

## MEDIA RELEASE

**30 March 2024**

### **OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SPINE INSTITUTE (NUSI): LEADING SPINE CARE INTO THE FUTURE**

*Public symposium by NUSI marks the end of a series of spine-related events that provide doctors with platform for professional development and networking*

SINGAPORE — The National University Spine Institute (NUSI) is a new dedicated specialist spine institute under the National University Health System (NUHS) that provides multidisciplinary care for patients with spinal diseases and deformities.

With an experienced team of spine specialists backed by medical best practices, methodologies and technology, NUSI is steadfast in its commitment to adapting to the evolving healthcare landscape, including addressing the rapid increase in complex spine healthcare for both non-operative and operative demands in an ageing population in Singapore.

Under the leadership of Associate Professor Gabriel Liu, NUSI aims to set new standards in spine care through a patient-centric approach. A/Prof Liu said: “NUSI differentiates itself by providing dedicated sub-specialties within the spine practice, standardising work processes and providing value-driven patient care across the cluster to address spinal problems. NUSI is dedicated to developing community care programmes for patients, with cases expected to rise in the coming years partly due to an ageing population.”

The ageing demographic in Singapore is a pressing concern, with the nation set to attain “super-aged” status in 2026. By 2030, one in four persons in Singapore will be aged 65 and above, up from one in six now.

This shift puts a spotlight on age-related spine conditions such as scoliosis, spinal stenosis and degenerative disc disease.

With about 1,000 magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans ordered at the National University Hospital (NUH) a month, a new deep learning model known as SpineAI is helping radiologists identify spinal abnormalities more efficiently.

This application of artificial intelligence (AI) was shared by Dr Jonathan Tan, Consultant in NUSI as well as the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at NUH, at the inaugural NUSI Fellows Best Practice and Research Conference on 20 March, which saw attendance from local and international spine specialists who convened to share best practices and research presentations on cutting-edge surgical techniques.

This event highlights NUSI's commitment to knowledge sharing and global collaboration.

The international doctors in attendance are also NUSI spine fellows, who have passed through the doors of NUH to gain exposure to Singapore's healthcare industry and hone their skills in their specialties through the hospital's clinical fellowship scheme. The NUSI Spine Fellow Chapter is part of the NUH Global Fellows Alliance, which boasts more than 900 clinical fellows.

Some 35 local and international doctors also attended the NUSI Advanced Cervical Spine Surgery Cadaveric Course on 21 March, which took them through the management of complex cervical spine conditions via lectures and discussions, hands-on cadaveric dissections and live surgery demonstrations.

These spine-related events will culminate in the first NUSI Public Spine Symposium to be held at NUHS on 30 March, which features free talks by NUSI doctors on a range of spinal conditions from slipped disc to spine cancer. Attendees will also get to learn exercises to strengthen the back, undergo free scoliosis and osteoporosis screening and hear from members of Scoliosis Support Singapore about what it is like living with and overcoming scoliosis.

A/Prof Liu said: "NUSI is not just about transforming spine care. We want to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources they need for better spine health. Through our comprehensive public engagement initiatives and community outreach, we hope to foster awareness, education and prevention that will better improve spine health among the community."

NUSI has a multidisciplinary approach that involves orthopaedic spine surgeons, neurosurgeons and rehabilitation clinicians across NUHS, to provide a seamless patient experience across the full spectrum of spine care, from pain management to rehabilitation medicine, and the latest in minimally invasive, navigation, robotic spine surgery as well as complex surgical techniques for the treatment of scoliosis, spinal tumours, degenerative spine disorders and spinal trauma.

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## Chinese Glossary

National University Health System (NUHS)	国立大学医学组织 (国大医学组织)
National University Spine Institute (NUSI)	国立大学脊椎中心 (国大脊椎中心)
National University Hospital (NUH)	国立大学医院 (国大医院)
Global Fellows Alliance	全球医学员联盟
Associate Professor Gabriel Liu Head and Senior Consultant National University Spine Institute National University Health System	廖家宝副教授 主任兼高级顾问医生 国立大学脊椎中心 国立大学医学组织
Dr Jonathan Tan Consultant National University Spine Institute National University Health System  Department of Orthopaedic Surgery National University Hospital	陈炯豪 顾问医生 国立大学脊椎中心 国立大学医学组织 骨科外科部门 国立大学医院

### For media enquiries, please contact:

Joan CHEW  
Group Communications  
National University Health System  
Email: [joan\\_chew@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:joan_chew@nuhs.edu.sg)

### About the National University Health System (NUHS)

The National University Health System (NUHS) aims to transform how illness is prevented and managed by discovering causes of disease, development of more effective treatments through collaborative multidisciplinary research and clinical trials, and creation of better technologies and care delivery systems in partnership with others who share the same values and vision.

Institutions in the NUHS Group include the National University Hospital, Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, Jurong Community Hospital and Alexandra Hospital; three National Specialty Centres – National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS), National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS) and National University Centre for Oral Health, Singapore (NUCOHS); the National University Polyclinics (NUP); Jurong Medical Centre; and three NUS health sciences schools – NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (including the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies), NUS Faculty of Dentistry and NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health.

With member institutions under a common governance structure, NUHS creates synergies for the advancement of health by integrating patient care, health science education and biomedical research.



National University  
Spine Institute

As a Regional Health System, NUHS works closely with health and social care partners across Singapore to develop and implement programmes that contribute to a healthy and engaged population in the Western part of Singapore.

For more information, please visit [www.nuhs.edu.sg](http://www.nuhs.edu.sg).