

SCHEME FOR “HANDS-OFF” OBSERVERSHIP

ABOUT INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

The Institute of Mental Health (IMH) is a 2,000-bed acute tertiary psychiatric hospital situated on a 25-hectare campus at Buangkok Green Medical Park. Set amidst serene surroundings, IMH offers a comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and counselling services for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.

IMH's tradition of care started in 1928. IMH was the first mental hospital in Singapore, starting with some 1,000 patients. Since then, many advances have been made in treatment, training, and research. IMH provides specialised psychiatric care in areas of Addiction Medicine, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, Community Psychiatry, Early Psychosis Intervention, Forensic Psychiatry, General Psychiatry, and Geriatric Psychiatry. Treatment at IMH integrates evidence-based therapies, supported by the departments of clinical psychology, nursing, occupational therapy, and medical social work, to provide holistic care for our patients. IMH is equipped with modern facilities, with 50 wards for inpatients and seven Specialist Outpatient Clinics.

IMH was the first mental health institution in Asia to receive the Joint Commission International Accreditation in 2005, a highly coveted international accreditation for healthcare organisations.

Over the years, IMH has gained a reputation for quality research. In 2008, the Ministry of Health, Singapore, entrusted IMH with a S\$25 million research grant to implement translational and clinical research into the causes of schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders.

IMH also plays a key role in training the next generation of mental health professionals in Singapore. IMH trains psychiatrists and mental health professionals through the NHG-AHPL Residency Programme for psychiatry and through collaborations with the local tertiary institutions.

“HANDS-OFF” OBSERVERSHIP

This appointment is accorded to foreign and local doctors to be attached to a clinical department to observe a specific skill with no hands-on experience.

The Singapore Medical Council (SMC) has decided that “Hands-off” Observers do not need to register with the Medical Council. However, the Observers must bear in mind that they are not recognized as ‘medical practitioners’ under the Medical Registration Act (MRC). They will be liable for prosecution if they hold/describe or mislead patients to believe that they are ‘medical practitioners’ registered with Singapore Medical Council.

The Observers cannot participate in patient care or contact, examination, diagnosis, clerking of case notes, writing of prescriptions, review or writing of reports, medical procedure, perform any other clinical work during the Observership or perform any such acts which require him to be registered under the Medical Registration Act. The Observers must be accompanied at all times when observing any procedures including assessments of patients, and pre and post-surgical procedures.

In the event of observing direct patient care, the Observers must maintain patients' confidentiality. Disclosure, discussion or revealing of details about such patients in any form to anyone other than those involved in the Observership will be strictly disallowed.

The Observers shall act appropriately and in a professional, courteous manner throughout the entire period of their Observership.

DURATION OF OBSERVERSHIP

The period of Observership will be from 1 day to a maximum of 4 weeks or 28 days duration with no extension.

SPONSORSHIP

There will be no financial commitment by the Hospital.

FEES

An administrative fee of SGD 153 is applicable upon application.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- At least 3 years' experience as a Medical Officer after Housemanship / Internship.
- Good academic record and at least 2 referees' reports.
- Has a valid pass from the Ministry of Manpower to stay in Singapore, if required.
- Meet minimum vaccination requirements as stipulated

SELECTION PROCESS

- Candidates should possess a good command of the English Language.
- Option of interview may be exercised by a panel chaired by the Chief of Department. Candidate bears the expenses for interview.
- Final selection will be decided by the Chief of Department.
- IMH Education Office will assist with the paperwork after the application is successfully recommended by the department.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All candidates applying for "Hands-off" Observership are required to submit the following:

- IMH Clinical Observership Application Form
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV) with full personal particulars, professional qualifications, 2 referees' reports (your referees must be able to vouch for your work performance and character) and career history with medical testimonials
- Letters from relevant sponsors, if applicable (Any agreement with pharmaceutical companies as sponsors will not be acceptable)
- Current Medical License/Registration with the Local Medical Council
- Passport-sized photograph
- Vaccination certificates and documents:
 - Covid vaccination (completed primary vaccination and a booster shot within 270 days from last dose in primary vaccination series)
List of approved vaccinations : <https://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/arriving/overview#vaccination>
 - Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) within the last 10 years
 - At least the first dosage of MMR (Mumps, Measles and Rubella)

Only short-listed candidates will be notified.

- Observers must have valid health insurance cover and have received the minimum vaccination required as stipulated by IMH. Copies of the vaccination certificates and the health insurance cover must be produced before commencement of Observership.
- Observers must complete and submit the original copy of the “Hands-off” Observership Agreement by SMC, to IMH Education Office, before the commencement of the Observership.

BENEFITS

“Hands-off” Observers are not eligible to any benefit/privilege extended by the Hospital to its employees.

CONTACT US

For enquiries, please email to imh.observership@nhghealth.com.sg

Information is correct at time of printing and subject to revision without notice (November 2025).