinics' mammogram and colorectal cancer screening strategies and support for cancer patients under Healthier SG. The visit fostered opportunities for potential collaboration between both organisations.








## Minister of State for Health Visits SPARk Clinic

On 10 March 2026, NHG Polyclinics hosted Ms Rahayu Mahzam, Minister of State for Health, at the Supporting PWIDs – persons with intellectual disabilities – with Accessible Resources and (k)care (SPARk) Clinic at NHG Ang Mo Kio Polyclinic. The SPARk team demonstrated their tailored approach to supporting patients on their health journey, which included coordinated multidisciplinary support and environmental adjustments. Ms Rahayu also observed a consultation session, seeing firsthand how customised care was provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities. The event highlighted the importance of strengthening and scaling initiatives such as SPARk to better serve patients and their families.



## Lunar New Year Healthy Cooking Workshop



On 10 January 2026, the Patient Advisory Council (PAC) of NHG Khatib and Yishun Polyclinics organised a festive culinary demonstration at Khatib Polyclinic's Health Studio. Following practical tips by PAC members Ms Eunice Lee and Mr Richard Cheah, participants prepared a healthier version of Baked Chicken Ngoh Hiang by modifying ingredients, seasonings and preparation methods. The workshop encouraged residents and patients to adopt sustainable dietary changes for long-term wellness.

## Cultivating Positive Medication Habits

NHG Polyclinics' Health Promotion and Preventive Care department partnered with the NHG Population Health Community Care Team to conduct a workshop on positive medication habits at Serangoon Polyclinic on 15 January 2026. Through interactive, hands-on exercises, participants learnt how to read medication labels, develop medication lists, and organise medications in compartmentalised containers for daily dosing schedules. The workshop also introduced practical techniques including alarm reminder notifications and strategic placement of pill boxes near sleeping areas. These activities helped participants establish structured routines for safe and effective medication management, contributing to better community health.



UP CLOSE WITH

# CHAMPIONING GREEN AT THE HEART OF CARE

As co-chairs of NHG Polyclinics' GREEN Committee, Dr Gloria Khoo, Family Physician, Associate Consultant, Hougang Polyclinic and Mr Iven Chen, Deputy Director, Infrastructure and Facilities Management, approach environmental sustainability from very different vantage points – one clinical, one operational. Together, they reflect on what it takes to make going green not just a target to achieve, but a shared way of working.

> ***"Increasingly, care quality is being understood through the lens of the triple bottom line: delivering good outcomes for patients while also accounting for the financial, social, and environmental costs. When care generates a high environmental impact, it is ultimately not sustainable in the truest sense of the word."***
>
> ***Dr Gloria Khoo***

## Was there a defining moment that deepened your commitment to this role and to environmental sustainability in healthcare?

**Dr Gloria:** I felt a strong sense of responsibility to learn more about the field when I accepted this role. During a study trip organised by MOH Holdings to Sydney, I had the opportunity to learn about policies that effectively drive sustainability on the ground, and to meet medical staff who were deeply passionate about the environment and actively leading initiatives within their departments. This experience inspired me to bring some of these good practices back to my workplace.

**Iven:** As Head of Infrastructure and Facilities Management, I am used to reviewing energy use, operational costs, and resource constraints every day. So, when the opportunity to co-chair the GREEN Committee came along, it felt like a responsibility that aligned with what I currently do. Many of the decisions we already make, such as how we manage air-conditioning systems or handle waste, seem small in isolation, but add up quickly at scale. This role lets me think beyond short-term fixes and ask: how do we make sustainable choices the default, not the exception?




▲ Dr Gloria Khoo



▲ Mr Iven Chen

## The GREEN Committee brings together representatives from every department. What does it take to build a shared sustainability culture across such diverse teams?

**Dr Gloria:** Our GREEN Committee comprises members willing to contribute to sustainability efforts, and this has helped us form a motivated and engaged team. We are united by a common goal: to reduce electricity and water consumption by 10 per cent and waste disposal by 30 per cent by 2030. Having both a clinical and a non-clinical co-lead also makes a real difference. Sustainability in healthcare spans both worlds and viewing it from different perspectives helps us find solutions that actually work on the ground.

**Iven:** The key thing we learnt early on is that sustainability means different things to different people. A clinician, a facilities colleague, or someone from procurement or IT will experience it through a different lens. What we focus on is aligning people around a shared 'why' – why sustainability matters for NHG Polyclinics, our patients, and our staff – while giving each team the space to define what that looks like in their daily work.

## How does sustainability connect to NHG Polyclinics' core mission of delivering high-quality, patient-centred care?

**Dr Gloria:** Increasingly, care quality is being understood through the lens of the triple bottom line: delivering good outcomes for patients while also accounting for the financial, social, and environmental costs. When care generates a high environmental impact, it is ultimately not sustainable in the truest sense of the word. Additionally, many aspects of value-based care, such as prevention and patient empowerment, naturally reduce resource use by avoiding unnecessary interventions. Often, doing what is best for patients and for the environment goes hand in hand.

**Iven:** Sustainability and good patient care are more aligned than one might expect. In healthcare, being sustainable means ensuring we can continue to deliver high-quality care today without using up resources or creating waste that would reduce the quality of care in the long term.

## From your respective vantage points, what does a greener polyclinic look like in practice?

**Dr Gloria:** I see it in three areas: places, processes, and people. For places, it means having energy-efficient infrastructure, such as optimising air-conditioning systems, adopting hybrid cooling where feasible, and incorporating greenery and open-air spaces to improve both environmental performance and staff well-being. For processes, it means embedding sustainability into everyday workflows by, for instance, making a conscious shift from disposable to reusable items and reducing waste across clinical and operational practices. Finally, people are at the heart of it all. This means cultivating shared habits and mindsets, like turning off equipment when not in use, being more judicious about investigations and medications, and encouraging both staff and patients to participate in recycling.

**Iven:** A greener polyclinic is not defined by any single initiative or piece of technology. What matters is how sustainability shows up consistently in everyday decisions. The greatest impact happens when clinical and operational priorities are aligned rather than traded off. Sustainability initiatives are co-designed with safety and workflow realities in mind. Over time, green choices gradually become the default, and staff understand how their daily decisions contribute to a larger purpose. Most importantly, sustainability needs to be embedded in quality improvement, patient safety and service planning conversations, not sit alongside them as a separate agenda.




## As staff-led green efforts are central to the committee's work, how are these ideas identified and scaled up? Can you share an example?

**Dr Gloria:** One example I often think about is the team at Geylang Polyclinic who started sustainability initiatives on their own in 2025, organising a drive to collect old clothes and items, and setting up paper recycling bins in the staff lounge. These efforts matter because they show commitment, not just compliance with a central directive. In the coming year, we aim to build on this momentum by organising an inter-clinic challenge, where clinics can showcase their initiatives and share best practices to facilitate wider adoption of successful ideas.

**Iven:** The initiative that stayed with me is the social café at Serangoon Polyclinic. The team spotted an opportunity to partner a social enterprise that shared our sustainability values. Recycled chopsticks were creatively repurposed into furniture for café visitors. Beyond the environmental angle, the café also created employment for socially disadvantaged residents from the neighbourhood by having vulnerable individuals to man the café counter. It was a reminder that sustainability has a social dimension too. That is the kind of thinking we want to encourage.

> ***"Sustainability is not about adding more work, but about being a bit more thoughtful in what you already do."***
>
> ***Mr Iven Chen***

## Driving sustainability within a healthcare setting comes with unique constraints. Can you elaborate?

**Dr Gloria:** Time is a real constraint. It is often much easier to throw something in the general waste bin than to sort out recyclables. Public education is another challenge as recycling bins can quickly become contaminated with general waste, which defeats the purpose. Also, whenever we introduce reusable items, we have to think carefully about infection control. These are not insurmountable issues, but they do mean we cannot simply copy what other sectors do. We have to find solutions that fit a healthcare environment.

**Iven:** Driving sustainability in healthcare is uniquely constrained because patient safety and regulatory compliance take priority over environmental gains. Infection control standards, clinical operations, and strict accreditation requirements guide changes to energy systems, materials, and waste practices, while ageing infrastructure and budget considerations further influence what can be implemented. However, I do not see these as barriers. I see them as design parameters that push us to think more carefully and work smarter.

## What have been some significant challenges and how have you navigated them?

**Dr Gloria:** It takes time to connect and build trust with different groups, such as senior management, colleagues on the ground, and patients. Convincing patients that sustainable choices are as safe and effective as conventional options is also an ongoing conversation. Shifting established habits and mindsets remains a work in progress. We keep focusing on engagement, communication, and education. There is no shortcut.

**Iven:** One of the trickiest things to navigate is the fact that everyone's priorities are legitimate. Frontline teams are rightly focused on patient care, and sustainability can feel like additional work on an already full plate. Leadership, meanwhile, has to balance it against service demand, manpower, and costs. Our approach has been to keep sustainability integrated – embedding it into existing processes where possible, being selective about what we push for, and staying transparent about trade-offs. Small wins matter too. Celebrating something credible, even if modest, keeps the momentum going.

## Looking ahead, what are the GREEN Committee's priorities and ambitions over the next few years?

**Dr Gloria:** Our focus is to build an environmental sustainability ethos throughout NHG Polyclinics by involving staff, running quality improvement projects focused on green practices, and encouraging both staff and patients in this journey. I am keen to see our partnerships bear fruit, especially with recycling programmes for plastics, paper, inhalers, and insulin pens, as well as site visits to recycling facilities that help staff connect the dots between what we do in the clinic and where materials end up.

**Iven:** We want sustainability to become part of our everyday work, not just a separate topic of discussion in meetings. The next step is creating clearer pathways for staff to share ideas that work well in one clinic to a network-wide practice. We are also working closely with clinical teams on utilities management and strengthening recycling efforts. The GREEN Committee's role, at its best, is to be a catalyst and a connector, making it easier for good practices to grow, rather than trying to do everything ourselves.

## What would you say to inspire NHG Polyclinics staff who want to play a more active role in this journey?

**Dr Gloria:** If you have ideas or want to explore an initiative, please reach out to the GREEN Committee! We welcome the conversation. There are also several conferences coming up this year, including the Singapore Primary Care Conference in May 2026 and the Singapore Healthcare Sustainability Symposium in October 2026, for those who want to learn more. Sustainability is a shared responsibility. The committee can only do so much, and the more people who bring their own energy and ideas, the better.

**Iven:** You do not need to have a polished idea or a big project to start. Many things we are proud of began when someone noticed a small inefficiency or found a better way of doing something in their daily work. Sustainability is not about adding more work, but about being a bit more thoughtful in what you already do. Looking after patients, supporting your colleagues, managing resources with care are already part of our daily routine. We would love more colleagues to join the committee. Every contribution makes a difference.