



Honouring A Trailblazing Nursing Leader

A visionary yet compassionate leader, Ms Ng Gaik Nai, Chief Nurse, KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) has dedicated more than 30 years to transformations leading to an empowered nursing workforce; pursuing critical developments in nursing practice and education, and championing multidisciplinary collaborations for enhanced patient health and outcomes. For her significant contributions to Singapore, Ms Ng has been awarded the 2018 President's Award for Nurses – the highest accolade for the nursing profession in Singapore.

Currently holding dual appointments as Chief Nurse, KKH and Deputy Group Chief Nurse, SingHealth, Ms Ng was amongst six recipients of the President's Award for Nurses conferred by President Halimah Yacob at the Istana in July 2018. This national accolade has been awarded to just 67 recipients since its establishment in 2000.

A strong advocate of life-long progress and education, over the course of her career, Ms Ng has led the development of numerous critical changes in nursing practices, policies and procedures to drive the delivery of safe, efficient and integrated care for patients and their families. She also serves on the National Quality Council national advisory panel for the Ministry of Health to facilitate cross-institutional sharing and improvement in healthcare delivery.

"Nurses need to use our heads, hearts and hands to constantly care for the sick, to lead in clinical nursing practices, and to work as a multidisciplinary team to drive transformational

change for better health outcomes for our patients," shares Ms Ng. "Our patients come to us with full trust and we must provide care that is as good as the care that we or our loved ones would like to receive."

EMPOWERING NURSES TO LEAD

In 2011, then a Deputy Director of Nursing overseeing the paediatric wards at KKH, Ms Ng led a team of nursing leaders to develop and implement Singapore's first Paediatric Resident Nurse Programme. This pioneering work upskills Resident Nurses to perform comprehensive patient assessment, plan medical treatment and initiate investigations, and triage patients for appropriate treatment. Resident Nurse programmes in obstetrics and gynaecology, and neonatology soon followed.

The Resident Nurse Programme has since laid the foundations for the development of several education initiatives, such as the Advanced Clinical Education (ACE) Clinical

Instructors Programme and ACE Immersion Programme, which enable nurses with an Advanced Diploma in Nursing to enrol in a specialisation programme to prepare them to practice to the full extent of their training.

Ms Ng also mooted the establishment of a dedicated Obstetrics Monitoring Unit in 2017, to enable closer monitoring for pregnant patients with high-risk and complex pregnancy conditions, or those scheduled to undergo induction of labour.

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE CARE

As Chair of the Singapore Nurses Association Nursing Informatics Chapter, Ms Ng leads efforts to build the capacity and capability of IT competency among nurses, and support the development of nursing informatics in Singapore.

In 2009, Ms Ng played a pivotal role in KKH's efforts to harness information



Ms Ng Gaik Nai, Chief Nurse, KKH and President Halimah Yacob (centre), with Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong (far left), Ms Tan Soh Chin, Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health (far right), and fellow recipients of the 2018 President's Award for Nurses.

technology (IT) to enhance patient care and healthcare efficiency, serving as the nursing lead in the DigiMed workgroup. The team successfully implemented an electronic medical records system in KKH and across SingHealth, as well as automated the medication dispensing process to enhance medication safety in KKH.

Anticipating the benefits of integrating IT into healthcare, Ms Ng established the Nursing Informatics Unit at KKH in the same year to pursue ongoing enhancements to care processes through IT, and to provide training and support to nurses.

BRINGING CARE INTO THE COMMUNITY

Recognising the need of vulnerable patients for specialised care beyond an acute hospital, Ms Ng worked closely with a multidisciplinary team of KKH nurses, clinicians and medical social workers to create an inpatient paediatric facility at St. Andrew's Community Hospital (SACH) in 2015. Today, with training and support from KKH, the facility enables children requiring specialised paediatric care and who are technologically dependent, to receive continual and specialised care in a community hospital setting.

To equip caregivers with the essential knowledge and skills to care for an infant safely, Ms Ng and her nursing leaders

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collaborated with the Prime Minister's Office, National Population and Talent Division, and SEED Institute to develop a Basic Infant Care Training for Caregivers programme in 2017. Conducted in a community setting, the programme has proven invaluable in enhancing caregivers' understanding and practice of safety and hygiene when caring for infants.

NURTURING A FUTURE GENERATION

A keen advocate for talent management and development, Ms Ng has played a key role in redefining and developing the talent management plan for nurses. In 2017, under her leadership, the SingHealth Nursing Talent Review Board was established and a job rotation framework was introduced at KKH for newly joined nurses, to provide a greater breadth of experience in the various nursing disciplines available to the nurses prior to specialisation.

Ms Ng also serves as Chair of the SingHealth College of Clinical Nursing (CCN), overseeing all nursing education and training initiatives across SingHealth. Working closely with nursing teams, CCN aims to review and develop undergraduate, post-graduate, continual education and global nursing programmes, as well as collaborate with other disciplines to promote inter-professional education and inter-collaborative practice, and to shape the clinical education landscape for nurses in SingHealth and beyond.

"I believe that people are our greatest asset and we need to provide opportunities to develop them to their fullest potential, so that they can be better leaders than us," says Ms Ng. "I am honoured to have the role of guiding and equipping our nurses with the necessary knowledge and skills to continually grow their capacity and capabilities, towards providing the best care to our patients."