

## IN FOCUS

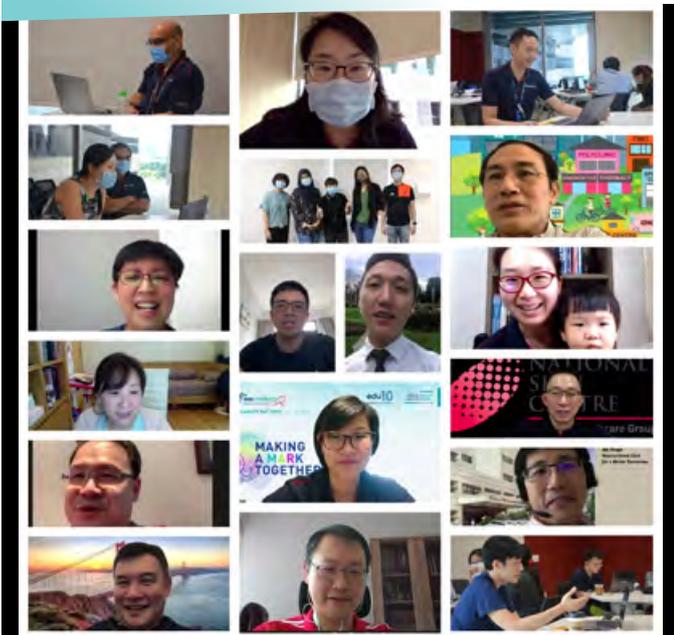


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INSPIRING Professionals  
IMAGINING Tomorrow  
ReINVENTING Healthcare  
NHG EDUCATION

# NHG Education Welcomes New Deputy Group CEO (Education & Research)



Dr Benjamin Seet (left) took over the role of NHG Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer (Education and Research) from Prof Lim Tock Han in July 2020

National Healthcare Group (NHG) Education is pleased to welcome Dr Benjamin Seet as the new Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer (Education & Research), NHG. Dr Seet assumed the position on 1 July 2020, succeeding Professor Lim Tock Han.

An ophthalmologist by training, Dr Seet will helm the development of health professions education and research in NHG.

Dr Seet joined NHG in January 2020 as NHG Group Chief Research Officer, where he helped elevate research excellence to impact clinical and population health outcomes, strengthened research and development collaborations between NHG institutions with Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine), and led NHG's efforts in overseeing medical support for migrant worker dormitories in the north of Singapore as part of the nation's ongoing fight against COVID-19.

"I like to express my appreciation to Prof Lim for his leadership to bring health professions education to where it is today," said Dr Seet.

"How health professions education is delivered will continue to evolve. We will see greater emphasis on self and continuous learning, with digital media becoming the dominant form of instruction. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our earlier conceptions of what the office, classroom or meeting room should look like, and brought all of us, willingly or otherwise, into a new virtual way of working, and learning."

"I am grateful to Prof Lim for setting a firm foundation, as well as for putting together a dynamic team here at NHG Education," said Dr Seet.

"Together with our partnership with LKCMedicine and our institutions, we have the right ingredients to address these rising demands as part of our developing academic health system."

"Ben comes with decades of experience in top level management, and a wide international network in research. He will chart new courses for health professions education and research, and bring both to greater heights. I would like to urge all at NHG Education and Research to support Ben and GCEO to blaze a trail, to 'add years of healthy lives,'" said Prof Lim.

## ► Thank you Prof Lim



Prof Lim giving his opening address at the 2019 NHG Teachers' Day celebrations

A senior consultant in ophthalmology, and also the founding Designated Institutional Official (NHG Residency) and Cluster Education Director (NHG), Prof Lim has had a key hand in laying the foundations for NHG Education, and was also closely involved in the formative years of LKCMedicine.

Under his leadership, Prof Lim developed manpower policies and career tracks for Clinical Educators and Clinician Scientists, played an instrumental role in the partnership with LKCMedicine, NTU and A\*STAR in setting up collaborative research institutes, centres and programmes; and a strong proponent of NHG's annual Singapore Health and Biomedical Congress (SHBC).



Prof Lim (centre, foreground) was presented with a photo collage of his time as Deputy GCEO (Education and Research) by NHG Education's senior management



Prof Lim (right) receiving the National Medical Excellence Award from Health Minister Gan Kim Yong at the 2012 NMEA award ceremony

Prof Lim was accorded many awards for his achievements and contributions in driving health professions education and research during his helm. Some of these awards include: National Medical Excellence Award (NMEA) in the category of 'National Outstanding Clinician Educator' in 2012; 'NHG Distinguished Achievement Award' in 2019; and 'The Public Administration Medal (Silver)' at the 2019 National Day Awards.

While he has since relinquished his role and returned to his clinical portfolio at the NHG Eye Institute in Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Prof Lim shared that his "true north has not changed, although the means will defer".

"Education is about our patients and our learners. The proudest moment for me was when the first batch of residents graduated, when the first batch of LKCMedicine students became house officers, and when the first clinician-scientist was conferred PhD," said Prof Lim.

< Click on the image or the link below to view our tribute video to Prof Lim Tock Han



<https://youtu.be/CUkQ68YcIHQ>

# Pharmacy Residency: An Invaluable Experience

It has been over two years since Ms Amy Leo, Senior Pharmacist from Institute of Mental Health (IMH) became the first ever graduate of the National Pharmacy Residency Programme in Psychiatry. We caught up with her to learn more about her residency experience, and how it changed her practice.

## Hi Ms Leo, can you share with us a little about how your journey has been since graduating from residency?

After completing residency, I went on to obtain my Master of Science in Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Practice and have also successfully completed the National Collaborative Prescribing Programme (NCP) in 2019. Since then, I've also started running the pharmacist-managed clozapine clinic.

## What attracted you to embark on the residency route?

Psychiatric pharmacy is a rapidly evolving field and I find it to be a humbling experience to provide services to psychiatric patients, who are often stigmatised.

I developed a keen interest in mental health after working in the field of psychiatry at IMH for a few years, and I wanted to advance my practice in that area. Residency training provided me with the learning experience and tools to do so.

At the systems level, I believe that advancing specialist pharmacists' training and practice can help us shoulder the growing caseload for stable chronic disease management in psychiatry, and hence increasing our doctors' capacity to take care of more acutely or critically ill patients.



From right: Ms Amy Leo with her preceptors Mr Ng Boon Tat and Ms Emily Liew

## Has the residency better prepared you to be a specialist pharmacist?

Most definitely! Residency training provided me with the systematic learning experience that I would otherwise not have acquired from the normal work duties of pharmacists.

The depth and breadth of the experience, knowledge and skills that I've acquired through residency training gave me a solid foundation to critically appraise and optimise the medication therapy of complex cases, to serve patients via collaborative prescribing. And it also better prepared me for the NCPP.

Aside from clinical skills, I also learnt how to conduct patient assessments, and received in-depth coaching for my teaching skills and research work.

However, one of the most valuable lessons residency taught me was to be patient and compassionate towards my patients. It made me realise that sometimes our patients require not just medication(s), but someone who can be a listening ear and offer help in other ways. With a better understanding of their concerns, I can care for them in a more holistic manner.

## How has your role as a pharmacist changed?

In addition to inpatient pharmacist duties, I have started my collaborative prescribing services at the Clozapine Clinic, where the psychiatrist and I co-manage patients who are suffering from treatment-resistant schizophrenia and require long-term clozapine therapy.

I am now certified to prescribe medicine and order tests for patients without needing the psychiatrists to sign off. What this means is that upon receiving a referral, I am able to order medication(s), request for mandatory haematological tests and periodic metabolic labs with electrocardiogram, and furnish the documentation and instructions for the next appointment. My partnering psychiatrist in the adjoining room will be consulted immediately if the patient that I am seeing becomes unwell or if I have any issues or concerns to discuss.

Since being exposed to providing care in both inpatient and outpatient settings, my perspective at the range of pharmacist services that can be provided using team-based approach for patients has widened. I have since established a more nuanced, sound clinical judgement and confidence in assessing and managing patients.

I am very happy that I can now serve my patients better, and be more involved in their care and treatment.

**Ms Amy Leo is an inpatient pharmacist at the Institute of Mental Health. She completed the MOH National Pharmacy Residency Programme Year Two (R2) in Psychiatry in 2017, as well as her Master of Science in Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Practice, and the National Collaborative Prescribing Programme in 2019. Her main interests also include practice-based research and clinical teaching in psychiatric pharmacy.**

# Special Events: Creating Learning Opportunities, Building Networks, Engaging People

Do you know that National Healthcare Group (NHG) has its own events and conference management capabilities? And NHG's annual Singapore Health and Biomedical Congress (SHBC) is run by a team of seven members from NHG Education? We spoke to Ms Eileen Hor, Assistant Director (NHG Education), who heads this team (known as Special Events), about the team's journey, and their role in NHG.



The 2012 SHBC team.

**Hi Eileen, it is quite unique that as a healthcare cluster, we (NHG) have our own events and conference management capabilities, can you share how this team came to be?**

Wow, where do I start? (laughs) The 'team' started off with me being recruited by NHG Research & Development Office (RDO) in 2009 to manage NHG's Annual Scientific Congress (ASC), which was later renamed as SHBC (Singapore Health and Biomedical Congress) in 2010.

Back then, we organised the annual congress by engaging an external professional conference organiser (PCO) to manage the logistics, setup, and execution of the event. The RDO team managing the annual congress was very small (three members), and they did not have the relevant experience. This made the liaison between the Organising Committee and PCO challenging, and hence I was hired to be the 'conduit' (laughs).

At that point in time, the Special Events team was still not conceived. It was much later around 2011 and 2012, when A/Prof Tham Kum Ying was appointed chairperson for SHBC and she prompted to review the PCO model due to the amount of human resource involved to support the event.

Aware that I've been managing ASC for a few years, A/Prof Tham approached me and asked if I'm keen to take on the Secretariat role and run SHBC internally, I said 'sure, why not?'. And that was how it all started (laughs).

**Was it very challenging when you took on SHBC by yourself?**

Oh yes, it was! We had to do everything ourselves – from coordinating the stage setup to event tear-down. And what made it even more challenging was because we (including A/Prof Tham) took a radical approach to streamline and reorganise the whole structure, such as changing from a 30-person Organising Committee and 30-person Scientific Programme Committee, to two Organising Chairmen and two Scientific Competition Chairmen; and engaging tertiary students to handle on-site logistics, instead of staff volunteers.

We stumbled quite a bit from that first experience, but we learnt from our initial mistakes.

As SHBC continues to evolve year after year, introducing new initiatives such as the annual rotation of the Organising and Scientific Competition Committee Chairmen, novel elements and changing themes, I am very proud to say that the team persevered, and thrived well under pressure.

**So how did Special Events come under NHG Education?**

In the same year (2012) A/Prof Tham was chairing SHBC, Professor Lim Tock Han was also appointed Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer (Education & Research), NHG. Prof Lim thought there would be better alignment for SHBC to come under the purview of NHG Education, as the strategic goals of NHG Education and what NHG like to achieve at SHBC are similar, i.e. to provide healthcare professionals with a platform to learn, network and share the best and latest healthcare practices. And that was how Special Events came under NHG Education.

**Can you share with us how Special Events has evolved since then?**

I think initially, our role was to fill a 'gap' i.e. to liaise, coordinate, and execute the event. However, as SHBC re-positioned and re-aligned to support NHG's vision and mission, we have evolved beyond being an event management team.



From left: Ms Eileen Hor with Dr Yeo See Cheng, SHBC 2017 Scientific competition Chairman



The special events team and the colleagues from the NHG Education office at the 2019 NHG Teachers' Day celebrations



Healthcare Humanity Awards 2018. One of the many events and conferences that the Special Events team provides secretariat support

We now play a collaborative role with stakeholders and institutions to create opportunities and platforms for learning and development that would benefit NHG's entire healthcare workforce.

We have since become an events, conference and team engagement capability hub where partner institutions can approach us for consultative advice and expertise, when they plan their own activities, or even when they are deciding to engage an external PCO.

**Special Events Team is synonymous with SHBC, but what are some of the other events your team offers consultative expertise to?**

Many people think that we only run SHBC! (laughs) Yes, that's our core event, but we are actually involved in other cross cluster events, conferences and team engagement activities such as the Singapore Mental Health Conference (with Institute of Mental Health), Healthcare Executives Asia Leadership (with Tan Tock Seng Hospital), Healthcare Humanity Awards (with NHG HQ), NHG Residency Career Day and NHG Teachers' Day, to name a few.

**This year has been a very unique year for everyone, with SHBC cancelled due to COVID-19. How has this pandemic affect your team and your future events?**

The current pandemic has shown that we no longer can run any event in the same way. While events and conferences are predominantly conducted virtually at this point in this 'new normal', it will not be the only way moving forward.

That is why as a team, we are learning new skills, and looking for new and innovative approaches to conduct events and activities, so that we can remain relevant and continue to serve our cluster well.

# NHG Residency: A Remotely Far Reaching e-Career Day

While the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about social and physical (international, for some) distancing measures, it did not stop National Healthcare Group (NHG) Residency from organising its first e-Career Day, which took place from 24 to 26 July 2020.

This year's virtual edition of the career day attracted more than 400 local and overseas medical students, Post-graduate year 1s (PGY1s) and medical officers, who tuned in to career and residency programme talks, and participated in live chat sessions with some 800 residents, faculty members and institution leaders across NHG.

## Wider Reach and Flexibility

The online format was a boon for international medical students such as Ms Sarah Tan, who tuned in from Tasmania, Australia.

"Despite being held online, I felt that the e-career day served its intended purpose of providing students the platform to interact with faculty and have their questions answered," shared Ms Tan, who is also president of the Singapore Medical Society of Australia and New Zealand.

For Ms Gan Ming Ying, a year-5 medical student at the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, it was the convenience and ease of attending an e-career day that she appreciated.

"I enjoyed the online Career Day because it gave me greater flexibility to work around my schedule and tune in to the Career Day," she said.

NHG Residency Designated Institutional Official, Dr Faith Chia, who spearheaded the e-Career Day shared that it was "a rather exciting experience" to hold the career day on a virtual platform, yet "anxious about how it would go".

"I'm grateful that it was so well received!" she said. "The virtual sessions were quite lively, with many participants asking questions," she said. "It also demonstrated the creativity of our residents, who produced many outstanding [programme videos!](#)"

## The Human Touch

Dr Chia highlighted that the e-Career Day has certainly created opportunities to drive engagement and expanded NHG Residency's reach, allowing overseas medical students and doctors who were unable to return to Singapore due to travel restrictions or local junior doctors who were at work in institution across the country, to attend the talks and live chat sessions.

While an e-Career Day brought about many benefits, Dr Chia acknowledged that it was not without its drawbacks. "We couldn't actually see who the participants were and get a feel of who they were, since most had their web cameras turned off," she said.

"Career day in person feels like a [huge festival](#) with opportunities for the residents and faculty to socialise as well, (and) I missed that."

Ms Serene Goh, Institutional Coordinator, NHG Residency, shared the same sentiments, "It is best to be able to interact with the people in person, but I'm glad to say that we manage to get a good amount of engagement with the deliberate planning of our activities.



Residents and faculty from all NHG Residency programmes conducted programme talks and engagement sessions over the three-day event



Dr Faith Chia (right) and Dr Vishalkumar Shelat Programme Director, NHG PGY1 (TTSH)] during the opening address

## A New Way Forward?

"Given that this is the first year NHG is having an online e-Career Day, I thought it was extremely well-planned and organised," said Ms Gan. "The instructions to sign up for the event were clear, easy and straightforward."

"The sessions were well organised, with very helpful faculty members who answered the queries I had and provided more information on the residency programmes offered," echoed Ms Tan.

"Overall, I thought the NHG Residency e-Career Day was amazing and comparable to the face-to-face event, and I thoroughly enjoyed myself!"

On the future of NHG Residency Career Day, Dr Chia shared that "a blended format" may be adopted "so that people who can't make it physically (including NHG residents and doctors who are in different locations) can also attend the engagement sessions".

Follow the link to view the highlights from Day 1 & 2:



<https://www.instagram.com/p/CDEfpY5IAqE>

Follow the link to view the highlights from Day 3:



<https://www.instagram.com/p/CDI8U7WAsaP>

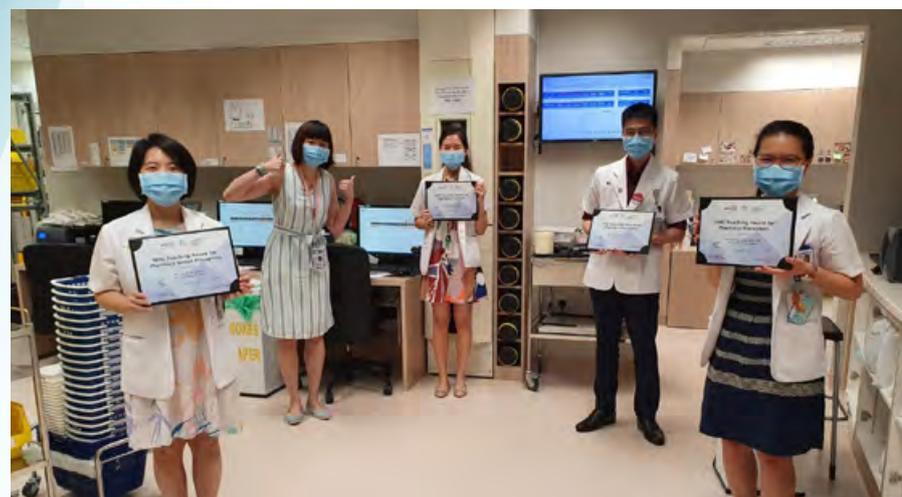
# Teachers' Day 2020: The Spirit of Education Remains Unchanged in the New Normal

253 National Healthcare Group (NHG) educators across various disciplines were lauded for their teaching and mentoring efforts, with 40 receiving Special Commendation Award at this year's Teachers' Day celebration, held on 2 September 2020.

The Special Commendation Award was introduced to recognise educators who went the extra mile to champion change, develop solutions to minimise disruptions to learning, and create innovative learning opportunities amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

While this year's celebrations were scaled down and held remotely at the Institute of Mental Health, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and Tan Tock Seng Hospital due to safe distancing measures, some 400 people tuned in to the main programme highlights live-streamed via Zoom for the first time.

Associate Professor Nicholas Chew, Group Chief Education Officer, NHG, and Chairman Medical Board, Woodlands Health Campus, gave his opening address and remarked that while this has been an "extremely unusual year... it has brought out the indomitable spirit of our healthcare family and most importantly, the resilience of our educators to ensure staff receive continual training and education amid the pandemic".



Satellite celebrations and awards presentations at respective NHG Institutions

He also took the opportunity to thank immediate past Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer (Education and Research), NHG, Professor Lim Tock Han for his vision, foresight and guidance in building NHG Education – which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year - over the past decade, and welcomed Dr Benjamin Seet, who took over the reins on 1 July 2020.

In closing, A/Prof Chew thanked all teachers and mentors for their "hard work, commitment, passion and dedication in inspiring the professionals for tomorrow's healthcare".

"I hope that your dedication and efforts will continue to inspire and encourage more healthcare professionals to join the education community to contribute in the teaching and nurturing of future generations of healthcare professionals, playing a crucial role in shaping the future of Singapore's healthcare workforce," he said.



A full list of this year's NHG Teaching Excellence Award recipients is available at the [NHG Education website](#).

Follow the link to view the 2020 NHG Teachers' day highlights:

 <https://www.instagram.com/p/CEnuNisJ574>