

SurgeOn

NEWSLETTER

Highlights of the Issue:

- NMRC Award Winners (January 2024 Cycle)
- What's a gynaecologist doing in a prostate surgery?
- Machine learning for ear impression taking
- Duke Surgery Study Trip 2024
- Institute of Advanced Nursing (IAN) Preceptor Connect
- Congratulations on your promotions and appointments (July to September 2024)

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Legend
SGH: Singapore General Hospital
CGH: Changi General Hospital
SKH: Sengkang General Hospital
KKH: KK Women's and Children's Hospital
NCCS: National Centre for Surgical Oncology
Singapore
DSSO: Division of Surgery and Surgical Oncology

CATEGORY: AWARDS

DSSO Joy @ Surgical Services (J@SS) Award Ceremony on 11 September 2024

Service Excellence awards presented for the period of January to June 2024

We had the privilege of celebrating the excellent service of 25 incredible individuals - from house officers to Senior Consultants who went above and beyond in delivering exemplary care during the period from January to June 2024



Service Excellence Award winners (Left to right)

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Row 1: | Dr Marcus Sim Jianhong | HO Category | General Surgery |
| | Dr Stefanie Lee Hui Ting | HO Category | General Surgery |
| | Dr Yeo Zhi Shuang | MO Category | Urology |
| | Dr Alexander Chuang Yi | JR Category | Obstetrics & Gynaecology |
| | Dr Liu Xuandao | JR Category | Otorhinolaryngology |
| | | | – Head & Neck Surgery |
| | Dr Adele Ng Chin Wei | SR Category | Otorhinolaryngology |
| | | | – Head & Neck Surgery |
| | Dr Alvin Lee Yuanming | SR Category | Urology |
| | Dr Lim Ee Jean | AC Category | Otorhinolaryngology |
| | Dr Tay Kaijun | AC Category | – Head & Neck Surgery |
| Row 2: | | | Colorectal Surgery |
| | Dr Isaac Seow En | C Category | Otorhinolaryngology |
| | Dr Shaun Loh Ray Han | C Category | – Head & Neck Surgery |
| | | | Breast Surgery |
| | Dr Lim Sue Zann | C Category | Breast Surgery |
| | Dr Sim Yirong | SC Category | Breast Surgery |
| | Dr Preetha Madhukumar | SC Category | Breast Surgery |
| | Dr Devendra s/o Kanagalingam | SC Category | Obstetrics & Gynaecology |

Award winners not in the photos:

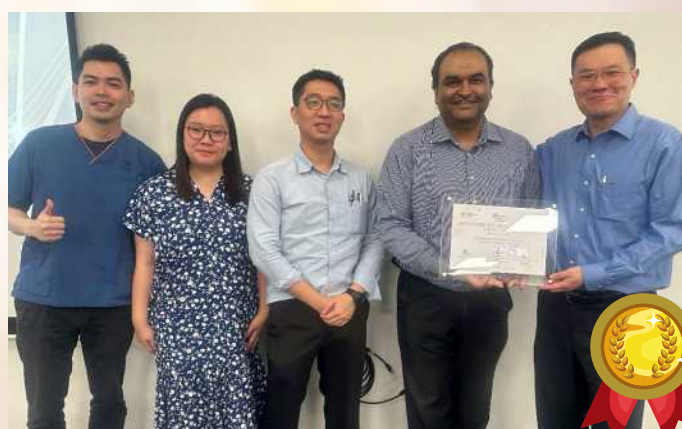
| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Dr Randal Lee Wei Liang | HO Category | Obstetrics & Gynaecology |
| Dr Genevieve Lee Min | MO Category | Otorhinolaryngology |
| | | – Head & Neck Surgery |
| Dr Han Hui Ping | MO Category | General Surgery |
| Dr Grace Cheah Hui Shi | SR Category | Obstetrics & Gynaecology |
| Dr Oey Chung Lie Sri Mukti | RP Category | Breast Surgery |
| Dr Bawa Alpana Bandhu | RP Category | Neurosurgery |
| Dr Gautham S/O Palaniappan | RP Category | Otorhinolaryngology |
| | | – Head & Neck Surgery |
| Dr Tan Yu Guang | AC Category | Urology |
| Dr Tan Si Ying | C Category | Breast Surgery |

At this ceremony, two new awards categories were introduced: The **Team Care award** and **Outstanding Progress award**.

The **Team Care award** was established to recognise exceptional service provided to patients as a cohesive unit, with contributions from doctors, nurses, allied health, ancillary, and support service staff all playing a role in the team's success. Meanwhile, the **Outstanding Progress Award** recognised the department with the greatest increase in the average number of compliments per doctor since the January to May 2023 cycle.



Congratulations to Ward 57 and Department of General Surgery for winning the **Team Care Award**!



Congratulations to Department of Colorectal Surgery for winning the **Outstanding Progress Award**!

It was truly an evening to celebrate individual excellence, teamwork and the strides we're making together in patient care. Congratulations once again to all winners!

CATEGORY: AWARDS

Congratulations on your achievements!

National Medical Research Council (NMRC) Award Winners (January 2024)



Clinician Scientist - Individual Research Grant (CS-IRG)

Assoc Prof Johnny Ong

Senior Consultant, Sarcoma, Peritoneal and Rare Tumours (SPRinT), SGH & NCCS

Project title: Development of biologics targeting PAI-1 towards regulatory approval aided by patient stratification using a vesicular signature on a novel nanotechnology platform (STAR) in peritoneal metastases (PM)



Clinician Scientist - Individual Research Grant - New Investigator Grant (CS-IRG-NIG)

Dr Nicholas Shannon

Associate Consultant, Head & Neck Surgery, SGH & NCCS

Project title: AI-powered radiomics for early treatment response prediction and personalised treatment in nasopharyngeal carcinoma: integrating clinical, imaging and biomarker data



Open Fund – Young Individual Research Grant (OF-YIRG)

Dr Thean Lai Fun

Research Fellow, Colorectal Surgery, SGH & NCCS

Project title: Spatial omics in deciphering crosstalk between microbiome and immune cells in the tumor microenvironment of early-stage colorectal cancer



Open Fund – Young Individual Research Grant (OF-YIRG)

Dr Liu Ying

Research Fellow, Surgery & Surgical Oncology – Research, SGH & NCCS

Project title: Mechanistic dissection of novel biologics targeting PAI-1 via an integrative proteomic and transcriptomic approach coupled with prospective validation of a rapid ELISA companion biomarker panel to infer successful treatment response on peritoneal metastases

SingHealth Medical Student Talent Development Award (SMSTDA) (FY2024 Cycle 1)

SMSTDA – PROJECT AWARD



Mr Bryan Chong

Medical Student,
NUS Yong Loo Lin School of
Medicine

Project title: Selective Treatment De-escalation in Advanced Prostate Cancer: Have we come full circle?



Clin Assoc Prof Kenneth Chen

Senior Consultant,
Urology, SGH & NCCS



Mr Brian Yeo Sheng Yep

Medical Student,
NUS Yong Loo Lin School of
Medicine

Project title: Accuracy of Artificial Intelligence in Diagnosing Obstructive Sleep Apnea using Photoplethysmography – A Meta-Analysis



Clin Assoc Prof Toh Song Tar

Head of Department & Senior
Consultant, Otorhinolaryngology –
Head & Neck Surgery, SGH & NCCS

SMSTDA – TRAVEL AWARD



Mr Lu Yang

Medical Student,
Duke-NUS Medical School



Prof Pierce Chow

Senior Consultant, HPB &
Transplant Surgery, SGH & NCCS

Project title: Prognostic Factors in Hepatocellular Carcinoma Patients undergoing Curative Resection: ALBI Grade and Tumor Characteristics Overrule Viral Status

Congratulations on your achievements!

Inaugural AMII Innovation Grant Programme for Students and Trainees 2024



Mr Chan O Yinn Wharton
Duke-NUS MD
PhD Student



Dr Sabrina Cheok
Resident,
General Surgery Residency,
SingHealth
DHIP Run 2 Fellow



Dr Joella Ang
Consultant,
Department of Obstetrics
& Gynaecology,
DSSO, SGH

Project title: HerScope by Cervivor: Empowering Women's Health through At-Home, AI-Enhanced Cervical Cancer Screening

CATEGORY: CLINICAL

What's a Gynaecologist doing in a Prostate Surgery?

Reflections of the first SingHealth Pelvic Oncology Fellow

Dr Joella Ang, Consultant, Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, DSSO, SGH



Introduction

In the complex landscape of cancer care, multidisciplinary collaboration stands as a beacon of hope, guiding teams towards improved outcomes. This is especially so when the affected area is in the pelvis, where the urinary system, genital tract and gastrointestinal system are so closely approximated. Cancers in

this region may spread, invade and thus challenge us to think beyond our specialty silos.

As part of my training as a budding gynaecological oncologist, I spent a year rotating through the various departments of Singapore General Hospital's Division of Surgery and Surgical Oncology – leaving the warm and familiar embrace of the uterus and ovaries of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, venturing out into foreign lands of SPRinT, Colorectal Surgery, Urology and Hepatobiliary & Transplant Surgery.

Greater appreciation of the role of each discipline

My journey began in the SPRinT department, where I quickly realised how sheltered we gynaecologists had been from the complexities and frustrations of intestinal obstruction. These patients, who often landed in general surgery after any type

of operation—including gynaecological ones—left me with a newfound appreciation for our surgical colleagues who tackle these challenges daily.

I've also developed a greater appreciation of how various departments perform the same type of surgery differently. An example would be in bowel resection. For one, the goal of the surgery may be for palliation whereas in the other, where



With the Dept of Urology

CATEGORY: CLINICAL

the disease is localised, the goals may be to achieve optimal margins, complete mesocolic excision and central vascular ligation for cure. Neither one should be considered superior, but each have their merits and principles for the diseases that they are treating.

The Heart of Palliative Care

Delving into the role of palliative surgery, one case will stay with me forever. A patient with an inoperable, foul-smelling vaginal tumour taught me the true meaning of palliative surgery. From a gynaecological perspective, surgery seemed futile, even reckless. But the SPRinT team saw beyond the immediate surgical concerns.

They understood that for this patient, the tumour's odour was more than a physical symptom—it was a barrier keeping her loved ones at arm's length during her final days. The surgery, while not curative, gave her the precious gift of spending her last moments surrounded by family and friends. It was a powerful reminder that sometimes, the most important outcome isn't measured in survival rates, but in the quality of life we can offer our patients.

Urology: An Unexpected Goldmine of Knowledge

A week prior to the start of my urology posting, I'll admit that I was very worried and less than thrilled. "There will be many prostates and penises," my mentor warned, and I shuddered, making a mental note to revisit the male anatomy chapters I'd gleefully ignored for years.

But oh, how wrong I was to dread this experience! It turned out to be a treasure trove of transferable skills and innovative ideas. The similarities between transurethral resection of the prostate and our transcervical resection of myomas were striking. Robotic prostatectomies offered insights into extraperitoneal approaches that we could adapt for pelvic lymph node dissections in our female patients.

Even procedures for penile cancers and extramammary Paget's disease of the scrotum provided valuable lessons applicable to vulvar surgeries. It was a constant reminder that in medicine, knowledge knows no gender boundaries.

Innovation: The Fruit of Collaboration

During my fellowship, cross-pollination of ideas has led to some exciting innovations. We began performing extraperitoneal lymph node dissections in gynaecological oncological surgeries, adapting techniques from our urology colleagues. We incorporated colonic staplers in radical hysterectomies, a method borrowed from colorectal surgery that aims to reduce the risks of tumour spillage intraabdominally.

Collaboration is a two-way street. I had the privilege of introducing my colleagues to vaginal natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (vNOTES), a technique we had been developing in gynaecology. Watching this approach being adapted for right hemicolectomies by the colorectal team led by Clin Asst Prof Isaac Seow was a thrilling reminder of how innovation can flourish when we break down the walls between specialities.

With the SPRinT team and friends at Run for Hope 2023



Dinner with the Dept of Colorectal Surgery

The Road Ahead

As I reflect on this whirlwind year, I'm struck by how much I've grown, not just as a surgeon, but as a member of a larger medical community. I've made friends across departments who are now my lifelines when I encounter tricky cases. I've seen firsthand how different teams pursue clinical and research excellence, each with their unique flavour and focus.

Yes, there were challenges. The breadth of rotations sometimes meant sacrificing depth, and not everything I learned was directly applicable to gynaecological oncology. But these experiences have shaped me into a more well-rounded, empathetic, and innovative surgeon.

The journey toward excellence in pelvic oncology is one best travelled together. As healthcare continues to evolve, the need for collaboration will only grow. By working together—across disciplines—we can enhance patient care, drive research and innovation, and ultimately transform the landscape of pelvic oncology and beyond.

So, the next time you see a gynaecologist scrubbed in for a prostate surgery, don't be alarmed. We're not lost; we're exploring. And in that exploration, we're finding new ways to push the boundaries of care, through one unexpected collaboration at a time within surgery and beyond.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my mentors Clin Assoc Prof Claramae Chia, Clin Prof Emile Tan, Assoc Prof Tay Kae Jack, Clin Prof Alexander Chung and their team for guiding me and allowing me to learn and grow. I would also like to thank Clin Assoc Prof Yong Tze Tein, Dr Tan Wei Ching and Dr Ravichandran Nadarajah for their support and in designing my training programme. Finally, I would like to thank the Division of Surgery and Surgical Oncology for this wonderful opportunity to learn.

From Scalpel to Robot: A team's journey to Totally Robotic Minimally Invasive Oesophagectomy

Oesophagectomy is a highly complex surgery with risk of significant morbidity. The introduction of the da Vinci Robot has transformed surgery and its benefits of enhanced surgical precision, dexterity and improved 3D visualisation of the operative field has changed the way oesophagectomies are performed. In recent years, results from studies have shown benefits of robotic-assisted MIE (RAMIE) over open surgery in terms of lower pulmonary and cardiac complications, less blood loss, lower mean post-operative pain score and faster post-operative functional recovery. Oncologic outcomes such as completeness of surgical resection (R0 resection rates) and nodal harvest are also comparable with open surgery.

Compared with Minimally Invasive oesophagectomy, RAMIE has also shown benefit in terms of lower pulmonary complications with less blood loss. A recent multicentre randomised controlled trial (REVATE trial) published in May 2024 showed that in patients with oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma, RAMIE resulted in more successful left recurrent laryngeal nerve lymph node dissection with a lower rate of short- and long-term recurrent laryngeal nerve palsy compared to MIE.

Several studies have also shown a reduction in the learning curve for RAMIE with a structured proctoring programme. A study from the Netherlands showed the learning phase for a surgeon under a structured proctoring programme was completed after 24 cases in 13 months; a reduction of 66% in the number of operations and 76% in time compared with the proctor (70 cases in 55 months).



Prof Chao Yin-Kai from Taiwan (2nd from left) proctoring our first RAMIE case in 2018



Use of the robot for the thoracic phase



Front Row (Left to Right): Clin Asst Prof Annalisa Ng, Clin Asst Prof June Lee, Clin Assoc Prof Andrew Wong
Back Row (2nd and 3rd from Left): Clin Asst Prof Lin Jinlin, Clin Asst Prof Ching Siok Siong; 1st and last are Specialty Nurses

The CGH Upper GI department first started our MIE journey in June 2014 with a 3-stage thoracoscopic oesophagectomy. Over the years, we were encouraged by the increasing evidence of the role of the robotic platform in MIE and we subsequently embarked on our first hybrid RAMIE case (robotic thoracic phase, laparoscopic abdominal phase) in August 2018 where we were privileged to have Professor Chao Yin-Kai from Taiwan's Chang Gung Memorial Hospital come as a proctor.

Since then, we have successfully performed 24 RAMIEs and have commenced performing the abdominal phase robotically as well (Total RAMIE) since the start of 2024 (after a fellowship with a centre of excellence) with good oncologic outcomes and similar operative timings (compared with hybrid RAMIE). Robotic abdominal surgery for gastric cancer has demonstrated improved outcomes to laparoscopic surgery in terms of increased lymph node harvest and reduced blood loss with similar oncologic outcomes. In our series of patients, we were able to meet benchmark oesophagectomy outcomes including mortality rate, overall complication rate, major morbidity e.g. anastomotic leak, cardiac, chyle leak, readmission rate, while achieving adequate lymph node yield. Majority of our patients received bilateral RLN nodal dissection and our temporary palsy rates compare favourably with published series.

The use of the robotic platform has played a significant role in how we perform oesophagectomies today. It has revolutionised the radicality of upper mediastinal lymphadenectomy whilst minimising complications such as recurrent laryngeal nerve palsy and pulmonary complications. This has led to us being able to provide patients with a higher quality of care, leading to better patient outcomes at the end of the day.

9th Singapore Breast Oncoplastic Surgery Symposium (SBOSS)



The faculty of the 9th SBOSS along with the KKH Breast Department and a few of the foreign delegates.



Panel discussions on issues encountered in breast cancer treatment. Each discussion was interactive and began with an audience poll. Fun facts of each topic were shared at the end of each session.

Held at KK Women's and Children's Hospital in July 2024, it was another successful SBOSS well attended by local and international delegates. Themed "Exploring Breast Surgeons' Practices in Asia", the symposium was spearheaded by Clin Assoc Prof Lim Geok Hoon, Head of KK Breast Department. Renowned speakers from various parts of Asia were invited to provide insights on breast cancer practices in their countries. These speakers included Dr Aldin Basa from the Philippines, Prof Bahadır Güllüoğlu from Turkey, Prof Hung Wen Lai from Taiwan, Dr Visnu Lohsirawat from Thailand, Assoc Prof Mee Hoong See from Malaysia, and Dr Farida Sobri from Indonesia. Various local breast and plastic surgeons also presented on the various aspects of breast cancer care in Singapore. There were also hands-on workshops on oncoplastic surgery and cryotherapy, the latter organised by Clin Asst Prof Mok Chi Wei from Changi General Hospital. Both workshops were fully subscribed.

SBOSS has successfully imparted breast cancer knowledge while allowing networking and collaborations among the breast healthcare community.



Prof Hung Wen Lai (left) and Clin Asst Prof Mok Chi Wei (3rd from left) demonstrated how to use cryoablation for breast tumors. The delegates who signed up were able to try the system during the second day of the SBOSS.

Sharing Session: Comprehending Stakeholders and their Interconnections in Healthcare Innovation – Wednesday, 26 June 2024

The seminar, co-organised by SingHealth Duke-NUS Surgery ACP and the Duke-NUS Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship (OIE), offered valuable insights into the complex web of stakeholders in healthcare innovation. This enlightening event on healthcare innovation drew over 60 attendees from various SingHealth institutions and industry partners.

Adj Assoc Prof Alok Mishra, a former J&J Medical APAC executive and current CEO of Value Addition, delivered the keynote presentation. His talk on “Comprehending Stakeholders and their Interconnections in Healthcare Innovation” provided a comprehensive overview of the subject.

Following the presentation, an engaging panel discussion ensued featuring distinguished experts from academia, clinical sectors, and industry. The panel members were Prof Jenny Low (Clinician Scientist and Senior Consultant, SGH), Clin Assoc Prof Frederick Koh (Surgeon-Scientist and Consultant, SKH), Ms Amy Ho (Head of Disease Areas, APAC Roche Diagnostics Asia Pacific) and Asst Prof Ann-Marie Chacko (Head, Laboratory for Translational & Molecular Imaging, Duke-NUS).

The diverse backgrounds of the panelists facilitated a rich dialogue, offering attendees multifaceted perspectives on healthcare innovation and stakeholder management.

Here are key takeaways from the session:

- 1) Innovating a solution is only the start. Getting from solution to market (commercialisation and adoption) is the real challenge — it can be expensive and take a long time.
- 2) Collaborations begin with trust. If you set out seeking collaborations only when you need it, you won't get it. Build relationships early or follow Adj Assoc Prof Alok's advice – make a coffee date today!
- 3) Don't stay in your bubble. Attend conferences, seminars, and workshops to network. That said, we will be planning more events to help us all connect and spark collaborations, so stay tuned!



From left to right: Asst Prof Ann-Marie Chacko, Adj Assoc Prof Alok Mishra (Moderator), Ms Amy Ho, Clin Assoc Prof Frederick Koh and Prof Jenny Low

Machine learning for ear impression taking - a novel prototype using structured light imaging

In collaboration with SUTD professors:



Clin Asst Prof Kenneth Chua
Principal Audiologist, CGH
(Principal Investigator)



Ms Hazel Yeo
Audiologist, CGH
(Study Team Member)



Assoc Prof Robert E Simpsons



Assoc Prof Stylianos Dritsas

Ear impressions are frequently taken by Audiologists to customise ear molds for specific types of hearing aids. The standard method of taking an ear impression is minimally invasive and involves inserting a cotton block (otoblock) into the ear canal with a probe. Sometimes a deep insertion may be required for custom hearing aids and as a result, patients may express discomfort. A silicone-based mixture is then injected into the ear canal and left to harden for approximately 5 minutes before it is removed. Patients with active ear infections and mastoidectomy history are generally contraindicated for this procedure, as the ear impression material may end up trapped in the mastoid cavity as a foreign body.

There is hence a need to work on a contactless scanning method of the ear. CGH Audiology team worked with engineers from the Singapore University Technology and Design (SUTD) and developed a novel prototype, using structured light imaging to capture the external images of the ear (pinna). Machine learning on 3000 ear impression images was also performed and an algorithm was applied to prototype images, to predict the rest of the ear canal shape. We were able to classify, register and segment ear canal shapes using convoluted neural network. We deployed this prototype in a pilot study and compared it with gold standard ear impression images taken via the standard method. Comparable differences were within acceptable limits and the next phase will be to further refine the

algorithm, improve the contactless imaging method and miniaturise the prototype.

This is an innovative novel method to determine the structure and shape of ear canals with no contact and more information on the study can be found in our publications below.

- 1) Charmaine Kai Ling Tan, Zhi Hwee Goh, Kenneth Wei De Chua, Savitha Kamath, Conrad Kang Rui Chung, Wendy Bing Yu Teo, Jose C Martinez, Stylianos Dritsas, Robert E. Simpson, An improved hearing aid fitting journey; the role of 3D scanning, additive manufacturing, and sustainable practices, *Materials Today: Proceedings*, Volume 70, 2022, Pages 504-511, ISSN 2214-7853, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.matpr.2022.09.536>.
- 2) A Novel Ear Impression-Taking Method Using Structured Light Imaging and Machine Learning: A Pilot Proof of Concept Study with Patients' Feedback on Prototype. <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-0383/13/5/1214>
- 3) Dritsas S, Chua KW, Goh ZH, Simpson RE. Classification, registration, and segmentation of ear canal impressions using convolutional neural networks. *Med Image Anal.* 2024 May;94:103152. doi: 10.1016/j.media.2024.103152. Epub 2024 Mar 21. PMID: 38531210.

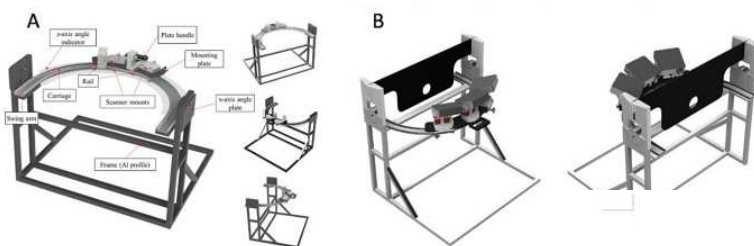
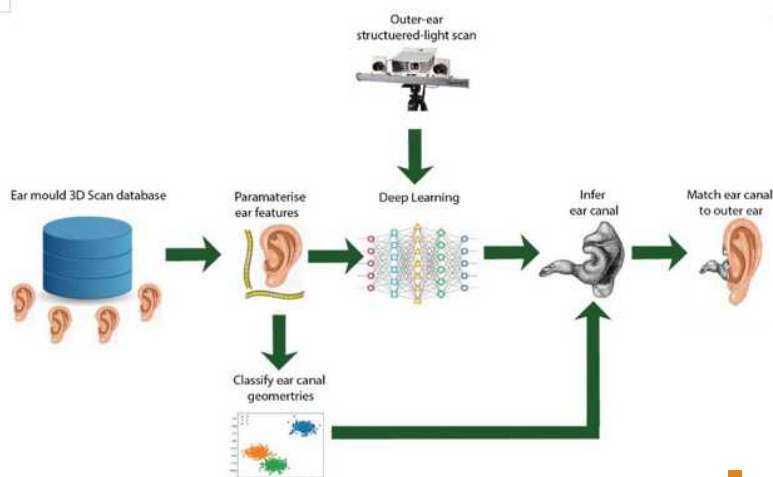


Figure 1A: A close-up sketch of the EarScanner prototype, 1B: Adjustable height with acrylic frame showing a circular hole where the ear is placed

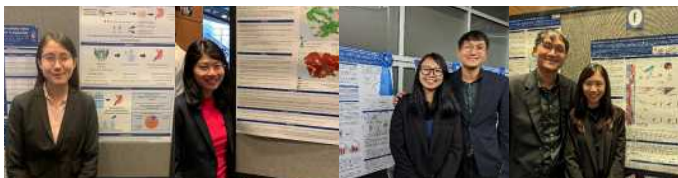
Figure 2: Schematic showing structuring light scanning with machine learning on ear impression images to predict and classify ear canal shapes



Duke Durham Study Trip 2024

Surgery ACP embarked on a transformative study trip to Duke Durham from 15 – 19 April 2024, with a team comprising of faculty, residents, medical students and administrators. The trip presented the team with valuable insights and learning opportunities, proving to be a fulfilling and enriching experience.

The team attended the **Duke Surgery 8th Annual Research Day** on 17 April 2024. The event aims to recognise the research accomplishments of learners and foster further accomplishments. During the event, Dr Josephine Hendrikson, House Officer, Healthcare Manpower Division, MOHH delivered an oral presentation on her research project titled “Harnessing Molecular Dependence of Peritoneal Metastases on Paracrine Factors in Ascites towards Developing Predictive Biomarker Panel for Tumor-Agnostic Therapy”.



From left to right: Dr Claire Lim with her poster, Dr Meghan Lim with her poster, Assoc Prof Johnny Ong with Dr Josephine Hendrikson, Assoc Prof Johnny Ong with Ms Jolynn Ong

The Duke Department of Surgery hosted the **Centennial Summit on Data Science in Surgery**, as a part of Duke's centennial celebration, on 18 April 2024. The event featured presentations and discussions led by experts in the realms of data science, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and related applications in surgical care. During the summit, Dr. Nicholas Shannon, Associate Consultant, Department of Head and Neck Surgery, SGH and NCCS, presented on the topic “Beyond Anatomy: Uncovering Hidden Patterns with Radiomics”.



Dr Nicholas Shannon, Associate Consultant, Head & Neck Surgery, SGH

The visit to Duke Durham included engaging sessions with faculty members and researchers, providing ample opportunities for networking and establishing connections with experts in various fields. Particularly, three proposals were submitted for the Duke / Duke-NUS Research Collaboration Pilot Projects 2024. The connections made during the trip will serve as valuable resources for future collaborations and knowledge sharing.

Reflections

The quotes “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country” and “It takes a village to raise a child” have never resonated more to me than before this trip. The true meaning of service leadership and the importance of purpose is not only crucial to the masses, but also for those leading. One cannot succeed alone; we need a carefully built team to do so.

A/Prof Frederick Koh
Consultant, Colorectal Service,
Sengkang General Hospital



Prof Henry Rice, Chief, Division of Pediatric General Surgery

The delegation with the Department of Surgery, Duke University



Prof Kent Weinhold, Division of Surgical Sciences



The delegation near the Duke University Chapel

Sharing on my SingHealth Medical Student Talent Development Award (SMSTDA) journey



Dr Fong Khi Yung
House Officer, SGH
Graduated from NUS Yong Loo
Lin School of Medicine in 2024

Held on 5-8 April this year in Paris, France, the European Association of Urology (EAU) Annual Congress is Europe's largest annual event in urology. After the gruelling final MBBS exams, I was looking forward to a brief change in pace and scenery, and to meeting my research collaborators in person once again.

The event was held at the Paris Expo Porte De Versailles, with exhibition halls, auditoriums, and meeting rooms spanning over 3 floors. The exhibition halls showcased the latest science and technology in urology, such as lasers for endourology procedures and focal ablative therapies for prostate cancer. The auditoriums were the site of keynote lectures on important advancements and trials in the field, with debates on a variety of topics ranging from cytoreductive nephrectomy to artificial intelligence in urology. I particularly enjoyed the live surgery sessions, wherein four separate procedures carried out by renowned surgeons were streamed simultaneously on the large auditorium screens. All participants were given a headset with an adjustable audio channel, allowing us to switch between live explanations of all four surgeries to catch the highlights and specific nuances of each.

In addition to these lectures, I was also able to meet up with research collaborators from Singapore and all over the world. The relaxed backdrop of the conference and excellent Parisian coffee provided great networking opportunities and helped

scientific discourse to flow freely. Besides discussing future topics for investigation with friends and collaborators, I also managed to attend a meeting kickstarting a large multicenter database to better understand how these Herculean projects are conducted from start to finish.

On the final day of the congress, I delivered an oral presentation of a meta-analysis on off-clamp versus on-clamp robot-assisted partial nephrectomy, which I had co-written with my mentors from the SGH Department of Urology. The ensuing discussion, as well as a later session summarising the highlights of EAU 2024, was a fruitful end to the conference. I am hopeful that I will be able to apply my takeaways from this conference in the clinical setting as a house officer and beyond.

I am grateful to the SingHealth Medical Student Talent Development Award (SMSTDA) for providing travel sponsorship to attend the conference, as well as my mentors and collaborators who have encouraged me along every step of my research journey. Here's hoping that I'll be able to see everyone again at next year's EAU Congress in Madrid!

With my research mentor from SGH, Clin Asst Prof Valerie Gan



With my research mentor from NTFGH, Dr Vineet Gauhar, and his research mentor from India, Dr Mallikarjuna Chiruvella



Meeting of the Global En Bloc Registry, a multicenter collaboration on transurethral resection of bladder tumours

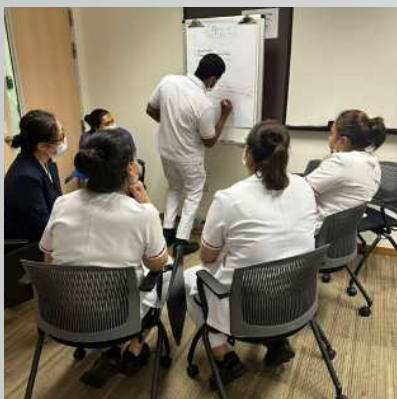
Institute of Advanced Nursing (IAN) Preceptor Connect

In supporting and recognising the clinical preceptors in the areas of mentoring the students and new nurses, the Preceptor Connect was launched in 2024

Preceptor Connect is a new initiative committed to garner interests and sustain the strength of the community of preceptors in the work of guiding new nurses. This event in April 2024 led by educators from Alice Lee Institute of Advanced Nursing were attended by nurse preceptors from various clinical settings of SGH. Throughout the 2-hour workshop, there were lively discussions peppered with experience sharing by clinical preceptors and reflections on their various encounters. The educators were available to share on the resources in providing structured clinical supervision

to the nursing students. Attendees also learnt about different assessment methodologies from the academic institutions which had benefitted preceptors who were unfamiliar with the local grading system for the nursing students. The clinical preceptors had surfaced some of their challenges during the journey of guiding the students and as a group they brainstormed ideas for effective clinical supervision.

At the end of the day, the attendees shared that this platform has built their confidence and provided them with knowledge and skills in handling different situations when guiding students. Most were delighted to have gained valuable insights from the real-life case scenarios and video discussions on common incidents involving nursing students.



Preceptor Connect brainstorming



Sharing by an educator



Preceptor Connect IAN Team

Masterclass on Crafting Compelling Stories for Serious Games in Healthcare



Have you ever been so engrossed in a movie, book, or Netflix series that time flew by, and you could not wait to find out what happens next? This sense of “presence” – the sense of being there in the story – is what makes a game exciting and memorable. A powerful and engaging storyline immerses players and provides them with motivation and purpose, so that their gameplay experience becomes more meaningful.

If you are a healthcare professional looking to design serious games for your clinical practice and/or education, join us in March 2025 for our masterclass “Deconstructing the “Art” and “Science” of Serious Games Stories: How to Engage, Yet Keep It Real”. This course will provide the theoretical foundations of game story design and hands-on practice in developing a “play-your-own-adventure” game story. This masterclass will provide insights into what makes gamers tick.

Why Attend?

Serious games are becoming increasingly popular in healthcare, offering an interactive and engaging way for learners to learn in a risk-free environment. This masterclass is open to clinicians, surgeons and allied health professionals who are eager to harness the power of serious games to enhance their practice and education.

What You’ll Learn:

- **Storytelling Fundamentals:** Understand the elements of a good story.
- **Generative AI in Storytelling:** Gain an insight into how to leverage on generative AI to create a “play-your-own-adventure” game story.

- **Interactive Sessions:** Participate in hands-on activities to leverage generative AI to enrich your narratives.
- **AI Ethics in Serious Games:** Explore the ethical use of AI to design impactful game stories responsibly.

About the Facilitators:

Clin Assoc Prof Kevin Yap is the Serious Games Lead at the Division of Pharmacy, SGH, and an interdisciplinary digital health strategist and innovator with extensive experience in developing award-winning serious games in healthcare.

Ms Phylaine Toh is a Senior Art Therapist at the Art Therapy & Music Therapy Unit, SGH and a core faculty of the SingHealth Duke-NUS Medical Humanities Institute. She is dedicated to integrating creativity into healthcare education.

Course Details:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Date | : 25 March 2025, Tuesday (please refer to official website for latest updates) |
| Time | : 9.00 am to 5.30 pm |
| Venue | : National Heart Centre Singapore (in-person) |
| Class Size | : Up to 30 participants |
| Device Required | : Internet-accessible laptop recommended |

Don’t miss this chance to level up your serious games design skills. Look out for further details and the registration link from SGH-Postgraduate Allied Health Institute (SGH-PGAHI) and start creating impactful game stories for your practice and education.

Hearing Screening in Tacloban city, Philippines

Tacloban city, Philippines is not unfamiliar as it was one of the most severely hit cities in the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan. As the provincial capital of Leyte in Eastern Visayas, it is instrumental in the provision of healthcare in the region serving about 251,881 individuals. In recent years, non-communicable conditions such as vision and hearing loss have received increased attention as emphasis shifted from survival to better quality of life for the people. However, while formal vision screening programmes are available, hearing screening is still mostly done informally via the whisper test (hearing loss determined based on a person's ability to hear someone whispering) due to limited knowledge and equipment. Such a test is low in sensitivity as it depends on the person administering the test and the environment. There is thus a need for a more formal hearing screening protocol there.

From 3 to 9 September 2023, our audiologists and audiometrician from Changi General Hospital (CGH) – Clin Asst Prof Kenneth Chua, Ms. Hazel Yeo, and Ms. Katrina De Luna - went to Tacloban city, Philippines with the relevant equipment to share knowledge on conducting hearing screening. This was done in conjunction with EyeHear Foundation and the local Department of Health (DoH).

comprising of mostly nurses from EyeHear and DoH. This was complemented by observation of hearing screening conducted by the team and subsequent hands-on sessions by the participants.



Training of volunteers from EyeHear Foundation and Department of Health

Over 1 week, 144 participants from Tacloban city and the surrounding region underwent the hearing screening programme. Of these participants, more than half had hearing loss while approximately 20% required onward referral to the Ear, Nose, and Throat doctor for ear conditions. The prevalence of hearing loss and ear conditions indicates the necessity of such programmes. One such programme will be kickstarted by the EyeHear foundation with equipment donated by CGH and the staff who underwent training.



Handing of audiology equipment by Clin Asst Prof Kenneth Chua to Dr Lilibeth Andrade, Assistant Regional Director of the Department of Health-Eastern Visayas

Clin Asst Prof Kenneth Chua conducted training sessions covering the screening protocol, otoscopy, tympanometry, and audiometry for approximately 20 interested individuals



Trained staff in action during a DoH Free Hearing and Eyeglasses Provision service caravan by DoH in Leyte (September 23-24, 2023)

The Pursuit of Global Surgery



Universal health coverage is one of World Health Organisation's (WHO) Sustainable Developmental Goals. Even though Singapore has made great strides toward achieving this goal, many regions around the world still lack universal health coverage, particularly in surgical care.

Being a renowned academic medical centre, SingHealth is in great position to be a regional hub for collaboration and policy engagement to help improve health outcomes and strengthen health systems in Asia and beyond.

To effectively contribute to the research, education and policy in this field, I decided to take a year off from residency to read Master of Public Health at Imperial College London.

This was a highly valuable experience as it equipped me with knowledge, skills, and perspectives to be an effective contributor in Global Health. The course provided opportunities to meet stakeholders from many countries with differing backgrounds which aided me in understanding the complexities in improving health systems. One of the key highlights of the course was the week spent in WHO, Geneva, interacting with the staff and appreciating the challenges and nuances in this field.

As I continue with my surgical training, I am actively seeking opportunities to get involved in this field with the goal of improving access to quality surgeries across the globe. This is just the start of my journey in pursuing Global Surgery.

Dr Prasad Palanisamy

Resident, General Surgery Residency Programme, SingHealth

Valedictorian for the Master of Public Health, Imperial College London 2022/23

CATEGORY: FACULTY AFFAIRS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FAPD)

★ Congratulations on your appointments! (July 2024) ★



Clinical Professor

Benita Tan

Former Vice Chair (Faculty Affairs & Professional Development),
Surgery ACP
Chairman, Division of Surgery,
SKH



Clinical Professor

Emile Tan

Director, Health Services Research,
Surgery ACP
Senior Consultant (Head), Colorectal
Surgery,
SGH & NCCS



Associate Professor (Research Track)

Tay Kae Jack

Dir, Outcomes Research &
Database Registry, Surgery ACP
Senior Consultant, Urology, SGH



Clinical Associate Professor

Chen Yong

Senior Staff Physician,
Paediatric Surgery,
KKH

★ Congratulations on your appointments! ★
(July to September 2024)

Clinical Assistant Professor



Aw Kang Lie Darius
Consultant, Surgery,
SGH



Chen Hui Lionel Raphael
Consultant, Colorectal Surgery,
SGH & NCCS



Chua Wei-quan Darren
Consultant, HPB/Transplant
Surgery, SGH & NCCS



Du Jingzeng
Consultant, Urology,
SGH & NCCS



Koo Chee Hoe
Consultant, Colorectal Surgery,
SGH & NCCS



Loh Wei-Liang
Consultant, HPB/Transplant
Surgery, SGH & NCCS



Benjamin Poh Ruimin
Consultant, General Surgery,
SGH



See Huimin Amanda
Consultant, Surgery,
CGH



Sin I-Lin Eliza
Consultant, General Surgery,
SGH & NCCS



Tan Si Ying
Consultant, Breast Surgery,
SGH & NCCS



Tan Yu Guang
Associate Consultant,
Urology,
SGH

Clinical Instructor



Cai Mingzhe
Associate Consultant,
Sarcoma, Peritoneal and Rare
Tumours (SPRINT), SGH



Tay Kaijun
Associate Consultant,
Otolaryngology –
Head & Neck Surgery, SGH

Education Associate II



Lee Hui Bing
Senior Dietitian
Dietetics, SKH