

## MEDIA RELEASE

**13 July 2023**

### **DIGITAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES AND POPULATION HEALTH TAKES SPOTLIGHT AT PRECISION PUBLIC HEALTH ASIA 2023 CONFERENCE**

*Third edition of the Asia-Pacific regional conference attracts  
over 500 delegates from ASEAN and beyond*

SINGAPORE — If an AI-assisted study of your genetic profile shows that you are at increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, that information can prompt you to take actions to avoid the onset of the disease.

Even if you are already diagnosed with diabetes, tailored interventions using data and technology can help to slow the disease progression so that you can avoid complications such as blindness, kidney failure and lower limb amputation.

The global call to fight the scourge of diabetes – one of the top 10 causes of death and disability worldwide – has been given a boost through precision public health, which is centred on the use of data, digital health and precision technologies to improve practices and policies in public health. Its ultimate aim is to bring about the right interventions at the right time, every time, to the right populations.

This year marks the first time that the Precision Public Health Asia 2023 Conference, co-organised by the National University of Singapore (NUS) Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health and Precision Public Health Asia Society, will be held in-person since the COVID-19 pandemic hit. The second edition, held in April 2021, was conducted entirely online.

Over two days on 13 and 14 July at the Centre for Healthcare Innovation, international, regional and local speakers from the private and public sector will centre on the conference theme of “Advancing Precision Public Health in Asia and Beyond – The Future is Now”. The topic is gaining importance as Singapore emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic and moves into the Healthier SG era. Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Health, will deliver the opening address.

The conference saw strong regional participation, with more than 500 delegates from ASEAN and beyond registered to join the event. These include policymakers, health sector leaders, industry experts, clinical researchers and academics, who will discuss issues such as safe and responsible data-sharing practices, precision public health financing, innovations in digital health and applications of artificial intelligence (AI) to unlock clues for genetic diseases.

Assistant Professor Clive Tan, Chairman of the Precision Public Health Asia 2023 Conference Organising Committee, said: “For many years, public health has focused on interventions aimed at reducing the burden of disease in populations. While these

efforts have led to significant improvements in health outcomes, there is a growing recognition that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be the most effective way to address the complex health needs of populations.

“This is where precision public health comes in. Precision public health aims to improve the health system and advance population health goals by adopting public health principles, such as tailoring interventions to the specific needs of individuals and communities, using technology such as digital health, big data and precision medicine to identify and address health disparities and prevent disease,” added Asst Prof Tan, a founding member of the Precision Public Health Asia Society.

Associate Professor Jeremy Lim, Director of the Leadership Institute for Global Health Transformation at NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, will moderate the opening plenary topic of “Digital Health for Population Health” and speak on how we can effectively invest in precision public health on the first day of the conference.

It is said that building the infrastructure to capture and collate healthcare data is akin to building roads in a country for buses and sports cars to travel on.

A/Prof Lim said: “The vast majority of people will not need or want sports cars but safe, efficient and affordable buses or trains. Hence we see a future where the built digital health infrastructure supports population health for all, as well as cater to those willing to pay extra in the form of more sophisticated, expensive biohacking interventions.”

The conference is the platform to bring together people from the public and private sectors as well as academia to discuss how precision public health interventions are being developed, implemented and financed today, and explore the gaps in these areas. Various parts of the system will have different and complementary roles to play in enabling precision public health interventions to be more widely adopted and mainstreamed.

## Chinese Glossary

Precision Public Health Asia 2023 Conference	精准公共卫生亚洲社团 2023 国际会议
National University of Singapore Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health	新加坡国立大学苏瑞福公共卫生学院
Precision Public Health Asia Society	精准公共卫生亚洲社团
Centre for Healthcare Innovation	医疗保健创新中心
Assistant Professor Clive Tan Chairman, Precision Public Health Asia 2023 Conference Organising Committee	陈泳安助理教授 主席，精准公共卫生亚洲社团 2023 国际会议组委会
Associate Professor Jeremy Lim Director Leadership Institute for Global Health Transformation NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health	林方源副教授 主任 全球卫生方案 新加坡国立大学苏瑞福公共卫生学院

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**About the NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health**

Building upon decades of experience in research, training and practice in epidemiology and public health, the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health (SSHSPH), under the National University of Singapore, was established in October 2011 as Singapore's national school of public health. The School is also a member of the National University Health System (NUHS).

The School aims to continually foster healthier communities in Singapore and the region, and impact public health programmes and policies through its robust educational programmes and translational cross-disciplinary research work on cohort studies and life course epidemiology, infectious disease research, health technology assessments, health promotion, workplace safety and health, health systems evaluation and health services research. An interdisciplinary approach, augmented by rigorous training, applicable research and regional partnerships, places SSHSPH at the forefront of public health knowledge discovery and practice in Asia.

The School actively collaborates with many partners including the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Karolinska Institutet, Harvard School of Public Health and University of Michigan School of Public Health. Its flagship programme, the Master of Public Health degree, attracts students from a wide range of disciplines from within Singapore and throughout the region.

For more information, please visit <https://sph.nus.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.



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).