

MEDIA RELEASE

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Kids CLASsroom-based learning in a psychiatric hospital

1. A new facility to provide a conducive learning environment for child and adolescent inpatients is officially opened today at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). The **Centre for Life and Academic Skills (CLAS)** is located within Sunrise Wing, a 20-bedded ward for patients aged 6 to 18 years old, and is built with the generous sponsorship of S\$122,000 from the Ronald McDonald House Charities Singapore.
2. The ward manages and supports children and adolescents for varying mental health conditions that are often accompanied by emotional, behavioural and developmental issues. One of the setbacks of being hospitalised for extended periods is that these school-going children may lose the momentum for learning and face the stress of coping with their studies upon returning to school. For those who have dropped out from school due to their conditions, they may eventually lose the motivation and will to complete their studies. This may cascade to a loss of opportunities in the young persons' life, preventing them from reaching their full potential in life.
3. With the provision of CLAS, IMH offers academic skills-based intervention in a classroom setting for the inpatients, allowing them to continue learning at their own pace while receiving treatment in the ward. Depending on their learning standards and needs, they receive relevant academic sessions with a specialist teacher. Being able to continue learning after their mental condition has stabilised helps to reinstate some form of normalcy to the patients. It also increases their ability and confidence to return and reintegrate back into school upon discharge. In the same classroom, the young patients go through therapy sessions to learn important coping strategies to help them manage their daily stressors.
4. IMH Chief Executive Officer, A/Prof Chua Hong Choon, said: "We are grateful to the Ronald McDonald House Charities Singapore for their support and would like to thank them for their generosity. It is extremely challenging for our young patients to cope with their mental health issues and at times having to miss school for long periods due to their condition. With the establishment of CLAS, we are able to provide better patient-centred care that can help to lessen the impact of their hospitalisation. By looking into their learning needs, we hope they can ease back into school and continue to live well in the community."
5. Equipped with up-to-date learning facilities such as an interactive projector for e-learning and laptops, the classroom space allows for a more conducive, small group teaching. On days when there are no scheduled sessions, the facility is used for independent learning under the supervision of nurses. There are educational board games and fun activities to keep our young patients meaningfully occupied while they recuperate and recover in the ward.

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About the Institute of Mental Health, Singapore

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 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 therapy services in hospital-based and community-based settings. The 2010-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.

Chinese Translations
Annex A

Institute of Mental Health (IMH)	心理卫生学院
Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Singapore	新加坡麦当劳叔叔之家慈善基金
Associate Professor Chua Hong Choon Chief Executive Officer Institute of Mental Health	蔡奉俊副教授 院长 心理卫生学院
Centre for Life and Academic Skills (CLAS)	生活技能教室
Child Guidance Clinic - Sunrise Wing	儿童指导门诊 - 旭日轩