

# Congratulations

**To All Public Health Preparedness Clinics for receiving the President's Certificate of Commendation for your invaluable contributions during COVID-19**

**by Agency for Integrated Care**



**President's Certificate of Commendation to PHPCs for COVID-19 contributions**

The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenging time, during which our Public Health Preparedness Clinics (PHPCs) went above and beyond, participating in initiatives to ensure that residents received required care, testing and vaccinations close to home. We would like to express our gratitude to the PHPCs for partnering us in the national fight against COVID-19.

The SARS outbreak of 2003 highlighted the importance of having a system that would enable efficient case-finding and treatment at the community level during public health emergencies. The Pandemic Preparedness Clinic Scheme was set up and later consolidated with the Haze Subsidy Scheme to form the PHPC Scheme in 2015, allowing enrolled clinics to serve as the first line of defence during infectious outbreaks.

Singapore's response to COVID-19 as a whole was remarkable, with a high vaccination rate and one of the lowest case fatality rates of all the countries in the world. Our PHPCs, no doubt, played a key role in the country's successful handling of the crisis. During the pandemic, more than 1,000 PHPCs were activated and took on roles such as administering vaccinations and testing. Here are some of the initiatives that they were involved in.

## Flu Subsidy Scheme

This scheme enabled Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents with symptoms of acute respiratory infections to receive consultation and medication at subsidised rates of \$5-\$10 at PHPCs. The MOH subsidies made care for acute respiratory infections affordable and accessible, and encouraged residents to seek treatment early and helped to limit the spread of possible infections when details of the infection were still uncertain.



## Swab and Send Home

The Swab and Send Home (SASH) Programme was an initiative to expand the COVID-19 testing capacity by tapping on PHPCs to carry out swab tests on individuals presenting with symptoms of acute respiratory infections. These efforts provided residents with convenient and timely testing close to their homes, hence facilitating early detection and active case finding in the community. Free Personal Protective Equipment was provided to participating PHPCs to carry out this initiative.



Photograph courtesy of Dr Nelson Wee

## National Vaccination Programme (From January 2021)

PHPCs supported the National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme by offering free COVID-19 vaccinations subsidised by MOH to residents, making vaccinations accessible and convenient. This allowed vaccination capacity to be expanded, which was critical in protecting residents from severe disease, minimising the risk of transmission and preventing the healthcare system from being overwhelmed. As a result, Singapore achieved a remarkable vaccination rate compared to most other countries and was able to ease restrictions allowing residents to resume their pre-COVID-19 activities.



**Letter of appreciation from Director-General for Health and photograph of Dr Tan Tze Lee, then president of the College of Family Physicians receiving the commendation medal on behalf of PHPCs.**

**Visit [www.primarycarepages.sg](http://www.primarycarepages.sg) to read the letter in full.**

## Oral Antivirals (From March 2022)

Participating PHPCs administered free Oral Antivirals to eligible residents who tested positive for COVID-19 who were at risk of severe illness. This initiative was key to reducing hospital admissions and the general burden on the healthcare system.

**Interested in participating in the PHPC scheme? Scan the QR code or contact your AIC account manager to learn more.**



## Home Recovery Programme

The Home Recovery Programme enabled eligible COVID-19 positive residents to recover at home, with PHPC support through patient assessment, medication, follow-up and coordination with private swab providers for subsequent swabs where needed. This enabled tertiary acute hospitals and community facilities to focus on providing care to patients with severe illness and reduced the need for additional capacity for patients with mild/moderate illness.

**Once again, we would like to thank all our PHPCs for this tremendous effort during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing much needed care and advice to residents amidst constantly changing protocols. We would also like to thank all Primary Care Network (PCN) leaders and staff for supporting their clinics during this time.**