



Issue 177 October 2021

# PSS E-BULLETIN

*To maximise the contribution of Pharmacists to the healthcare of Singaporeans*



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## PHARMACISTS IN THE COVID -19 PANDEMIC: COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES EDITION

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# PSS HIGHLIGHTS

## SINGAPORE PHARMACY WEEK 2021

Written by Mr Roman Rosales, Co-Chairperson of Singapore Pharmacy Week 2021



The annual Pharmacy Week organized by PSS was held from 20 – 26 September 2021. With the theme 'Partnering You In Your Health Journey', it was the second time Pharmacy Week was held via an online platform due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and current safe management measures.



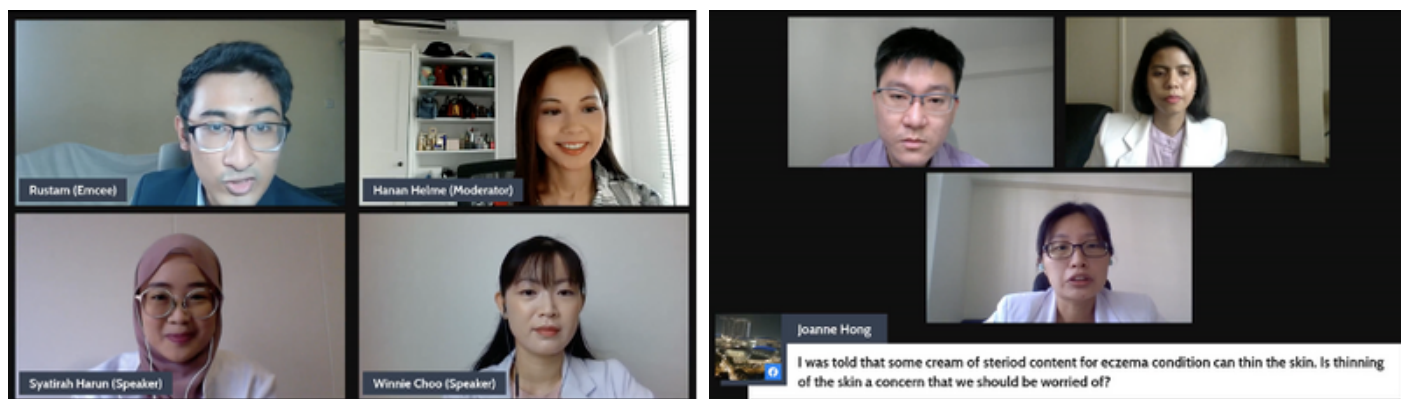
*Left: Feature poster showcasing a pharmacist in a data analyst role. Centre: Infographic on vitamins and minerals. Right: Feature video showcasing an inpatient pharmacist.*

Throughout the month of September, a series of health and pharmacy-related infographics and interactive activities were posted on PSS social media platforms leading up to Pharmacy Week. Feature posters and videos of pharmacists from various settings were also put up to showcase the many roles that pharmacists play and highlight their contributions. Furthermore, PSS also partnered with the People's Association to provide free, appointment-based consultations, exclusively to PAssion Card members, via Zoom or face-to-face (at participating community pharmacies) where participants can channel any medication or health-related questions to pharmacists.



*Ms Yong Pei Chean, President, 115th Council, and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Health & Ministry of Manpower*

The annual event culminated in a virtual health carnival on 25 September 2021, in conjunction with World Pharmacists Day. Dr Koh Poh Koon, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Health & Ministry of Manpower, graced the virtual event as Guest of Honour. In his opening address, Dr Koh highlighted the important contributions of pharmacists to our healthcare system and their active involvement in educating and empowering the public to improve their health.



*Screenshots from the health and medication-related talks.*

As part of the virtual carnival, there were seven health and medication-related talks, with topics ranging from common ailments across different age groups, management of diabetes, to health promotion, including vaccination. Pharmacists from various institutions provided expert advice and answered questions from viewers during the Facebook Live event. The viewers greatly appreciated the recommendations, the interaction with the speakers and having their queries answered in real time.

The organising team would like to thank everyone who supported and participated in this year's Pharmacy Week. The co-chairpersons, Roman Rosales and Isabelle Teo, would also like to thank the organising team, the sub-committee members, volunteers, speakers, moderators, sponsors, the PSS Council and all those who contributed in one way or another to the success of Singapore Pharmacy Week 2021.

Looking forward to next year's event!

# PHARMACY WEEK 2020 WINS GLOBAL AWARD

We are proud to announce that PSS won FIP's (International Pharmaceutical Federation) 2021 Health Promotion Campaign Award. This award was introduced to recognise health promotion campaigns that aim to provide information or education to individuals, groups and communities to empower them in adopting health behaviours and improve their health status.



Under COVID-19 restrictions, the 25th annual national Pharmacy Week was revamped to educate and empower the public to improve their health. The theme for **Pharmacy Week 2020** was **"Digitalizing Healthcare: Your health at your fingertips"**. Topics included: medication management made easy; accessibility to medicines, accessing digital health care, improving health literacy and the roles and expertise of pharmacists. Through the virtual carnival, livestream talks (over social media platforms and the Pharmacy Week webpage), educational videos (e.g. how to use self-care diagnostic devices) and virtual pharmacy tours (both community and hospital) were conducted. Interactive activities like quizzes were incorporated to create a fun learning experience for the participants.

Ms Yong Pei Chean, President of the 115th Council commented:

"We are honoured to receive this international award for this initiative, involving the entire pharmacy community in Singapore, which is a strong recognition of our perseverance towards contributing to public health and safety. The topics were relevant and provided the much needed guidance for the public to navigate the healthcare services, particularly pharmacy services, especially during the pandemic outbreak period where many healthcare changes were introduced."

PSS would like to congratulate the organizing committee, and thank all volunteers for their contribution to the society.

# FEATURED ON CNA LIFESTYLE

**cna**  
LIFESTYLE

ENTERTAINMENT

WOMEN

WELLNESS

LIVING

STYLE & BEAUTY

DINING

TRAVEL



WELLNESS

## Taking vitamins on an empty stomach? 8 do's and don'ts of health supplements

It's always best to meet your nutritional needs through your diet. But if you have certain conditions that require something extra, experts explain how to maximise these.



(Photo: iStock/stock\_colors)



Khoo Bee Khim

13 Oct 2021 07:13AM  
(Updated: 13 Oct 2021 09:53AM)



As Singaporeans look to safeguard their health during the pandemic, many turn to taking dietary supplements. CNA lifestyle looks to verify some information regarding the consumption of supplements in their article, "Taking vitamins on an empty stomach? 8 do's and don'ts of health supplements". This article was supported by pharmacists from PSS Community Chapter and PSS Media and Communications Committee (MCC).

Click [here](#) to read the full article.

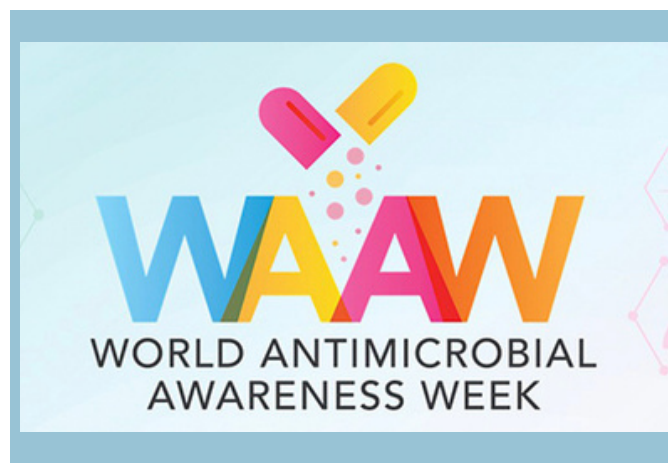
# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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1st - 29th November 2021

## The World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) Inter-Hospital Webinar Series (FREE)

The World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) Inter-Hospital Webinar Series 2021 will be taking place from 1st to 29th November. Hear from their panel of experts about preventing the further emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance!



- **Organizer:** National Centre for Infectious Diseases
- **Time:** 1-2pm on the 1st, 9th, 16th, 18th, 23rd, 25th, and 29th of November.
- **Who should attend:** This event is open to all healthcare professionals.

Click [here](#) for more details and to register!



# INDUSTRY INSIDER: A/PROF SIA CHONG HOCK

by PSS Industry Chapter

A veteran influencer, Adjunct Associate Professor (A/P) Sia Chong Hock, has been actively influencing both local and regional pharmaceutical scenes. With a career spanning more than 40 years, he rose up the organisation ladder to become the founding Director of the National Pharmaceutical Administration GMP Unit (now known as HSA Audit & Licensing Division), creating significant impact to both the Singapore pharmaceutical manufacturing landscape and to the regional regulatory arena.



The Editorial Team embarked on a ride back in time with A/P Sia, as he shared his experiences, values and work ethos that has facilitated his elevation up the ranks, his accomplishments, and contributions.

ASEAN Joint Sectorial Committee on GMP inspection - Jakarta 2019

## THE WORDS OF INFLUENCE

A/P Sia's first contact with the industry happened during his internship at Beecham Pharmaceuticals Pte Ltd in Jurong. Despite a keen interest in Pharmacology, the internship instilled in him an inclination towards the industry and the lack of openings in patient care became antecedents for him to join GPLS.



When GPLS closed, A/P Sia was tasked to set up a Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN) Compounding Laboratory in Alexandra Hospital (AH), due to his extensive manufacturing experience garnered from GPLS. Inevitably, the closure was a poignant moment for him. Yet, he quickly discovered his satisfaction with his work at AH, knowing the laboratory has benefitted the patients.

Reflecting on this, A/P Sia left a takeaway:

*"The end of a chapter is not the end of a book. Rather, it is the beginning of another new and more exciting chapter in your book of life."*

At AH, A/P Sia also interacted with pharmacists from the Drug Administration Division (DAD), who encouraged him to crossover and contribute to the emerging sector of pharmaceutical regulation. Believing that he was able to achieve more, A/P Sia ruminated and eventually joined DAD in 1990.

## CREATING AN INFLUENCE IN SINGAPORE AND ABROAD

As A/P Sia described:

*"Change is the only constant and there is a need for continuous learning, un-learning and re-learning",*

His transition into regulation was accompanied by a phase of self-directed learning. This phase ignited his flame of passion to bring Singapore to the World, the World to Singapore and Pharmacy to greater heights.

## CREATING AN INFLUENCE IN SINGAPORE AND ABROAD

### BRINGING SINGAPORE TO THE WORLD

A/P Sia's proudest venture was when Singapore acceded to the global Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme (PICS) in January 2000; the first country in Asia to do so. This facilitated the market access of pharmaceutical products and allowed inspectors, like A/P Sia, to collaborate with international counterparts.



### BRINGING THE WORLD TO SINGAPORE



A conference that brought professionals from different countries into Singapore, A/P Sia had participated in the International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineering (ISPE) Singapore Conference since 2001. One topic that A/P Sia often shared was on ASEAN's success story on harmonisation of pharmaceutical inspection.

A/P Sia's prodigious commitment to collaborate, adapt, innovate and advance the pharmaceutical regulatory practices in Singapore, ASEAN and beyond culminated in A/P Sia being named as "PSS Industry Pharmacist of the Year" in 2013, and to clinch the prestigious ISPE Singapore Lifetime Award in 2016.

## INFLUENCING YOU & ME

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE**

Appointed as Adjunct Associate Professor

PSS Industry Pharmacist of the Year, 2013

ISPE Singapore Lifetime Achievement Award, 2016

ISPE Roger Sherwood Article of the Year Award, 2017

A/P Sia shares with us his pillars of motivation and words of advice



With pharmacy students at NUS LT29, 2018

Juggling with multiple commitments, A/P Sia opined that some of these appointments were "tall orders and daunting tasks", especially those that he commenced at zero bases and with minimum resources. The tasks to set up Singapore's GMP Inspection Unit and to teach Pharmacy Law, and Compliance and Good Practices in Pharmacy at NUS Department of Pharmacy, were 2 examples.

Initially daunting, the avuncular A/P Sia soon found teaching aspiring pharmacists a tremendously enjoyable task, which was a welcoming break from the daily grind of inspection and regulation at HSA. Beyond the walls of the lecture halls, A/P Sia collaborates with faculty to co-supervise final year undergraduates in their final year projects, contributing articles to international journals to benefit the industry and regulators. A/P Sia described his undergraduate teaching assignment as a win-win partnership, where he also learns from these young, ebullient students. Talking about his leaps of faith when he accepted the tall orders, and his perspective on lifelong learning, he shared:

*"Too much of a comfort zone can be a trap. We must get used to feeling discomfort and vulnerable from time to time and have a hunger for knowledge. We have to embrace life-long learning!"*

## INFLUENCED BY HIS 3 PILLARS OF MOTIVATION

As indefatigable as A/P Sia appears, he has also encountered career fatigue in this Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) world. When asked about his approach to cope with career fatigue, and how he resiliently contributed to the pharmaceutical industry in this fast-paced world, A/P Sia identified his three pillars of motivation that supported his career:



### FAMILY

A/P Sia believes that work-life balance is crucial and family support is of utmost importance. He received **unstinting support from his spouse** – A/P Chan Lai Wah (NUS Department of Pharmacy) – as he navigated and repeatedly accepted challenges in his work-life journey.

### CREATING SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING

His belief in creating something from scratch, shaping and **seeing his initiative bear fruits** helped him stay motivated to contribute. This was clearly evinced in his involvement in driving the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) on GMP Inspection.

### HOBBIES

Outside work, he is an avid racket sports player, a self-taught guitarist, and an amateur horticulturist in his own garden. These hobbies **helped him to recharge**, allowing him to bounce back strongly from the moments of fatigue.

Scintillatingly, A/P Sia's belief in his ability to create something out of nothing was also seen in his long-term goals, where he hopes to compile all the regulatory articles, which he authored, also as part of his hobbies, into a book.

## THE MEANING OF AN INFLUENCER

Although A/P Sia started his journey into Pharmaceutical Regulations without much guidance and knowledge, he was fortunate to have met a few mentors along the way. A/P Sia had collaborated with Mr. Robert “Bob” Tribe – the then-Chairman of PICS and Chief GMP Auditor of Australia Therapeutic Goods Administration – when Singapore acceded to PICS. What initially started as an auditor-auditee relationship unexpectedly transited into a mentor-mentee partnership. This mentorship impressed A/P Sia deeply and had influenced his approach to acquiring technical and interpersonal skills.



ISPE Singapore Lifetime Achievement Award 2016

*“If there are people who are sincere in guiding us, it is a blessing. Bob was someone who was sincere and generous to guide me and to help Singapore. It is rare to come across someone like him.”*

Mr. Robert “Bob” Tribe

Using the experience gained from his octogenarian mentor, A/P Sia also shared three key ideas about mentorship, and the importance of having mentor(s) in our career:

- 1 **A MENTOR CAN HELP YOU AVOID PITFALLS ALONG THE WAY**
- 2 **A MENTOR CAN GUIDE YOU IN A STRATEGIC WAY TO SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE, AND TO LEARN THE ROPES FASTER.**
- 3 **IT IS WISE TO SEEK OUT MENTOR(S) WHO ARE SINCERE AND WHO ARE WILLING TO INVEST THEIR TIME IN YOU.**

# FACES OF PSS: MS TIFFANY YONG

by PSS Media & Communications Committee

We have always featured pharmacists in different practices. This time round, we wish to feature someone special. This person is not a pharmacist, but she has been an integral backbone for the PSS in supporting the pharmacist profession. She is indeed an unsung hero, who deserves recognition and appreciation. She wears many hats and is integral in bringing pharmacists from different institutions together.

*"My thoughts on the pharmacy profession are that it is a profession that holds great responsibility on the patients' medications and is very often under-represented."*



Tiffany's pet dog.

## 1) Tell us more about yourself. What are some of your hobbies and pastimes?

Hi everyone, I'm Tiffany, an admin & IT executive in the PSS Secretariat Team. My hobbies are travelling, watching YouTube/Netflix, and reading Chinese e-novels. Some of my current favourite pastime activities would be to groom my pet dog such as giving her a haircut or nail trim and social gaming to get to know more new friends or foster stronger bonds with existing friends. Pre-Covid, I used to visit my friends' houses often to hang out together or having a spontaneous night drive with friends for supper. It all ceased due to the capacity restrictions in place thus, my current favourite pastime activity now generally revolves around the technology world.

## 2) Why did you choose to be a part of the PSS?

I started as an admin officer at PSS six years back when I first graduated from Polytechnic, and it was my first full-time job. Upon graduating from Poly, I was uncertain of the direction of my career path and unsure if I wanted to continue my studies in university first or take a break and work. Therefore, I joined PSS for the opportunity to gain more diverse working experience while giving myself some time to slowly think through what I truly wanted to pursue. I chose to join PSS among other job opportunities as I loved the idea of working with a small team; a huge team seemed rather intimidating to me back then.

## 3) What are some of your thoughts about the pharmacy profession in Singapore?

Through these years in PSS, my thoughts on the pharmacy profession are that it is a profession that holds great responsibility on the patients' medications and is very often under-represented. If one would ask someone in the public that is not working in the healthcare industry for examples of "Healthcare Professions in Singapore", the more common identification would be doctors and nurses rather than pharmacists due to the limited knowledge or interactions the public have with pharmacists.



*Pictured together with Janet and Jessin from the PSS Secretariat team.*

#### **4) Share a typical day at work and how it has changed in this COVID-19 situation.**

Pre-Covid, a typical day at work starts from going into the office, working on my work desk, having small chats with colleagues, eating lunch with colleagues during lunchtime, running errands at the bank, post office or hospitals when required, and heading home or out to meet friends after work. During this Covid-19 pandemic, our whole work routine changed rather drastically due to all the restrictions that stopped all physical gathering at the workplace thus, ending all social contact with colleagues entirely. While it is sad that all interactions got interrupted, I'm thankful that all work processes managed to transit onto digital platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, Emails etc.

#### **5) Share with us your most memorable experience or moment thus far in your career here in the PSS.**

The most memorable experience in PSS would be when the venue for our 26th Singapore Pharmacy Congress in 2016 changed to Suntec Convention Hall. Even though it is the same event, it feels rather different perhaps due to the LCD screen that welcomed us with the event details upon alighting at the drop-off point, or it could be the change in venue floor plans that made it easier for us to look around different booths without any pillars blocking our view. Apart from the seemingly brand-new experience due to the location change, 26th SPC held in 2016 was particularly interesting as it was when Pokémon Go was new and trending. Thus, some of us even walked around the convention hall during tea breaks to catch Pokémon while chatting.

#### **6) Is there any piece of advice or shout-out that you would like to share to all pharmacists in Singapore?**

A big THANK YOU to all the pharmacists in Singapore for all your commendable contributions all these while and especially during this Covid-19 pandemic situation. Thank you for standing in the frontline to save lives and keep everyone safe. stay safe and healthy everyone!

On behalf of PSS, we wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to Tiffany for all the hard work she has put in to support the PSS and the pharmacy profession in Singapore. Keep up the good work!

# PROFESSIONAL UPDATES

## PHARMACISTS IN THE COVID -19 PANDEMIC: COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES EDITION

Contributed by PSS Hospital Chapter



Singapore Expo's Covid-19 care facility. Source: Surbana Jurong.

To meet rising demands for medical care while relieving the pressure on public hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-2020, the Singapore government converted several large-scale non-medical venues into Community Care Facilities (CCFs) to house COVID-19 patients who did not require acute medical care. Collectively, venues such as the Singapore Expo, Big Box shopping malls in Jurong and the Changi Exhibition Centre were able to house 17,000 stable patients. While the medical staff to patient ratio was reduced in these facilities, pharmacy support was imperative in enabling smooth supply and use of medications, as with any medical setting! Currently, some of these CCFs have dovetailed to other similar facilities to cope with the community surges and some facilities have also been converted to Community Treatment Facilities. However, workflows remain largely similar.

In this issue of Pharmacists in the COVID-19 Pandemic, we are honoured to interview five pharmacy staff, as they share their experiences in

the running of pharmacies in the CCFs, and how it was like counselling the COVID-19 patients there (more affectionately known as “residents”). The pharmacy colleagues interviewed are:

- **Chee Hov** (Pharmacy Technician) and **Isabelle** (Senior Pharmacist) from Woodlands Health Campus (WHC)
- **Chwee Huat** (Principal Pharmacist) from Alexandra Hospital (AH)
- **Rachelle** and **Stephanie** (Pharmacists) from Singapore General Hospital (SGH)

### What were your initial reactions towards having to help set up the CCF?

**Chee Hov (WHC):** Mixed feelings of nervousness and excitement. It was an honour to be part of the pioneer team running the CCF. It was both a meaningful and fulfilling experience to be part of the team fighting the pandemic!

**Isabelle (WHC):** Stressed! As I was unsure of the things that needed to be done and whether we could complete those tasks on time.

**Chwee Huat (AH):** Was very glad to have been offered the opportunity to contribute to the nation's fight against COVID-19! And I was not alone – in fact, many of my colleagues were also very supportive, helpful and passionate about supporting the setup of the CCF. As the amount of work requires additional support beyond the pharmacy team, I was worried initially. But this was soon

allayed by the many volunteers who stepped forward: from non-public health institution-based pharmacists to other folks with no pharmacy experience.

**Rachelle and Stephanie (SGH):** The team was initially anxious as there were a lot of uncertainties regarding the pandemic situation. The timeline was also very short to set up a facility of such scale and re-deploy existing staff from the hospital to run pharmacy operations at CCF. However, we were also excited as this was something completely new to many of us. It was also an opportunity to contribute by answering the nation's call to fight against the pandemic.



*Pharmacists from AH (Ming Liang, Chwee Huat and Ilya) who were involved in setting up of the Big Box CCF – described by Chwee Huat as his “fellow comrades” in the national fight against COVID-19*

### What were the key operational roles that pharmacy played in running of the CCF?

**Rachelle and Stephanie (SGH):** The key responsibility of the pharmacy at CCF was to ensure safe and timely supply of medications to its residents. The team was tasked to:

- Review and set up the drug list in GP Connect (GPC) at CCF to facilitate the prescribing of medications.

- Manage drug inventory in the pharmacy and clinics.
- Establish work processes to receive drugs from the hospital and supply drugs into the quarantine area, to minimise unnecessary staff exposure to the virus.
- Counsel residents on the use of their medications and any potential side effects through video counselling.
- Provide drug information services to doctors and nurses.

**Chwee Huat (AH):** GPC was the main electronic medical record system used in the management and care of the residents at the CCF. Hence it was important that the GPC was set up as a simple and easy solution for doctors and nurses to learn and use in a short span of time. This is especially important as the doctors and nurses who had volunteered were from very different backgrounds, with varying understanding of medication ordering systems. As the medical post sees scores of residents in a short span of time, the focus was on efficiency. Pharmacists played key roles in coming up with the proposed formulary of the CCF, and liaised with doctors on the standard order instructions and bundled packs available for efficient prescribing, to cut down the number of data entries and promote user-friendliness. Once these were harmonised, pharmacy teams quickly got into action to start the pre-packaging and pre-labelling of drugs in standard pack sizes or bundles.

The result was that doctors, nurses, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians were able to dispense and counsel the CCF residents on the use of the medications efficiently as everything had been prepared.

**Isabelle (WHC):** Pharmacy was in charge of all things related to medications. Because of this, we were involved in a myriad of tasks: from the procurement of medications directly from vendors, coming up with workflows for on-site and off-site medication ordering and supply, to working with Integrated Health Information Systems to ensure that the clinic system was able to support our needs (for doctors to order safely and for us to use as a pharmacy and inventory management system), to the translation of medication-related information.

**Chee Hov (WHC):** My main responsibility was to ensure sufficient medication stocks both in the pharmacy store and across the CCF halls. I also ensured that the storage temperature was optimal. In addition, I was also involved in medication dispensing for residents who were uncontactable through the phone.



WHC pharmacist Isabelle with her non-pharmacy colleague at the CCF – evidence of bonds forged among newfound friends as they worked together for a common purpose of supporting the nation's fight against COVID-19

### Were there any challenges faced when communicating with other healthcare providers?

**Chwee Huat (AH):** I think there weren't any challenges in communication with the other healthcare providers. On the contrary, the teamwork was great! The entire journey from the setup to the running of the CCF had blurred the lines between the stakeholders, where we thought

more of how to make things work for each other and achieve the best possible care for our residents at the CCF.

**Isabelle (WHC):** As all of us were mostly working with each other for the first time, it took a while for us to adapt to each other's working style. But once we warmed up to each other, it was easy to work as a team as we all had a common goal, which was to ensure that the patients receive the best care we can provide, using the resources that were available.

**Rachelle and Stephanie (SGH):** There were not many challenges faced when communicating with other healthcare providers at CCF as everyone was there for a common goal, i.e. to provide the best care for the residents at the facility. Some of the challenges encountered were during the initial period where everyone was getting used to the new work processes. However, this was quickly resolved with frequent huddles and discussions with the relevant parties.

**Chee Hov (WHC):** Not really. We were able to communicate effectively!



WHC Pharmacy Technician Chee Hov all smiles and ready to start the day by putting on his N95 at the donning station

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**How is the patient population different from your practice setting and were there any challenges faced when caring for this group of patients?**

**Isabelle (WHC):** While the bulk of them had no past medical history, there was a group of residents who had undiagnosed hypertension or uncontrolled diabetes. Hence the doctors had to start them on oral anti-hypertensives or adjust their diabetic medications while they stayed at the CCF. There was another group of residents with existing chronic conditions who used to get their medications from their home countries, but because of COVID-19, they were unable to obtain top-ups due to flight disruptions. The challenge was to ensure the continuation of care for these patients after they were discharged from CCF.

**Chee Hov (WHC):** Residents in CCF were mostly construction workers from overseas. I don't think language was a barrier here, because they were able to understand simple English and we could supplement with gestures which we usually do in hospitals too. When needed, there were also colleagues to help with translation. Regular reassurance was given to let the residents know that they are going to be okay as they were very concerned with being hosts of COVID-19 virus. They miss their home too.



*Migrant worker getting tested for COVID-19. Source: Reuters.*

**Chwee Huat (AH):** Unlike in the hospital setting, the majority of the folks were not able to speak or read English fluently. To help them understand what the medications are for and how to take them, the pharmacy teams prepared multilingual labels for all medications. The labels consist of pictograms in languages spoken/read by the residents, ranging from Bengali, Hindi, Chinese, Thai, to Vietnamese and so on.

**Rachelle and Stephanie (SGH):** The patient population at CCF was completely different from the usual patients we encounter in the hospital. They were mainly young and healthy migrant workers, where most of them do not have any comorbidities. As such, the clinical aspect of caring for them was generally more straightforward.



*Use of Temi robots to reduce exposure of healthcare staff to patients. Source: Singapore General Hospital*

Nevertheless, there were still challenges in providing care to them. This included the language barrier, cultural differences as well as emotional support needed. It was even more challenging to overcome all these when we were dispensing to them in full personal protective equipment (PPE) with limited facial expression. Fortunately, we managed to implement video counselling through Zoom and Temi robots, which enabled us to communicate with the patients without full PPE, from outside the quarantine area. We were able to communicate more effectively, with hand

gestures and the use of pictograms to show the indications of the medications. In addition, video counselling enabled us to teach the residents administration techniques of devices such as inhalers and nasal drops, which would have been difficult to do so inside the quarantine area. We have also noticed that these patients required more reassurance and emotional support during medication counselling as they may be restless and anxious due to the quarantine period and pandemic situation in their home countries, as well as the different health practices.



*The enthusiasm and cheer of pharmacy staff could not be hidden behind the layers of personal protective equipment that had to be donned for hours.*

### Could you share with us a memorable encounter from your experience working in the CCF?

**Chee Hov (WHC):** The most memorable part was that all of us from different backgrounds (different ages, different institutions etc.) were able to come together with one common mission and vision: to overcome this pandemic. Everyone was helping and supporting each other!

**Rachelle and Stephanie (SGH):** The most memorable experience which we've encountered at the CCF would be the camaraderie amongst the other healthcare professionals and support staff. As we typically work alone in the pharmacy, the

others would frequently offer to get food for us or check in to make sure we were doing fine.

Although it was a period of uncertainties, it was heartening to see everyone from various backgrounds coming together to run the facility, working together to provide care to the residents. The residents were also appreciative of our efforts, despite our interactions being limited to broken English and hand gestures.



*Healthcare workers working together. Source: Straits Times.*

**Isabelle (WHC):** Expo CCF was the first big project that WHC worked together as a team on the same site, as we are all currently nested in different hospitals.

**Chwee Huat (AH):** The entire journey of setting up the CCF pharmacy and establishing the work processes with volunteers, doctors and nurses was very memorable indeed. I was very fortunate to have the help from many people: AH pharmacy folks who stepped up voluntarily to help in the training and setting up of the CCF pharmacy as well as repackaging of medications; fellow friends from WHC (Pei Chean and Isabelle) and SGH (Soo Boon and Jielin) who were so willing to share their experience in setting up the CCF pharmacy as well as the multilingual pictogram labels; volunteers who staffed the CCF pharmacy and bore the brunt of it all, and last but not least the fellow AH

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comrades who sacrificed their blood, sweat and tears to setup the CCF in a very short time span.

It was really heartening to see so many people from different clusters, backgrounds and teams working together in the fight against COVID-19.

A heartfelt “Thank You” to all of them!

\*Disclaimer: All photos were taken in compliance with COVID-19 safe distancing measures at that point in time.

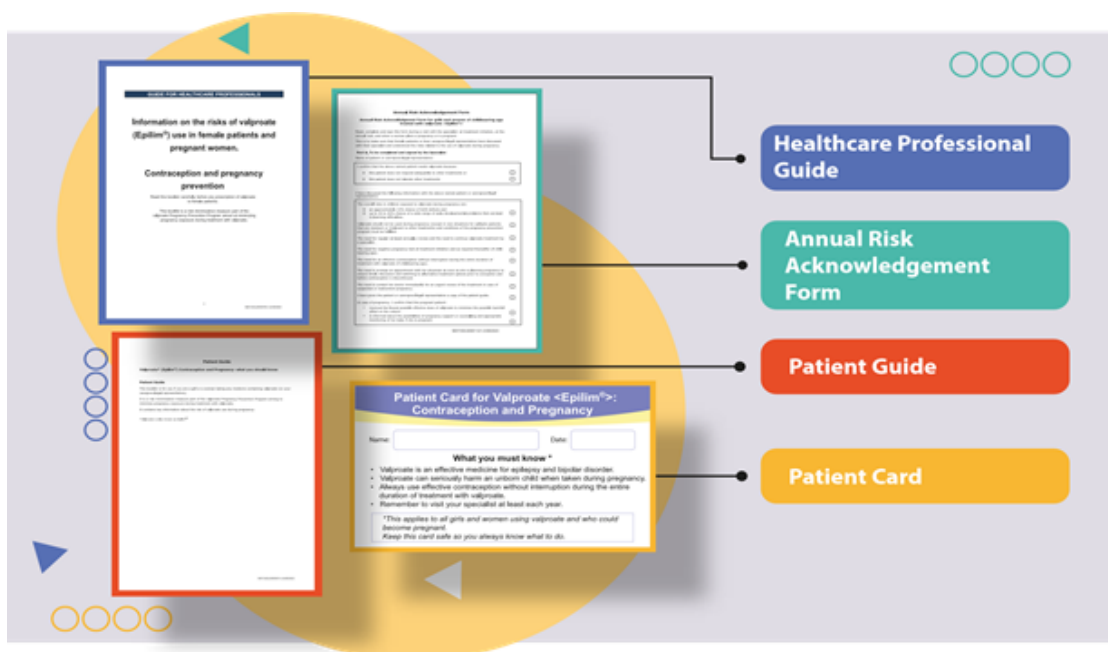
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# VALPROATE (EPILIM®) EDUCATION MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND PATIENTS

Brought to you by **SANOFI** 

Dear Healthcare Professional,

This is a gentle reminder from Sanofi to inform you of the valproate educational materials which have been made available for you and your patients, to provide information and recommendations on the use of valproate in women of childbearing potential. These include the **Healthcare Professional Guide**, **Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form**, **Patient Guide**, and **Patient Card** which can be downloaded here: <https://mysg.nexusbysanofi.com/resources-sg>.



These educational materials are also available in print upon request from:  
**sanofi-aventis (Singapore) Pte Ltd.**

Email contact: [Med.SAMS@sanofi.com](mailto:Med.SAMS@sanofi.com)

Please indicate the materials and number of copies required, along with:

- Recipient's title and full name:
- Recipient's designation & institution:
- Recipient's contact number:
- Recipient's full address:

To learn more about the use of valproate in women of childbearing potential, please visit the online CPD module at this link: <https://cpdonline.asia/>. 1 CPE point will be provided upon completion.



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# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Fresenius Kabi (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Regulatory Affairs Associate Manager



Fresenius Kabi is a global healthcare company that specializes in lifesaving medicines and technologies for infusion, transfusion and clinical nutrition. We are looking for a Regulatory Affairs Associate Manager to strategize and manage regulatory affairs for new product registration and product lifecycle management of all applicable product portfolios. He/She will assist as deputy Complaint Officer & deputy Batch Release Responsible Person to ensure compliance with Fresenius Kabi standards, SOPs and external regulations.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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National Cancer Centre Singapore

Locum Pharmacists



We are looking for locum pharmacists to provide dispensing and drug counselling services to our cancer patients at Specialist Outpatient Pharmacy

Click [here](#) for more information.

An initiative under the PSS Media & Communications Committee  
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