

## A new children's specialist clinic opens at Ng Teng Fong General Hospital

*A collaboration with the National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC), the new **NUWoC Children's Clinic @ NTFGH** aims to meet increasing healthcare demand of infants, children and adolescents*

*Saturday, 18 March 2023* – With over one million residents living in the western region of Singapore, newer estates like Bukit Batok having at least 5.0% of residents aged below 5 years old, and the population set to increase to another 42,000 households at the upcoming Tengah new town development, demand for paediatric health services in the West will increase. A collaboration with the National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC)<sup>1</sup>, the “NUWoC Children's Clinic @ NTFGH” provides both private and subsidised specialist outpatient medical care for infants, children and adolescents up to 16 years of age. The new paediatric specialist clinic is set to meet the growing demand owing to its current proximity to the heartlands and accessibility in light of the upcoming Jurong East integrated transport hub. NUWoC Children's Clinic @ NTFGH increases accessibility to specialised paediatric care by bringing paediatric outpatient services closer to the community in the West. This new clinic at NTFGH was opened last month on 20 February 2023 and has already seen more than 200 patients to date.

2 The new clinic provides a full range of general paediatric medical services for infants, children and adolescents up to the age of 16 years old, including treatment for acute childhood illnesses, adolescent health screening and holistic preventive care. Occupying a floor area of 233 square metres, the clinic houses consultation and treatment rooms and diagnostic facilities tailored for infants and children.

3 Its clinic lead, Dr Andrew Sng Anjian said, “One of the clinic's thrusts is childhood growth and development, which is a fundamental aspect of paediatrics. Fussy eating and childhood obesity are prevalent. The clinic's growth and nutrition service meets the growing need to treat picky eating and obesity.” Childhood obesity is a growing concern in Singapore as the prevalence of overweight children in mainstream schools has increased from 11% in 2013 to 13% in 2017. A local survey conducted among children aged 1 to 10 in 2012 by the Department of Paediatrics, KTP-NUCMI and Abbott Nutrition found that almost one in two parents consider their children to be fussy eaters. The other conditions seen at the clinic are acute childhood illnesses (e.g. bronchiolitis, urinary tract infection, hand, foot and mouth disease, gastroenteritis), adolescent health screening, asthma and allergic rhinitis, common

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<sup>1</sup> NUWoC is a specialist centre under the National University Health System (NUHS), which includes the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology and the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children's Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI) at the National University Hospital (NUH).

childhood conditions (e.g. common cold and constipation), holistic well-baby and well-child care (e.g. childhood vaccinations, growth, feeding difficulties and developmental assessment), skin allergies and eczema, and a broadened scope of sub-specialty services such as endocrinology, allergy and gastroenterology.

4 As part of the integrated paediatric network under NUWoC, the new paediatric clinic will see walk-ins and patients referred by the NTFGH Emergency Department (ED) in the day, polyclinics, General Practitioners (GP), KTP-NUCMI, and the NUH Children's Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang. It offers investigations such as specialised laboratory and radiology tests. Patients also have access to a suite of allied health services across NTFGH and NUH including dietetics, speech therapy and psychology. Patients who require more complex or inpatient treatment have direct access to NUH. A common patient records system facilitates the seamless flow and care across the members of NUHS under its One Care Plan, namely, NTFGH, NUH and National University Polyclinics (NUP). NTFGH paediatricians can promptly review the records of a patient seen at the ED. Patients who are referred from the ED, polyclinic or through a CHAS-accredited GP will continue to receive subsidised care. Patients who require advanced care or inpatient treatment can benefit from direct access to NUH.

5 Professor Lee Yung Seng, Group Chief, Paediatrics, National University Health System, and Head, Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children's Medical Institute, National University Hospital said, "As a regional health system, we are committed to supporting families and the health of their children in the western region of Singapore. The new clinic at NTFGH will offer comprehensive and coordinated specialist services for children and adolescents, who will be cared for by a multidisciplinary team including allied health professionals, in partnership with parents and caregivers." Professor Lee is also the Co-Director of NUWoC, who oversees paediatrics services.

6 Mdm Rahayu Mahzam, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health & Ministry of Law, and Grassroots Advisor to Jurong GRC, officially opened the clinic at JurongHealth Campus' "Health on Track" event this morning. The event featured activity booths centred around staying well at home and in the community, with a focus on preventive health for the family through lifestyle modifications to stay well and prevent the onset of chronic conditions, as well as self-management and safe practices to prevent avoidable trips to the hospital. There were also tips and talks on how to manage home emergencies for adult and children, how to set up a home pharmacy, preparing healthy meals for the family, fall-proofing homes and safe ambulation for the elderly to prevent falls when on the move, as well as anticipating and planning for children's health and well-being from birth to adolescence. Out of Covid-19, the hospital's annual flagship community health programme, has expanded its reach into the community by having the health fair take place across three separate days on 11 March, 18 March and 25 March, at its fourth year.

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