

# Synergise

## Inspiring A Healthier Community

Fostering Collaboration	03	No Health Without Mental Health	04	Kidney Tsunami	04	Empowering Families	05
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## Empowering Lives Through Knowledge, Care, and Connection

As we step into the new quarter of 2025, *Synergise* brings to the forefront community initiatives that collectively underscore our commitment to empowering lives through knowledge, care, and connection. This edition marks a significant milestone with the introduction of the younger population alongside a steadfast focus on caregiver support and chronic disease prevention.

At the heart of the National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC) **Division of Community Family and Child Health's** multi-faceted plans is its focus to extend support beyond traditional healthcare realms. This visionary step addresses the diverse health needs of children and their families, ensuring a holistic approach from pre-conception through to adolescence.

Caregiver support emerges as another central theme, reflecting the indispensable role that caregivers play in our communities. Initiatives such as **SG Assist's** innovative technology solutions and the **Home Nursing Foundation's** Carers Hub highlight the critical support systems that enable caregivers to thrive. These programmes not only provide resources but also foster an environment where caregivers feel valued and supported, reinforcing the importance of their well-being in the broader spectrum of healthcare.

Meanwhile, the emphasis on chronic disease prevention and social determinants of health continues to be a cornerstone of our collective efforts. Programmes spearheaded by our **Active Global Home & Community Care's** Active Ageing Centres focus on intergenerational activities nurture emotional well-being and mitigate chronic health issues among seniors. Similarly, the **National Kidney Foundation's** screening programmes ensure that even the most vulnerable populations receive essential health interventions, underscoring our commitment to equitable access to healthcare.

As we delve into the stories and initiatives featured in this edition, let us be inspired by the collective impact of informed decisions, compassionate care, and meaningful connections. Together, we can forge pathways to a healthier and more empowered future for all.

**The Synergise Editorial Team**  
Email: [rhso@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:rhso@nuhs.edu.sg)

## Editorial Team

**Joanne Yap** (NUHS RHSO)  
**Lakshmi K.S.**  
(Active Global Home & Community Care)  
**Josephine Leong** (Econ Healthcare)  
**Thanusha Devi Selvaraju**  
(Lions Befrienders)  
**Ong Si Jie** (Lions Befrienders)  
**Hanis Farhannah** (Lions Befrienders)  
**Arlene Tan** (NUHS RHSO)  
**Fiona Foo** (NUHS RHSO)

**Leow Yu Zhen** (REACH Community Services)  
**Adrian Tan** (SG Assist)  
**Brenda Lee** (Stroke Support Station)  
**Siti Hosier** (Vanguard Healthcare)  
**Eswari Annavee**  
(Viriya Community Services)  
**Tan Zhiwei** (Viriya Community Services)  
**Yap Chai Kian** (National Kidney Foundation)  
**Moses Ku** (Home Nursing Foundation)

## Fostering Collaboration for **Better Chronic Disease Management** Among Seniors

Recently our Active Global Home & Community Care's Active Ageing Centres (AAC) engaged in two dynamic collaborations aimed at fostering intergenerational bonds to enhance senior well-being. The first collaboration was a lively carnival at our Telok Blangah AAC with MENDAKI Club – PEER Community Programme and SG Cares Volunteer Centre @ Bukit Merah, operated by New Hope Community Services. Seniors and youth participated in an evening filled with carnival games, sing-along sessions, and meaningful interactions, creating a festive atmosphere that nurtured connection and joy.



For the second collaboration, our Ghim Moh AAC teamed up with Synapxe, bringing seniors for a visit to Synapxe's new office and innovation lab at Elementum. The event offered a diverse range of activities, including an office tour, demos and presentations on various

technologies designed to support the community care sector, as well as Salsa dancing and sing-along sessions with Synapxe staff.

Such collaborations illustrate how intergenerational bonding can enhance seniors' quality of life while supporting better chronic disease management. Intergenerational interactions reduce loneliness and isolation.<sup>1</sup> The joy and mental stimulation resulting from these events positively impact the health and well-being of seniors by reducing stress and anxiety.

Both events also provided unique opportunities for seniors to engage with younger generations in a new environment. These bonding activities also play a crucial role in the health of seniors, especially those managing chronic conditions.

Contributed by **Active Global Home & Community Care**



<sup>1</sup>Pinazo-Hernandis, S., & Carrascosa, C. (2024). Effectiveness of Intergenerational Programs to Reduce Loneliness: A Scoping Review and Reflections. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15350770.2024.2400278>



## Contribute your organisation's stories to our eNewsletter!

### You can

- share your initiatives and experiences
- profile your organisation and the work that you do in the community
- feature best practices and collaborative opportunities

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## There is No Health Without Mental Health

Mental health is as important as our physical health, and both are deeply intertwined. Untreated mental health conditions can worsen chronic illnesses, further taking a toll on our mental well-being. Conditions like depression, anxiety, and caregiver stress are critical health priorities deserving as much attention as physical ailments.

The interplay of mental health and general medicine:

- Early detection of mental health issues like depression and caregiver burnout can improve outcomes for patients and caregivers.
- Integrating mental health support into chronic disease management to deliver holistic, tailored care can improve impact.
- Often overlooked, caregivers are profoundly affected by the demands of caregiving. Empowering caregivers with tools to manage stress and maintain well-being will better-equip them to provide quality care.

Home Nursing Foundation (HNF) is committed to making mental health a priority in the community with Carers

Hub, a virtual portal and resource hub. Slated to go “live” in October this year, Carers Hub will provide resources, education, and peer support to empower caregivers in maintaining their own well-being. HNF hopes to collaborate with organisations in the community to tap on different expertise to build capabilities and resources for the project.

When general medicine practice includes mental health, we can create a community where everyone feels supported, both mentally and physically.

If you are interested to collaborate with HNF on the Carers Hub, please contact [moses.ku@hnf.org.sg](mailto:moses.ku@hnf.org.sg).

Contributed by **Home Nursing Foundation**



## Tackling the ‘Kidney Tsunami’ through Accessible Kidney Screening in the Community

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a pressing health issue that affects about half a million individuals in Singapore. For many, CKD progresses silently until it leads to kidney failure, requiring lifelong dialysis or transplant. This burden is often devastating, affecting not only patients but also their families and the healthcare system.

Diabetes and hypertension – two common chronic conditions – remain the leading causes of kidney failure. Alarming, six new cases of kidney failure are diagnosed daily, highlighting the urgent need for early detection and timely intervention.

To address this growing challenge, The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) launched the CKD Intervention programme in March 2024. This initiative focuses on kidney health screening for high-risk individuals by partnering with general practitioners (GPs) and strengthening collaborations with primary care networks. By working with these frontline providers, NKF has screened over 2,000 individuals, with nearly 17% requiring further evaluation for abnormal kidney function. To ensure no one is deterred by cost, NKF fully subsidises the screening, which includes a blood and a urine test.

Aligned with the Healthier SG strategy, NKF aims to engage more GPs and community partners to empower individuals to take charge of their health and prevent disease progression.

Primary care providers and community partners play essential roles in ensuring timely screening and follow-up care. By working together, we can mitigate the impact of diabetes, hypertension, and kidney disease to pave the way for a healthier, more resilient society.



For more information, email [ckd.clinic@nkfs.org](mailto:ckd.clinic@nkfs.org) or call 1800-KIDNEYS (5436397)

Contributed by **National Kidney Foundation**



The NKF collaboration allows our patients to access subsidised screenings while also educating them about kidney health.”

**Dr Lim Kai Hung, Medical Director,  
57 Medical and HealthlandHealth**

## Empowering Families: CFCH’s Vision for Community Health

With a vision of creating healthier futures for our community, the National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC) established the Division of Community Family and Child Health (CFCH) to support and address the health needs of our children and their families beyond the realm of healthcare. As part of the NUHS Family & Child Preventive Health Strategy, CFCH coordinates services that support families at every stage, starting from pre-conception to parenthood, infancy to adolescence.

By integrating healthcare, social services and education, CFCH aims to facilitate seamless care that addresses the complex needs that families may encounter.

At the heart of CFCH’s efforts lies **FORGE** (Families Optimised to Raise Generations Empowered), a comprehensive initiative that offers early intervention and anticipatory guidance during critical developmental milestones. Partnering with the **National University Polyclinics** (NUP), FORGE provides families with tailored support, empowering them to make informed health decisions.

Key components of FORGE include the **Sleep Easy Programme (SLeEP)**, which provides sleep education for mothers and babies, as well as the **Breastfeeding Triple Support Programme** that offers lactation support to mothers. In addition, autism screenings and assessments on children’s screen time use are also carried out. For accessibility and convenience to the community, these screenings and services



are offered to coincide with the child’s growth and developmental visits at NUP.

CFCH also oversees the coordination with partner programmes such as **KidSTART@NUH** which provides multi-disciplinary support to eligible pregnant mothers and their families, **Promoting Parental Emotional Health to Enhance Child Learning (ProPEL II)** and **Women Enhanced Health Plus (WEHS+)** helmed by the NUH Department of Psychological Medicine to provide care and intervention for women experiencing emotional distress and mental health issues during pregnancy and beyond.

In addition, CFCH serves as an integrator across these programmes, connecting the diverse range of services. For example, CFCH helped to link KidSTART@NUH with SLeEP to explore ways to improve infant sleep issues encountered by KidSTART@NUH families. To further support mothers experiencing emotional and mental distress in pregnancy, SLeEP is also working with WEHS+ to implement sleep questionnaires for mothers in hopes of identifying sleep issues early on and providing intervention where necessary.

Moving forward, CFCH is in the process of establishing connections with community partners to address issues like childhood obesity and develop programmes to support at-risk youths. With its focus on long-term health outcomes, CFCH aims to create lasting, measurable impact on the health of families and children, setting the foundation for stronger, healthier communities.

For collaboration opportunities, please contact **Dr Chiong Yee Keow**.

Email: [yee\\_keow\\_chiong@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:yee_keow_chiong@nuhs.edu.sg)

Contributed by **National University Centre for Women and Children**





## Featured Partner I: SG Assist

Greg Tan – CEO and Co-founder of SG Assist



Greg Tan is the co-founder of SG Assist, a visionary organisation dedicated to transforming the lives of caregivers and seniors in Singapore. A compassionate leader with a strong belief in the power of community and support, he was motivated by a deep sense of empathy and personal experience to leave behind a successful oil and gas sector career and devote his full attention to ensuring that caregivers have a trusted ally in their caregiving journey.

Leveraging on technology to empower caregivers, Greg played a pivotal role in developing the SG Assist App and spearheaded the CareConnect platform which provides personalised care concierge support and 24/7 remote emergency monitoring for caregivers.

In 2025, Greg hopes to see seniors and their family members have access to the knowledge and products to help them age confidently and independently. He also aims support more community-driven projects to raise awareness and promote education on assistive solutions and Gerontechnology.

### About SG Assist

Founded in 2018, SG Assist empowers caregivers with innovative resources and technology solutions to alleviate caregiving stress. Our Caregiver Resource Centre in Nee Soon South is Singapore's first community-based initiative to raise awareness, offer meaningful programmes and training, and advocate for assistive technology. These efforts aim to promote successful ageing, enhance seniors' health and improve their overall quality of life.

### A Roadmap to Compassionate Care

Meeting the needs of our ageing population requires a united, collaborative approach. In partnership with the Singapore University of Social Science (SUSS), SG Assist has launched the Age+ Living Lab @ Caregiver Resource Centre. This initiative supports ageing in place by utilising assistive technology and offering practical solutions for choosing suitable assistive products for you and your loved ones.

Our Learning Journey workshop introduces the 6 Stages of Caregiving framework, illustrating how community-driven actions can create more inclusive and supportive environments for caregivers and seniors.

### Turning Life Experience into Community Strength

Seniors are at the heart of our volunteer movement, working with partners to build social connections and healthier engagement.

The SUSS GeronTech Ambassador programme trains seniors as experiential learning tour guides, bridging knowledge gaps about ageing and encouraging the adoption of gerontechnology.

Additionally, the Fei Yue Care Agent Programme involves seniors in Active Ageing Centres (AAC) and home visits, where they volunteer to support others' physical and mental well-being.

Join us in delivering these initiatives and programmes at your centre to shape a more inclusive future for our ageing population. For more information, please reach out to us at: [contact@sgassist.com](mailto:contact@sgassist.com).

## Featured Partner II: Viriya Community Services

Founded on 8 March 2001, Viriya Community Services (VCS) is a dedicated social service agency that aligns our principal activities with our vision of "Caring for You; Enhancing Quality of Life", and our mission to promote fulfilling lives by providing social services with the right effort and compassion. Our multi-disciplinary team of social workers, counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists and mental health professionals deliver community-based services for families, community health and mental health services, specialist services, training and employment assistance programmes.

VCS employs an Inter-Disciplinary Team (IDT) approach for managing chronic conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, dementia, anxiety, and major depressive disorder. By adopting a collaborative approach, we create personalised care plans that address the needs of individuals and their families. Our holistic focus aims to improve overall well-being, ensure comprehensive care for individuals with chronic mental health conditions, and foster mental resilience within the community.

VCS aims to be a leading advocate for mental health in the western region of Singapore, focusing on preventive initiatives to enhance mental health literacy and build community capacity. We provide a variety of accessible resources, including financial



assistance for children and the elderly with chronic medical conditions, casework, group and community work, counselling, group therapy, and specialist services such as psychotherapy, neurodevelopmental assessments and psychological interventions, grief and bereavement services.

VCS also offers collaborative opportunities for community service partners including mental health talks, stakeholder engagement sessions as well as our annual Viriya Mental Wellness Campaign. We are committed to fostering compassionate communities that promote healthier and more fulfilling lives.

## NUHS Annual Chinese New Year GP Engagement Event



Held on Saturday, 18 January, this annual celebration organised by NUHS attracted more than 80 guests, including 34 family physicians and GP partners from the western region of Singapore.

NUHS Chief Executive Professor Yeoh Khay Guan was the guest of honour, and the session's programme included guest speakers from NUHS@Home and Virtual Care Centre, CME Talks, an interactive panel discussion as well as updates on NUHS Cluster Support for GPs.

Overall, it was a fruitful afternoon of networking and celebration of the Lunar New Year.

# Events Calendar

## NKF Race Inspired! 2025 – Buddy Up For Kidney Health

**NKF Race Inspired! 2025 – Buddy Up For Kidney Health** will be happening on **Sunday, 6 April 2025** at **Waterway Point** from 2–7pm! Sign up for their 3km Fun Walk or 6km Walkathon which are suitable for all fitness levels. Look forward to an outdoor carnival featuring many fun-filled kidney health activities and healthy treats for all to enjoy. This year NKF is collaborating with local popular web comic creator, Bobblejot. Join Tori (the corgi), Samuel (the munchkin cat) and their friends to support kidney failure patients in need and raise awareness on kidney health by buddying up and taking action together!

To register, scan the QR code below.



6 April 2025

## Join the NUHS Health Peers Volunteers

The Health Peers Programme is a three-month peer support programme that aims to support residents in their journey to lead a healthier lifestyle. Volunteers will be paired with residents to set health goals and guide them towards leading a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and regular exercise.

In January 2025, a new training curriculum will be launched to train volunteers to provide peer support to residents with diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia and obesity.

### Requirements

- Bi-weekly commitment over a six-month period
- Volunteers are required to complete the full Health Peers training curriculum prior to being deployed

Register your interest at <https://for.sg/healthpeers-train> and our team will follow up with you for more details.



<https://for.sg/synergise>

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