

INTEGRATING HEALTHCARE FOR OUR FUTURE

By Agency for Integrated Care



“With changing demographics and increasingly complex healthcare needs, care integration is paramount in providing holistic and patient-centric care.”

— Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health, at GCIC 2018

Integration is at the heart of tomorrow's healthcare. More than ever, there is a global push towards coordinating care across levels to deliver better patient outcomes.

At the inaugural Global Conference on Integrated Care (GCIC), Guest-of-Honour Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health, noted that “we need to urgently transform the way we deliver care, if we want our healthcare system to continue to deliver appropriate and effective care for an ageing population.” Singapore's drive to enhance integrated care is stronger than ever, given that 1 in 4 Singaporeans will be aged 65 and above by 2030.

Organised by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) on 1-3 February 2018 at the Resorts World Convention Centre, GCIC was themed “Advance! Accelerating the Integration of Care”. The conference brought together more than 1,600 experts, policymakers and practitioners from 23 countries to share knowledge, experiences and best practices in shaping their own delivery systems. Here are the highlights from the primary care track of the conference.

Balancing the Costs of Care Integration

A one-day workshop titled “Health Economic Evaluation: Is It Important

to Us?” addressed the changing economics of healthcare, especially with regards to ageing populations. It provided insights on the complexities of providing healthcare services, given that it is a merit good and the three competing healthcare issues of access, quality and cost containment, as depicted by the Iron Triangle of Healthcare. Workshop participants conducted case studies to have a hands-on experience in evaluating provision of services in different care settings using various analyses — Cost analysis, Cost-Benefit analysis, Cost-Effectiveness analysis and Cost-Utility analysis. The workshop was led by Associate Professor Joanne Yoong, Deputy Director, Centre for Health Services and Policy Research, National University Health System.

Fighting Chronic Diseases

There were three talks showcasing chronic disease management at different levels and involving various partners.

Professor Chia Kee Seng, Founding Dean, Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, National University of Singapore shared the research that led to the declaration on War on Diabetes in Singapore and the “Whole-of-Government” effort and engagement of private sector to combat it.



Exhibition showcasing the latest technological innovations to support integrated care.

In “Managing multiple morbidities in the community — a primary care physician’s perspective”, NUHS-Frontier Family Medicine Clinic was brought up as a case study on how the public and private GPs can collaborate to deliver a more seamless, person-centric care. Established in 2013, the clinic is Singapore’s first Family Medicine Clinic and adopts the Patient-Centred Medical Home (PCMH) model of care that comprises case management by a multi-disciplinary team, targeted empanelment and proactive, team-based integrated care beyond episodic consultations. This talk was led by Dr Sim Kok Ping, Head, Frontier Family Medicine Clinic, and Dr Sue-Anne Toh, Director, Regional Health System Planning Office, National University Health System.

Professor Glen Maberly, Director, Western Sydney Diabetes, Integrated and Community Health, Western Sydney Local Health District shed light on how Western Sydney is changing its approach to diabetes via the “Western Sydney Diabetes (WSD)” initiative in his talk titled “Taking the Heat out of our Western Sydney Diabetes Hotspot”. He shared about their diabetes detection programme where GPs conduct routine HbA1c testing for patients. He also shared about their team-based care which includes other allied health professionals such as exercise physiologists and

psychologists, and their Joint Specialist Case Conferencing between specialists and GPs to strengthen diabetes management in primary care.

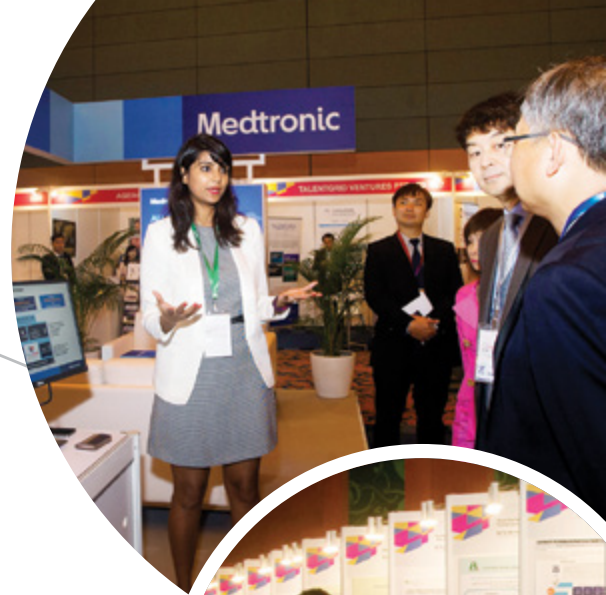
Integrating Primary Care with Homecare

Dr Ng Wai Chong, a home care doctor and Chief of Clinical Affairs at Tsao Foundation, spoke about his role as a primary care physician providing services beyond clinic setting and the importance of using a standardised care assessment tool, InterRAI, to bridge different care settings. He shared how the tool enabled him to better communicate his patient’s care needs to other healthcare partners thereby improving coordination of care for patient. His talk, entitled “Localising Care Assessment in Singapore”, highlighted that the “goal [is] to shift care beyond the hospital into the community and closer to home.”

Looking Forward

In his closing statement, Mr Gan reaffirmed the nation’s direction. “What we are doing in Singapore mirrors a global trend in healthcare reforms to re-organise care in a more coordinated and integrated fashion, and at a faster pace.”

As demographics change and healthcare needs become increasingly complex, care integration will be vital to provide holistic and patient-centric care.



Between the talks, attendees could browse the panels showcasing scientific posters submitted by various healthcare organisations.

To find out more about events like GCIC, please refer to the “Calendar of Events” at Primary Care Pages (www.primarycarepages.sg). You can also contact AIC at 6632 1199 or email gp@aic.sg

Prof June Andrews, Advisor, Dementia Services Development Trust, UK speaking at the plenary session “Building an Integrated Age-Friendly Community of Care — A View from Scotland”.



Dr Catherine Calderwood, CMO to Scotland UK presenting her keynote lecture “Realistic Medicine and How It Supports Health and Social Care Integration in Scotland”.

