Press Release

30 November 2010

Inventor of the PET/CT scanner appointed Director of the Clinical Imaging Research Centre (CIRC)

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) and the National University of Singapore (NUS) today announced the appointment of Professor David Townsend as the Director of Clinical Imaging Research Centre (CIRC). Prof Townsend is currently Head of Positron Emission Tomography and Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography (PET/SPECT) development at A*STAR's Singapore Bioimaging Consortium (SBIC). He is also Professor of Radiology at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NUS.

Prof Townsend’s appointment takes effect from 1 December 2010. As director of the CIRC – established in 2007 by the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and A*STAR's SBIC – he will lead the Centre in research using state of the art imaging tools and technologies. The Centre is a shared resource for Clinical Imaging Research in A*STAR, NUS and across Singapore and also serves as a major training centre in Clinical Imaging for Masters and PhD students.

Prof Townsend has a distinguished scientific career and had conducted research on imaging systems at hospitals and institutes across the US and Europe before joining A*STAR in 2009. He has recently been conferred the inaugural prestigious IEEE\(^1\) Medal for Innovations in Healthcare Technology, together with Dr Ronald Nutt, for the invention of the PET/CT\(^2\) scanner that has made diagnostic imaging of cancer faster and more accurate.

Said Chairman of SBIC and of A*STAR's Biomedical Research Council (BMRC), Prof Sir George Radda, “I am happy that David is taking on the additional leadership role as the Director of CIRC. His extensive years of experience in multidisciplinary imaging research would undoubtedly direct and push research at CIRC to new frontiers.”

Added Prof John Wong, Deputy Chief Executive of the National University Health System and Dean of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, “The CIRC aims to provide research imaging in humans using state-of-the-art clinical imaging systems and technology. David’s vast experience and personal expertise will position the CIRC as one of the world’s leading clinical imaging research facilities.”

Prof Townsend takes over from Prof Lenny Tan, who has served as acting Director since 1 April 2010. Prof Tan will be the Clinical Director of the CIRC with effect 1 December, 2010.

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\(^1\) The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) is the world’s largest professional association dedicated to advancing technological innovation and excellence for the benefit of humanity.

\(^2\) Positron emission tomography (PET) allows real-time monitoring of functional processes in the body while computed tomography (CT) produces three-dimensional anatomical images of internal organs. The PET/CT scanner provides precise data on both function and anatomy in a single imaging examination.
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About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) is the lead agency for fostering world-class scientific research and talent for a vibrant knowledge-based and innovation-driven Singapore. A*STAR oversees 14 biomedical sciences, and physical sciences and engineering research institutes, and nine consortia & centres, which are located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis, as well as their immediate vicinity.

A*STAR supports Singapore’s key economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to its partners in industry. It also supports extramural research in the universities, hospitals, research centres, and with other local and international partners.

For more information on A*STAR, please visit www.a-star.edu.sg.

About the National University Health System

The National University Health System (NUHS) groups the National University Hospital (NUH), NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and NUS Faculty of Dentistry under a common governance structure to create synergies to advance health by integrating excellent clinical care, research and education.

The enhanced capabilities and capacity will enable the NUHS to deliver better patient care, train future generations of doctors more effectively and bring innovative treatments to patients through groundbreaking research.

For more information about NUHS, please visit www.nuhs.edu.sg
NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM)

Established in 1905, the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM) was the first institution of higher learning in Singapore and the genesis of what would become the National University of Singapore. The School offers one of the finest undergraduate medical programs in the Asia-Pacific region and commands international recognition and respect.

From Academic Year 2009–2010, the School has an intake of 260 new students for the July admission. The School strives to fulfill its tripartite mission of providing excellent clinical care, training the next generation of healthcare professionals, and fostering research that will transform the practice of medicine. It plays a pivotal role in producing future leaders in healthcare delivery, discovery and public service as well as in Singapore’s Biomedical Sciences Initiative and Singapore Medicine, a medical tourism initiative.

The School’s 17 departments in the basic sciences and clinical specialties work closely with the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies, the Centre for Biomedical Ethics, and the Centre of Excellence for Health Services Research to ensure that teaching and research are aligned and relevant to Singapore’s healthcare needs.

For more information about YLLSoM, please visit http://medicine.nus.edu.sg/corporate/

About the National University of Singapore

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore’s flagship university and offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise. The NUS has 14 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 30,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives.

The NUS has three Research Centres of Excellence (RCE) and 22 university-level research institutes and centres. It is also a partner in Singapore’s 5th RCE. The University shares a close affiliation with 16 national-level research institutes and centres. Research activities are strategic and robust, and the NUS is well-known for its research strengths in engineering, life sciences and biomedicine, social sciences and natural sciences. It also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

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

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