

MEDIA RELEASE

12 August 2022

NUHS TRIBUTE AWARDS CEREMONY 2022 – CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Singapore — The National University Health System (NUHS) will be celebrating its outstanding healthcare professionals and administrators across the academic health system for their invaluable contributions to Singapore healthcare. The NUHS Tribute Awards Ceremony is one of the biggest events for the cluster where it honours staff for the difference they have made, with the aim of building a healthy community, shaping medicine and transforming care in Singapore through patient care, research and education.

The awards are given out once every two years¹ to recognise NUHS staff who have made significant achievements or contributions. Despite the challenges and evolving pandemic situation over the past two years, the NUHS family rallied together and stood by its patients, the community, and in one another to hold the line for Singapore. Through sacrifices and sustained dedication, NUHS staff have played a part in enabling the nation to open up significantly towards living with an endemic COVID-19 world.

Minister of Health Mr Ong Ye Kung is the Guest of Honour who will deliver a speech at the Ceremony to be held on 12 August 2022.

A total of 80 awardees will be receiving awards including the NUHS Awards, the NUHS-Mochtar Riady Pinnacle Awards, and the Distinguished Senior Clinician Awards. The awards also include the conferment of the lifetime honorary title of Emeritus Consultant on 14 long-serving senior clinicians with significant and impactful achievements during the span of their medical careers.

The following four exceptional individuals will be honoured for their exemplary leadership and transformation impact on healthcare: -

NUHS Award Recipients

Emeritus Professor Lim Pin

University Professor, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore (NUS Medicine); and Emeritus Consultant, Endocrinology Department, National University Hospital (NUH)

¹ The Tribute Awards Ceremony was last held in 2019 and postponed in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Associate Professor Benjamin Ong

Immediate Past Director of Medical Services (DMS), Ministry of Health (MOH); Senior Vice President of Health Education and Resources, NUS; and Senior Consultant, Division of Neurology, NUH

Emeritus Professor Kandiah Satkunanantham (Prof K Satku)

Emeritus Consultant, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, NUH; and former DMS, MOH

Professor John Eu-Li Wong

Senior Advisor and Immediate Past Chief Executive of NUHS; Senior Consultant, Department of Haematology-Oncology, National University Cancer Institute, Singapore; Senior Vice President of Health Innovation and Translation, NUS; and Isabel Chan Professor in Medical Sciences

More information on the award recipients are in the Annex below.

Chinese Glossary

National University Health System (NUHS)	国大医学组织
NUHS Tribute Awards Ceremony	国大医学组织致敬颁奖典礼

For media enquiries, please contact:

JUSTINE LAI
Group Communications
National University Health System
HP: +65 97380669
Email: justine_lai@nuhs.edu.sg

About the National University Health System

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, National University Heart Centre, Singapore and National University Centre for Oral Health, Singapore; the National University Polyclinics; 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.

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 <http://www.nuhs.edu.sg>.

Category	Description
Master Clinician Award	This award recognises clinicians who have contributed significantly towards elevating the quality of healthcare delivery. They are skillful and compassionate practitioners who are recognised for leadership in their respective areas of specialty.
Outstanding Mentor Award	This award recognises clinicians and academic staff who have displayed professional excellence in medical teaching and mentorship, and have contributed significantly to clinical education and the nurturing of clinicians and clinician-scientists in NUHS.
Research Excellence Award	This award recognises individuals who have undertaken a research study / project that has contributed significantly to bridging the gap between knowledge and practice resulting in improved standards of care, healthcare outcomes, higher efficiency and / or more effective patient-centred services.
Excellence Award	This award recognises individuals who have contributed significantly towards NUHS' clinical, research and education missions. Their contributions have major impact and robust outcomes, leading to improved standards of care, outstanding health research and / or exceptional medical education, paving the way for better healthcare outcomes and benefits.
Young Achiever Award	This award recognises young individuals who have demonstrated excellence in their professional fields, shown instances of promising leadership skills, and are exemplary role models for those around them.
Team Award	This award recognises teams that have undertaken clinical quality/practice improvement projects that have contributed significantly to bridging the gap between knowledge and practice with a strong research element in knowledge translation process resulting in improved standard of care, health outcomes, higher efficiency and/or more effective patient centred services. The teams demonstrated their achievements through successful implementation of the projects, which are novel, benefitted many patients and above and beyond the institutions' routine responsibility.

NUHS Award Recipients

Emeritus Professor Lim Pin

Emeritus Professor Lim Pin is a well-respected clinician and academician, both nationally and internationally. He currently holds the appointments of University Professor at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NUS, and Emeritus Consultant at the Endocrinology department of NUH.

Prof Lim began his foray into medicine in 1957 when he received the Queen's Scholarship to study Medicine at the University of Cambridge and graduated with distinction. A specialist in internal medicine, particularly endocrinology and metabolism, he secured a position in London's King's College Hospital and completed his MRCP (Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom) in 1965.

After returning to Singapore, he became a Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health before embarking into academia in 1966 as Lecturer with the Department of Medicine at the University of Singapore (now known as the National University of Singapore, NUS).

While fully engaged in his dual roles as physician and educator, Prof Lim continued to pursue his passion in research. He challenged societal norms then and became a pioneer and trailblazer to place Singapore's research work on the world map when his thesis on magnesium deficiency was published in the British Medical Journal, the Quarterly Journal of Medicine and the New England Journal of Medicine – a first for Singapore.

Prof Lim rose rapidly through the ranks as Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, and eventually Professor and Head of the Department of Medicine in 1978. He was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University that year, and rose to be Vice-Chancellor in less than two years – the youngest ever to serve in this capacity.

Prof Lim holds the distinguished honour of being the longest-serving Vice-Chancellor where he held the role for 19 years from 1981 to 2000. In the nearly two decades of his leadership of NUS, he steered the tertiary institution, then in its infancy, through politically tumultuous times in the early days of Singapore's independence, into a world-class institution today that boasts three campuses, 13 undergraduate schools, four graduate schools and is ranked as Asia's top university. As a testament to Prof Lim's passion and dedication to research in the years he was Vice-Chancellor, the number of research institutes at NUS increased.

Prof Lim's role as Deputy Chairman of the Economic Development Board from 1995 to 2000 also gave him insights into the capabilities and manpower needs of the economy. As an agent of change, he actively brokered research and collaborations with private companies. He bridged the gap in the research culture by co-locating a tertiary hospital with NUS, making the National University Hospital (NUH) as Singapore's first University Hospital, and attracted teaching and research staff. Today, NUS is an internationally-acclaimed academic institution hosting 17 research institutes and centres, and 40 faculty-based research centres. His dedication led him to publish over 130 papers to date, and the establishment of a research culture at NUS is perhaps his most notable contribution.

Driven by a singular dedication to Singapore's growth and to advance science and medicine, Prof Lim invested his efforts tirelessly with leadership positions on many important committees, one of the most prominent being the National Wages Council from 2001 to 2014 and the Bioethics Advisory Committee from 2001 to 2011. His lifetime of contributions has impacted NUS, NUHS and our nation in a profound manner, often during crucial periods of economic growth, advance industrialisation and modernisation. Prof Lim's achievements and distinguished service to the nation have been recognised with numerous accolades. In 1984, he received the gold Public Administration Medal and later, the Meritorious Service Medal in 1990.

Associate Professor Benjamin Ong

Associate Professor Benjamin Ong is the Immediate Past Director of Medical Services at the Ministry of Health; Senior Vice President of Health Education and Resources at the National University of Singapore (NUS); and a Senior Consultant with the Division of Neurology at the National University Hospital (NUH).

A/Prof Ong obtained his MBBS at NUS in 1981 and went on to train in neurology in Singapore and the United Kingdom (UK), with fellowship attachments at the Institute of Neurology and the Institute for Molecular Medicine in Oxford, UK. He joined NUH in 1986 and rose through the ranks to become a Senior Consultant. During this time, he developed equal passions for administration and education, and served as Head of the Department of Medicine at NUS; Chairman, Medical Board at NUH, and then concurrently as Chief Executive of the National University Health System (NUHS) and Senior Vice President (Health Affairs), NUS. A/Prof Ong also chaired the Integrated Health Information Systems Singapore (iHiS) and provided leadership in healthcare IT development and process improvements in patient care delivery.

In 2008, he was appointed Chief Executive of the NUHS. During his tenure, he contributed significantly to the development of electronic health records and the areas of patient safety, quality, and care models. An active proponent of medical education, he paved the way for the development of the NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health to further NUHS' vision to nurture the next generation of healthcare professionals.

In 2014, A/Prof Ong was appointed Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health (MOH), Singapore. Over the course of his six years as DMS, he instituted a system to better manage capacity across the public healthcare system and established roadmaps for the long-term transformation of care models to meet the needs of an ageing population. As a clinician-administrator and educator who was keenly aware of the need to ensure a healthy pipeline of clinicians for Singapore, A/Prof Ong also worked to enhance postgraduate medical training and oversaw the formation and expansion of the Agency for Care Effectiveness to push for clinically and cost-effective treatments. He is also an advocate for the welfare of healthcare professionals, and devoted his energies to expanding healthcare manpower attraction and improving development and retention efforts. During his tenure, MOH established regulatory sandboxes to enable new and innovative healthcare models and services.

His decisive leadership extended to the effective management of disease outbreaks such as the Zika virus infection in 2016 and the Monkeypox outbreak in 2019. He was instrumental in establishing the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) to strengthen our outbreak

prevention, control and management capabilities. NCID has been at the forefront of our pandemic response efforts, steering the nation confidently through to endemicity. Its timely creation prior to the onslaught of COVID-19 is a testament to A/Prof Ong's foresight.

For his outstanding leadership and dedication to the public service, he received the National Day Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 2009, the Public Administration Medal (Gold) in 2015, and the Meritorious Service Medal in 2020.

In 2020, A/Prof Ong returned to NUS as Senior Vice President (Health Education and Resources). He continues to practise as a Senior Consultant Neurologist at the NUH, and holds a number of high-profile appointments in the public sector. He is also the Chairman of the Expert Committee on COVID-19 Vaccination, which advises the Singapore government on its COVID-19 vaccination strategy, a Member of the Public Service Commission, and Deputy Chairman of the Health Sciences Authority (HSA).

Emeritus Professor Kandiah Satkunanantham

Emeritus Professor Kandiah Satkunanantham, more affectionately known as Prof K Satku, is a passionate teacher, avid researcher, renowned Orthopaedic surgeon, and a former Director of Medical Services (DMS) for the Ministry of Health (MOH).

Prof Satku's journey as an educator and academic began in 1978 when he joined the National University of Singapore (NUS) as a lecturer. He was appointed a full Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery in 1999 and to date, is still actively teaching and grooming our next generation of orthopaedic specialists. He is a Senior Consultant with the Department of Orthopaedics at the National University Hospital (NUH) and continues to practise general orthopaedics to care for his patients holistically, even though he has an interest in knee surgery. As one of the early pioneers in arthroscopy, ligament reconstruction and joint replacement surgery, he has published over 60 peer-reviewed publications; delivered more than 40 guest lectures regionally and internationally; presented more than 100 conference papers; and published more than 10 chapters in books.

Prof Satku was the Clinical Director, NUH, from 1997 to 1999 and Vice-Chairman of the Medical Board, NUH, from 2000 to 2001. He was appointed Head of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and NUH from 2001 to 2003, during which he inaugurated the VK Pillay and Robert Pho Lectureships.

His emphasis on patient-centredness is clearly evidenced during his tenure as DMS, MOH, from 2004 to 2013. He championed the development of the Primary Care Master Plan, Primary Care Partnership Scheme (PCPS) and the Family Physician Register – setting the foundation for a strong primary and continuing care system beyond the acute hospital setting to provide a more holistic and affordable healthcare service. He also led the development of the National Mental Health Blueprint and policy for Singapore to promote mental health in the community, prevent mental disorders and allow for early detection and intervention of mental illness through the enhancement of integrated mental healthcare and fostering greater collaboration with GPs.

Guided by his conviction for every healthcare professional to be a patient advocate, Prof Satku contributed much to the transformation of the education and training system of healthcare professionals. He also strengthened healthcare regulatory capabilities and Singapore's pandemic preparedness.

Beyond his clinical and academic duties, Prof Satku served on the boards of several agencies namely, the National Environment Agency, Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority, Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, National Research Foundation and MOH Holdings. He was recognised for his numerous contributions with the Public Administration Medal (Gold) and the Meritorious Service Medal on National Day in 2009 and 2014 respectively.

Professor John Eu-Li Wong

Professor John Eu-Li Wong is the Senior Advisor and Immediate Past Chief Executive of the National University Health System (NUHS); Senior Consultant at the Department of Haematology-Oncology at the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore; Senior Vice President of Health Innovation and Translation at the National University of Singapore (NUS); and Isabel Chan Professor in Medical Sciences.

Prof Wong graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, National University of Singapore (NUS) in 1981. He was among the first cohort of medical graduates from NUS and belonged to a small group of local medical students who went through two universities to obtain a medical degree – he was enrolled in the University of Singapore but graduated with a MBBS degree from NUS. Prof Wong completed his Internal Medicine residency at the New York Hospital – Cornell Medical Centre, and the Memorial-Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in 1985, and obtained his Board Certification in Internal Medicine in 1988, followed by Board Certifications in both Haematology and Medical Oncology.

Prof Wong returned to Singapore in 1992 and joined NUS as a Senior Lecturer, and attained full Professorship in a short span of eight years. In 2003, he became Dean of the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. He saw the importance of the basic sciences and exposing students to patients early in their medical studies, and spearheaded a sweeping revamp of the curriculum into integrated tracks to better aligned graduates with societal needs. The creation of a track system for academic faculty staff to opt for areas of interest in either administration, research, or education, is also credited to Prof Wong. As Dean, he was in touch with the ground and deeply involved in student life – often turning up in person to support medical and extra-curricular events.

In the critical days following the SARS outbreak in 2003, Prof Wong chaired the Singapore SARS Clinical Consortium (SSCC) where he proved his mettle and worked closely with senior government officials and the scientific and healthcare community to formulate strategies to combat the virus. The lessons gleaned helped shape Singapore's response to subsequent pandemics such as COVID-19.

In 2006, he established the Centre for Biomedical Ethics at the School to foster understanding and capacity for good judgment, and inculcate sound ethical practices into medical education and clinical practice. This reflects his personal commitment to ethics and professionalism, and

set the tone for a high standard of ethics and excellence in the practice and learning of medicine.

Prof Wong served as the inaugural head of the NUH Department of Haematology and Oncology, where he assembled a high-calibre team of medical oncologists and haematologists and led the department to become an internationally renowned research unit. In February 2010, the Ministry of Health approved its “National Centre” status and the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore was born. A prolific researcher who invested generously to nurture young clinicians and clinician-scientists, and attract world-class talent to NUS, NUHS and Singapore – his efforts placed Singapore on the world stage of medical and health research.

With the re-organisation of public healthcare in 2017, Prof Wong was instrumental in bringing the expanded NUHS, which comprised the Kent Ridge, Jurong and Alexandra campuses and NUP, to greater integration and providing not just excellent care but also emphasising value and intensifying efforts at prevention and maintenance of health; and shaping medicine and transforming care through research and education. His ability to create synergistic partnerships and encourage collaboration with some of the world’s most respected academic healthcare institutions and individuals have created many exciting opportunities for the NUHS and Singapore.

Prof Wong has been credited as a major architect of Singapore’s life sciences industry with his active involvement in building our research capabilities in the biomedical sciences and oncology. He is also a master clinician and medical oncologist-haematologist of renowned international standing, and was the first Asian to be inducted to the Board of Directors of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. In 2019, Prof Wong was elected to the United States’ National Academy of Medicine in recognition of his contributions to the advancement of the medical sciences and healthcare. He is also a member of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Personalised and Precision Medicine; the Nature Index Panel of Senior Medical Advisers; the international editorial board of The American Journal of Medicine, and the Journal of the American Medical Association. He also serves on a number of international councils and advisory boards.

Team Award Recipients

PACE-D

PACE-D aims to transform care for patients with diabetes by building a foundation for meaningful and productive conversations between them and their care team to better support the self-management of chronic conditions. PACE-D has demonstrated itself to be feasible and sustainable, with effective measures incorporated into the existing teamlet care model as routine interventions since March 2019.

Additional measures in the pipeline to ensure PACE-D remains cost-effective in the long run include automation of the care planning letter preparation (which will reduce the need for manpower) and for PACE-D interventions to be entirely carried out by existing members of the teamlet.

In addition to improved health outcomes and patient experience for patients who have undergone similar care models previously, patients undergoing PACE-D are also evaluated for their overall cost of healthcare utilisation in terms of Emergency Department attendances, hospitalisations and bill sizes to substantiate the value of the programme further. From April 2022, PACE-D programme integration into teamlet care will be enhanced. These changes will ensure that PACE-D interventions remain cost-effective in the long run. This beneficial patient-centred care model can also be readily applied to the management of common non-diabetes chronic diseases that are managed in polyclinics. Patients enrolled in PACE-D will eventually be able to download their care planning letters electronically via the OneNUHS app. This technological enhancement will enable the programme's scalability for widespread implementation among polyclinics.

CAR-T

For decades, scientists and physicians have pursued the goal of exploiting the immune system to fight cancer. Only in the last few years have compelling clinical data emerged that supports this vision. To harness the patient's immune cells against blood cancer, Professor Dario Campana from the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine developed a suite of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell technologies. CARs can redirect the patient's lymphocytes towards leukaemia with great precision and trigger their killing with outstanding potency. Because CAR-T cell activity is exquisitely specific for leukaemia, the toxicity of CAR-T treatment is significantly reduced compared to conventional high-dose chemotherapy and bone marrow transplantation (BMT).

The potency of CAR-T cells has allowed NUHS physicians to cure patients who otherwise would have been considered incurable because of leukaemia resistant to chemotherapy.

In addition, the NUHS team has developed accurate methods to quantify and detect sub-microscopic disease known as minimal residual disease (MRD) that is clinically actionable. MRD monitoring of the treatment response allows physicians to identify patients' resistance to conventional chemotherapy and BMT, enabling the early use of CAR-T cell therapy, which is curative with fewer side effects.

Liver Transplant

The liver transplant team at the National University Centre for Organ Transplantation (NUCOT) has achieved better-than-international benchmarks for patient and graft survival for both Living Donor and Deceased Donor liver transplants. Its published donor outcomes are better than international benchmarks and large-volume centres. The NUCOT liver transplant team has also demonstrated its ability to perform complex liver transplants such as Living Donor Liver Transplants (LDLT) in Portomesenteric Thrombosis, LDLT in Budd-Chiari Syndrome and multi-organ transplants.

NUCOT serves as one of two ACGME-I (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education International) accredited surgery programmes in Singapore with a transplantation component and has established international liver transplant programmes with the Philippines, Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and India. Its researchers have published over 45 papers in high-impact journals such as Transplantation, Journal of Hepatology, Lancet Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and Gut.

Premature Baby Care

The Premature Baby Care team at NUH cares for babies with an extensive range of services devoted to premature babies, high-risk cases, and babies with complex congenital anomalies. The team facilitates parental involvement in caring for babies and provides expertise in advanced ventilation, management of complex conditions, palliative care and bereavement support. Families continue to receive support after a baby's discharge.

To address the higher-than-expected rate of retinopathy of prematurity, the team instituted immediate corrective measures. It reduced the rate of severe retinopathy of prematurity from 9.4% to 5.4% in the first three quarters of 2021.

Incorporating evidence-based medicine and embodying the spirit of continuous quality improvement, the team has managed to learn from the experience of others and practice translational medicine that has crossed significant milestones benchmarked against global quality indicators.