

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Publication

NUH WINS GOLD AT IHF AWARDS 2026 FOR GREEN OPERATING THEATRE PROGRAMME

NUH won Gold and received an Honourable Mention for its sustainability efforts at the International Hospital Federation Awards 2026, alongside presentations of its green surgical initiatives, digital health and organisational improvement initiatives at the World Hospital Congress.

SINGAPORE — The National University Hospital (NUH) has won the **Gold Award (Low Carbon Healthcare) for its Green Operating Theatre programme** at the International Hospital Federation (IHF) Awards 2026. The hospital also received an **Honourable Mention (Hospital Sustainability Acceleration)** for its system-wide approach to embedding sustainability across healthcare delivery and hospital operations.

The awards were presented at the 49th World Hospital Congress in Seoul, where NUH is also sharing other initiatives in environmental sustainability, digital health and organisational improvement.

Professor Aymeric Lim, Chief Executive Officer of NUH, said: “Healthcare must become more sustainable without compromising patient care. Our teams have shown that simple, practical changes on the ground, from the way we run our operating theatres to how we use resources, can make a real difference. This recognition belongs to the multi-disciplinary teams and partners who turned ideas into everyday practice, and who continue to improve how we care for our patients.”

Advancing low-carbon healthcare by reducing the environmental impact of surgical care

NUH’s Green Operating Theatre (OT) programme began with efforts to reduce the use of high-carbon anaesthetic gases. What started as a targeted decarbonisation initiative has since grown into a hospital-wide programme that brings together clinicians, nurses, operations teams and facilities staff to **drive sustainability across surgical practices, resource use, waste management and energy management.**

The programme has achieved a 99 per cent reduction in the use of desflurane, a high-carbon anaesthetic gas, and delivered annual energy savings of about 660,000 kWh by optimising operating theatre ventilation during non-operating hours.

Surgical teams redesigned instrument sets used for high-volume knee replacement procedures to better reflect routine requirements, reducing emissions by almost 10,000 kg CO₂e annually while also cutting water use and sterilisation workload. Efforts have also been made to reduce unnecessary consumables and expand medical recycling streams.

Collectively, these initiatives have generated valuable insights that NUH has actively shared through inter-cluster platforms and collaborations, helping to inform the adoption of low-carbon practices across Singapore's public healthcare system.

Embedding sustainability into everyday healthcare delivery

NUH received an **Honourable Mention** for its organisation-wide approach to embedding sustainability into hospital planning and operations.

Guided by the IHF Sustainability Accelerator Tool, **NUH integrated sustainability into leadership oversight, strategic planning and everyday decision-making**, strengthening efforts in Appropriate Value-based Care, virtual care, procurement, workforce engagement and environmental stewardship.

This system-wide approach to advancing a sustainable healthcare system has been recognised internationally. In 2025, NUH became the first hospital worldwide to receive the *Joint Commission International-Geneva Sustainability Centre's* Healthcare Sustainability Certification. This year, it was the only hospital in Singapore to be accorded the highest 5-Leaf distinction in *Newsweek-Statista's* World's Greenest Hospitals index.

A new model of rehabilitation care

Recognised as **one of the top three healthcare innovations** selected for the International Hospital Federation's i-to-i Innovation Hub Awards 2026, the **NUH Virtual Rehabilitation Centre (VRC)** is helping to **extend rehabilitation beyond hospital walls**.

Developed as **a virtual-first rehabilitation ecosystem**, the VRC combines personalised patient education, self-management tools, AI-enabled telerehabilitation, remote monitoring and digital rehabilitation pathways to support patients throughout their recovery journey. By enabling rehabilitation to continue beyond traditional clinic visits, the VRC improves access to care, strengthens patient participation in recovery and allows therapists to focus their attention on patients with more complex rehabilitation needs. The digital home exercise programme, for instance, supports around 2,000 patients and records about 21,000 logins each month, freeing up the equivalent of 66 physiotherapist workdays annually for direct patient care.

The innovation demonstrates how technology can be used not simply to digitise existing services, but to transform how rehabilitation is delivered at scale.

Helping doctors work smarter with electronic medical records

NUH also presented results from its **Great Epic Transformation (GET) programme** at the 49th World Hospital Congress in Seoul. The hospital-wide programme trained specialist doctors to personalise their Epic electronic medical record (EMR) workflows, using customised note templates, order sets and shortcuts to work more efficiently.

Nine months after training, participating doctors spent 10.2 per cent less time in the EMR each day, equivalent to more than 33 hours saved per doctor annually, while time spent placing orders fell by 26.5 per cent. Twelve of 13 efficiency measures improved across both medical and surgical specialties. **Based on annual estimates, the overall efficiency gains are valued at more than S\$91 million a year.**

The programme is being extended to allied health professionals and pharmacists across NUHS, with a target of reaching more than 2,000 healthcare professionals by the end of 2026.

Chinese Glossary

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About the National University Hospital (NUH)

The National University Hospital (NUH) is Singapore's university hospital. While the hospital at Kent Ridge first received its patients on 24 June 1985, our legacy started from 1905, the date of the founding of what is today the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. NUH is the principal teaching hospital of the medical school.

Our unique identity as a university hospital is a key attraction for healthcare professionals who aspire to do more than practise tertiary medical care. We offer an environment where research and teaching are an integral part of medicine, and continue to shape medicine and transform care for the community we care for.

We are an academic medical centre with over 1,200 beds, serving more than one million patients a year with over 50 medical, surgical and dental specialties. NUH is the only public and not-for-profit hospital in Singapore to provide trusted care for adults,

women and children under one roof, including the only paediatric kidney and liver transplant programme in the country.

The NUH is a key member of the National University Health System (NUHS), one of three public healthcare clusters in Singapore. For more information, visit www.nuh.com.sg

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