

MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore – 7 March 2022

IMH and Temasek Foundation launch *Mental Health in Asia Programme* to promote exchange of best practices and insights on and build capabilities to better respond to mental health issues in ASEAN

1. Regional and local policymakers, professionals, specialists and academics came together today to discuss and exchange views on pertinent issues in mental healthcare at a new webinar series – *Mental Health in Asia Programme*, jointly organised by Temasek Foundation and the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). The participants were joined by Guest of Honour, Dr Mohd Maliki Bin Osman, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, and Second Minister for Education and Foreign Affairs, Singapore, who gave the opening address at the launch and opening session this morning.
2. The *Mental Health in Asia Programme* seeks to promote the exchange of best practices and insights on mental health issues in the ASEAN region, so as to better tackle mental health issues which are on the rise. By enabling networking among stakeholders, the programme aims to develop mental health communities of practice, which can inform new capabilities or skill sets as well as the latest trends and research to enhance the provision of quality care for mental health patients.
3. Studies have shown that mental health issues are a growing concern. In Singapore, an increased prevalence of common mental disorders has been reported in the adult population. According to the Singapore Mental Health Study conducted in 2016, 1 in 7 adults has experienced a mood, anxiety or alcohol use disorder in their lifetime. This is up from 1 in 8 in the previous study conducted in 2010. In other ASEAN countries, stigma, suicide, and the need for rehabilitation and accessibility of mental health services are pressing issues. Now into the third year, the COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated the mental health issues faced by many across different segments of society.
4. The webinar series will take place over eight weeks from 7 March to 25 April 2022, with a different topic each week. The topics – such as telepsychiatry, trauma-informed care, youth mental health, and suicide prevention – will be presented by specialists from various ASEAN countries. The webinars aim to catalyse in-depth discussions of individual subspecialties and promote better mental healthcare research, education or clinical implementation in ASEAN. Around 500 mental health experts are expected to participate throughout the webinar series.
5. “Mental health professionals in Singapore and other ASEAN countries face many commonalities in our practices, and these include managing issues such as stigma,

debilitating effects of mental illness, integrated care for physical and mental illness, but chief of all in the current climate, is the impact of the pandemic on population mental health and care delivery,” says Associate Professor Daniel Fung, Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Mental Health.

6. “Notwithstanding the disruptions it brings, the COVID-19 pandemic is also an opportunity for us to transform mental healthcare by digitising its delivery. IMH pivoted to telepsychiatry at the peak of the pandemic and while face-to-face consultations have resumed, telepsychiatry is here to stay. I am sure IMH is not alone in this telepsychiatry journey and this webinar series is an excellent platform for us to forge discussions with our regional counterparts on how telepsychiatry can be further exploited and improve care accessibility,” he adds.
7. Mr Benedict Cheong, Chief Executive, Temasek Foundation International, said, “Anyone living through this prolonged period of global pandemic has been affected by varying degrees of stresses, uncertainty and isolation. Thus, it is equally important to maintain not just our physical health, but mental health as well. We hope that this programme can serve as a platform for regional stakeholders to network, collaborate and build on efforts to continue destigmatising mental illness and find ways to help those in need of mental health support.”

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About the Institute of Mental Health (IMH)

The Institute of Mental Health (IMH), a member of the National Healthcare Group, is the only tertiary psychiatric care institution in Singapore. Located on the sprawling 23-hectare campus of Buangkok Green Medical Park in the north-eastern part of Singapore, IMH offers a multidisciplinary and comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and therapy services in hospital-based and community-based settings. The 2,000-bedded hospital aims to meet

the needs of three groups of patients – children and adolescents (aged below 19 years), adults and the elderly. Besides providing clinical services, IMH also leads in mental health research and training the next generation of mental health professionals in Singapore. For more information, please visit www.imh.com.sg or www.facebook.com/imh.singapore.

About Temasek Foundation

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**Mental Health in Asia Programme
Webinar Series**

7 Mar 2022: Launch of Programme and Webinar 1: COVID-19 Response – Telepsychiatry

Host: A/Prof Mythily Subramaniam,
Assistant Chairman Medical Board (Research), IMH

10.05am – 10.15am

Opening Speech by Guest of Honour Dr Mohd Maliki Bin Osman,
Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Education and Foreign Affairs, Singapore

10.15am – 12.00pm

Exploring New Frontiers in Treatment Delivery: Telepsychiatry

Adj Asst Prof Mok Yee Ming,
Assistant Chairman Medical Board (Clinical), Senior Consultant/Chief, Department of Mood and Anxiety, IMH

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way patients access healthcare services. Telemedicine is a service for patients to be connected to a healthcare provider via video consultations through a secured video conferencing platform. IMH started a pilot Virtual Ward Project with Econ Nursing Home in March 2019, with the objective of creating a support system for nursing home partners to better manage residents with mental health conditions. Through this programme, patients with frequent relapses are flagged by Econ Nursing Home to the Virtual Ward Team. The team will conduct an on-site review, intervention and debriefing to help the nursing home staff gain competency to manage patients who have relapsed. In turn, these patients do not have to be admitted into IMH and the Virtual Ward Team will continue to provide support through virtual review sessions. The Virtual Ward Project has been awarded the Health Services Development Programme Funding, to bring the total number of nursing home partners to eight by July 2024.

COVID-19 Response: Telepsychiatry

Prof Ahmad Hatim Bin Sulaiman,
Department of Psychological Medicine, Universiti Malaya

COVID-19 as a traumatic stressor – Escalating mental health issues during COVID-19 Pandemic – Telepsychiatry for medical frontliners at University Malaya Medical Centre

- Protocol for remote PFA
- Findings from our study – Telepsychiatry for patients
- Prerequisites and considerations
- Patient and provider identification/requirement
- Patient selection
- Practical tips on conducting the session: before, during, after

14 Mar 2022: Webinar 2: Trauma-Informed Care in Child Psychiatry

Host: Dr Lim Choon Guan,

Senior Consultant/Deputy Chief, Department of Developmental Psychiatry, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Trauma-Informed Care in Child Psychiatry

Adj A/Prof Ong Say How,

Senior Consultant/Chief, Department of Developmental Psychiatry, IMH

Adverse childhood experiences have been reported in significant number of adults in a mental health survey in 2016. This underpins the importance of identifying adverse events and trauma early in childhood, so that treatment could be offered to prevent subsequent psychopathology in adulthood. However, picking up traumatic experiences can be difficult especially when clinicians and staff are unfamiliar with the concept of trauma and its manifestations in regular clinical care. This lecture would introduce the tenets of trauma-informed care and response (TIC&R) and how IMH intends to embark on a journey to become an institution that is trauma-informed, starting with the child psychiatric department. By seeing patient experiences through trauma lens and engaging all hospital staff, we can be able to adopt TIC&R fully into the larger hospital system.

Childhood Trauma: A University Hospital Experience

Associate Prof Aili Hanim Binti Hashim,

Department of Psychological Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaya

Associate Prof Aili's main interest is in working with adolescents and young adults with depression, adolescents and young adults with ADHD and those who have experienced a difficult childhood. Dr Aili predominantly uses psychodynamic psychotherapy understanding in her work to assess and manage these individuals with mental health difficulties. Her talk will be about her experience with children who have experienced childhood trauma.

21 Mar 2022: Webinar 3: Youth Mental Health

Host: Dr Amelia Sim,

Deputy Chief/Consultant, Department of Psychosis, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Youth Mental Health in Singapore: The CHAT Experience

Dr Charmaine Tang,

Consultant/Chief, Department of Psychosis, IMH

Adolescence and young adulthood are thought to be particularly tumultuous times in neuropsychological and physical development. While many psychiatric institutions offer services for children and adults, those in the young adult population may not find a catered service that is tailored to their specific needs. Increasing attempts are being made worldwide to identify the barriers to accessing mental health services that youths face, and to introduce dedicated mental health services for youths and young adults. There has also been an impetus to have a dedicated youth mental health service in Singapore. With support and funding from the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT) was started in 2009. CHAT has established itself as a leader in the youth mental health landscape in Singapore. This session discusses the progress and maturation of CHAT's strategic framework over the last decade, highlighting some of the key programmes that have been developed to provide a more comprehensive service to Singaporean youths, and presents clinical and sociodemographic data reflecting the ten-year trends in referrals and assessments.

Mental Health Perspective Among Youth in the Period of COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia

Prof Tjhin Wiguna,

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Division, Department of Psychiatry,

dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo General Hospital – Faculty of Medicine Universitas Indonesia

COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating all around the world. In Indonesia, the number of cases increases significantly from the year of 2020 until today. Not only the active cases but also the number of deaths caused by COVID-19 increases dramatically. Many people are facing hard times, fears, worry, and various psychosocial problems. In response to this pandemic, the Indonesian government has implemented the social distancing policies, stay at home policies, including closure of schools, offices, and other public places to reduce viral transmission among people and students since April 2020. Adolescence is a biopsychosocial turmoil period. The hormonal changes and the need of fitting in and conforming to the standards of psychosocial roles of transition in this period may associate to the behaviour and emotional problems especially during these hard days in the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, several studies showed that school closures due to social and physical distancing influenced adolescents' mental and psychosocial well-being respectively. This presentation aims to identify the correlation between several psychosocial factors that can be defined to mental health consequences during COVID-19 pandemic among adolescents in Indonesia.

28 Mar 2022: Webinar 4: Suicide Prevention

Host: A/Prof Daniel Fung,

Chief Executive Officer, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Suicide and Self-Harm – Lessons from Singapore

Dr Jared Ng,

Senior Consultant/Chief, Department of Emergency & Crisis Care, IMH

The number of suicides has increased in several parts of the world over recent years, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon has worsened over the last two years due to the direct and indirect effects of the pandemic on the populations' mental health. During the talk, Dr Ng will attempt to describe suicide patterns in ASEAN countries, and highlight some suicide intervention programmes in Singapore. He will discuss lessons learnt from these programmes and propose future directions on suicide prevention interventions.

Suicide Prevention in Thailand: COVID Era

Dr Patanon Kwansanit,

Somdetchaopraya Institute of Psychiatry, Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health, Thai Royal Government

1. Rate of suicide in Thailand in 2020-2021
2. The provinces with highest rate of suicide in Thailand
3. Suicide prevention programme related to COVID situation

4 Apr 2022: Webinar 5: Correctional Psychiatry

Host: Adj Asst Prof Derrick Yeo,
Senior Consultant, Department of Forensic Psychiatry, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Correctional Psychiatry

Dr Christopher Cheok,
Senior Consultant/Acting Chief, Department of Forensic Psychiatry, IMH

This seminar will discuss the Singapore experience in providing psychiatric services to a correctional population at the prisons, hospital and outpatient clinic.

Correctional Psychiatry Services in Malaysia

Dr Ian Lloyd Anthony,
Psychiatry Hospital Bahagia Ulu Kinta, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, Hospital Bahagia Ulu Kinta Malaysia

Essential components of a comprehensive mental health system in prison includes a crisis intervention programme, an acute care programme, a chronic care programme (e.g. special needs unit such as housing units), consultation services and an effective discharge programme that is able to link offenders to mental health services upon release. In Malaysia, mental health services in the 32 prisons are not standardised due to numerous factors, of which the most pressing is the lack of trained mental healthcare personnel. Prison health clinics are staffed by medical officers and paramedics who handle all issues pertaining to the medical care of inmates. Some prisons receive monthly visits by psychiatrists from nearby hospitals. Psychiatric services in Malaysian prisons need greater attention to fulfil the essential components mentioned above. The most recent development is the screening of detainees in custodial settings immediately upon arrest. This programme aims to identify detainees with mental health problems prior to their reception into remand prisons.

11 Apr 2022: Webinar 6: Neurostimulation

Host: Adj Asst Prof Mok Yee Ming,
Assistant Chairman Medical Board (Clinical), Senior Consultant/Chief, Department of Mood and Anxiety, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Psychiatric Neurostimulation in Singapore

Dr Tor Phern Chern,
Head, Neurostimulation Service, Senior Consultant, Department of Mood & Anxiety, IMH

Background: The Neurostimulation Service in Singapore consists of a large electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) service using the CARE network system of systematic data collection. This has allowed robust analysis of real-world clinical, administrative, and cost effectiveness data to guide service development.

Objectives: To present a selected summary of papers demonstrating the utility of the CARE system to collect usable data from routine clinical practice for analysis.

Methods: CARE system data was used to analyse and compare the real-world effectiveness of ECT in the treatment of schizophrenia, mania, depression and catatonia. It also allowed comparisons of the speed of response and relative effectiveness and cognitive outcomes of different ECT modalities in

schizophrenia and switching ECT modalities, effect on expressed suicidality in schizophrenia, the influence of capacity on ECT outcomes, effect of ECT on readmission, influence of lithium on cognitive outcomes in ECT, cost effectiveness of rTMS vs ECT and impact of anaesthesia-ECT time on ECT outcomes.

Findings: ECT is a highly effective and rapid onset treatment for a wide variety of severe mental illnesses that is associated with improved cognition and quality of life in certain conditions. ECT is associated with decreased expressed suicidality and readmission and outcomes are associated with capacity status. rTMS and ECT are cost effective 3rd and 4th line treatments for depression in Singapore.

Conclusions: The CARE network allows for pragmatic and systematic data collection of real-world practice that can inform service development and quality.

How to Prescribe and Perform Electroconvulsive Therapy Effectively? The Mistakes We Made and How We Overcome Them

Dr Chee Kok Yoon,

Consultant Neuropsychiatrist, Department of Psychiatry & Mental Health, Kuala Lumpur Hospital Malaysia/LifeCare Medical Centre, Bangsar South Kuala Lumpur

Before the year 2010, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) in Malaysia has been sub-standard. No institution had formal teaching programme for ECT, and some hospitals did not use anaesthesia and no EEG monitoring during the ECT procedure. The Neuropsychiatry Unit of Kuala Lumpur Hospital (KLH) started the first nationwide ECT training in 2013, and since then, it has been organised once to twice per year. The publication of the Hospital Kuala Lumpur ECT Handbook in 2014 is one of the most important landmarks in standardising ECT practice and thus enables ECT to be performed effectively. Since then, many psychiatric centres with ECT services have adopted and adapted the handbook. The first nationwide ECT survey was carried out in 2020, examining ECT practice and forming the foundation of the first National ECT Guideline 2021.

18 Apr 2022: Webinar 7: Recovery-Based Care – Examples of Recovery Programmes

Host: ADN Goh Ai Sze,

Advanced Practice Nurse/Senior Nurse Clinician, Nursing Administration, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Recovery – A Journey to Living Independently

Adj Asst Prof Alex Su,

Clinical Director, Care Transformation Office & Chief, Recovery Care, IMH

Psychiatric patients have a long and hard journey through their years of mental illness treatment. Many facilities and programmes focus on treating the illness and return the patient back to community with stabilization of the psychiatric symptoms. Rehabilitation and Recovery focus more on our patients as a person – to help them re-establish their goals and dreams and to help them gain back their confidence as a person. The programme also help patients develop skills to live independently and work. The training of a multi-disciplinary team that is aligned to recovery and is an important component for a successful psychiatric rehabilitation programme.

Recovery-Based Care – Examples of Recovery Programmes in Thailand

Asst Prof Kamonnet Wannasewok,

Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University

This presentation will mention recovery-based programmes provided for persons with severe mental illness which are available in Bangkok and Metropolitans, Thailand from various organisations in the public and private sectors.

25 Apr 2022: Webinar 8: Integration of Mental Health Care with Chronic Disease

Host: Dr Chris Tan,

Deputy Chief/Consultant, Department of Geriatric Psychiatry, IMH

10.00am – 11.30am

Integration of Mental Health Care with Chronic Diseases

Dr Alvin Lum,

Head, Medical Care, Deputy Director, MH-GP Partnership Programme, IMH

Patients in IMH with serious mental illnesses are at a higher risk of developing metabolic illnesses, hence the importance of clinical management of mental illnesses and other chronic diseases in the overall wellness of patients in IMH.

Management of Depression in Cancer Patients

Associate Prof Ng Chong Guan,

Department of Psychological Medicine, Universiti Malaya

The findings of two research projects will be shared in the session. The first study is on the use of psychostimulants for rapid response in depression in cancer patients. The second is on mindfulness breathing for reduction of distress in palliative care cancer patients.

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EVENT SCHEDULE

<p>7 MAR</p> <p>10.00AM – 12.00PM</p> <p>COVID-19 Response - Telepsychiatry</p> <p>Opening Speech by Dr. Mohd Maliki Bin Osman</p>	<p>14 MAR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Trauma-Informed Care in Child Psychiatry</p>	<p>21 MAR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Youth Mental Health</p>
<p>28 MAR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Suicide Prevention</p>	<p>4 APR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Correctional Psychiatry</p>	<p>11 APR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Neurostimulation</p>
<p>18 APR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Recovery-based Care - Examples of Recovery programmes</p>		<p>25 APR</p> <p>10.00AM – 11.30AM</p> <p>Integration of Mental Health Care with Chronic Disease</p>

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