

MEDIA RELEASE

Date: 14 February 2014

Institute of Mental Health Opens Dementia-Friendly Wards

1. The Institute of Mental Health (IMH) has officially opened two dementia-friendly wards on 14 February 2014. The opening was officiated by the Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health, A/Prof Benjamin Ong.

2. The wards in the Sunshine Wing, with 25 beds each for male and female patients, were refurbished from IMH's existing acute geriatric-psychiatry wards that were built in 1993. They are the only dedicated inpatient facilities in Singapore that treat dementia patients with severe Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD).

3. Besides the addition of new facilities and a garden, the wards were designed to provide a more healing environment for patient rehabilitation, with the intention of returning the patients back to the community. Thoughtful design and colours were also employed to reduce patient agitation and aggression.

New Facilities

4. **Garden.** The old geriatric-psychiatry wards did not have a garden. As a result, some dementia patients who insisted on going out became agitated (and at times aggressive). With a therapeutic garden in place, dementia patients are now able to enjoy the natural surroundings. The landscaping work on the garden include a reminiscence corner and a water feature, seats with shades, and proper pathways to safely support the activity of walking for patients who like to wander.

5. **Reminiscence Room.** Antique objects and materials are displayed in this room to help patients evoke old memories and reminisce about the past as part of their therapy.

6. **Gym.** The new ward includes a gym equipped with modern exercise machines overlooking the garden. Patients undergo various forms of exercise under the supervision of physiotherapists to strengthen muscles and improve balance. The view of the garden also encourages the patients to participate in the physical activities.
7. **Sensory Room.** This room offers a range of sensory equipment that helps create a multisensory environment for patients to explore and relax in safety.
8. **Activity Room.** Specially designed to allow patients to focus on their activities and not be distracted by the surroundings, this room offers patients the opportunity to enjoy the latest video games such as Kinect, where they can play stimulating games that involve limb exercises.
9. **Caregivers Resource Corner.** Caregivers can access the resource corner for information, emotional support and guidance. The ward also conducts psycho-education sessions and workshops to help caregivers understand issues relating to caregiving for patients with dementia.

Improvements to Ward Environment and Layout

10. The ward environment has been designed to appear more homely, to help patients feel at home, thus encouraging them to pursue normal activities of daily living.
11. The dining area is located adjacent to the pantry, where the sensory cues that a meal is being served prepares patients for dining. Dining tables and chairs are arranged in small clusters to encourage mealtime social interaction. Patients are also encouraged to self-serve food and drinks if they are able to.
12. The dormitories have been designed with low partitions to offer some privacy and to provide patients with their own sense of personal space.
13. Bathrooms are no longer located at one end of the ward but have been decentralised and placed closer to the dormitories, activity room and lounge area for the convenience of the patients.
14. The use of colours, blinds, lights, noise reduction materials, and room dividers are some of the other steps taken to improve the ward and to provide a therapeutic environment.

Patient Profiles

15. IMH treats an average of 600 patients (combined inpatient and outpatient numbers) with dementia and co-morbid psychiatric conditions a year. There is an average of 350-400 admissions to the acute geriatric-psychiatry wards per year, with the average length of stay being 21 days.

16. More than half the patients admitted to the acute geriatric-psychiatry wards suffer from Dementia, while the rest may have Depression, Schizophrenia, and other mental illness. Patients in the ward are looked after by a multidisciplinary team comprising specialists, a physician, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and medical social workers.

17. Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Mental Health, A/Prof Chua Hong Choon, commented: "The opening of Sunshine Wing, IMH's Dementia Friendly Wards, marks an important milestone in IMH's vision to be a tertiary centre of excellence and global leader in mental healthcare. With these new facilities, we will be able to improve the quality of care for our elderly patients, in an environment that is specially tailored for their needs.

18. The 40-year-old daughter of an 80-year-old patient who was admitted into the Sunshine Wing, said: "Before the renovation, there were no dedicated rooms for family members to use when visiting patients. This newly redesigned ward has 3 family rooms for family members. I really appreciate the feeling of privacy during our visits to my father. The garden and gyms are also very good for my father. During his stay at the ward, my father learnt to play the Kinect bowling game. He is very proud of the fact that he even beat his 20-year-old niece when he played against her during his five-day home leave over the Chinese New Year!"

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1. Sunshine Wing is a 50-bed geriatric inpatient acute ward serving psychiatric patients 65 years old and above. The ward is equipped with elderly and dementia-friendly features and unique facilities that aim to improve their care. Ward A is for male while Ward B is for female inpatients.

2. IMH treats an estimated average of 600 patients (combined inpatient and outpatient numbers) with dementia and comorbid psychiatric conditions a year.

3. Ward Charges

Patients admitted to the Sunshine Wing will be charged a daily geriatric-psychiatric facilities fee of \$26.00. This is in addition to the normal Daily Ward Fee (\$23 for Class C wards) and Daily Treatment Fee (\$10 for Class C wards).

A geriatric-psychiatry programme fee of \$6.00 may be charged on a per activity basis. (Please refer to the table below for the additional charges).

Daily Psychogeriatric Facilities Fee	Singapore citizen	Permanent Resident
	\$ 26.00	\$ 58.00
Psychogeriatric Programme Fee (per activity)	\$ 6.00	\$ 13.50

Statistics on Dementia:

4. There are an estimated 35.6 million people in the world with dementia and the number is expected to double by 2030. In Singapore, we have about 28,000 elderly aged 60 years and above with dementia, and this is expected to more than double to 80,000 by 2030.

About the Institute of Mental Health, Singapore

The Institute of Mental Health (IMH) is the only tertiary psychiatric care institution in Singapore. Located on the sprawling 25-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 counseling services. The 2010-bedded hospital aims to meet the needs of three groups of patients – children and adolescents (age 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, visit: www.imh.com.sg

Institute of Mental Health (IMH)	心理卫生学院
Geriatric Psychiatry	老年精神科
Sunshine Wing	温善轩
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A/Prof Chiam Peak Chiang Vice Chairman, Medical Board (Education) Acting Chief & Senior Consultant, Department of Geriatric Psychiatry, IMH	詹碧江副教授 医疗委员会副主席(教育) 老年精神科代理主任兼高级专科顾问 心理卫生学院
Dementia	失智症