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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Rehabilitating the Mind

***8th October – Asia Pacific Rehabilitation Conference (2008) “Transforming Lives in Every Aspect of Our Work” 6 – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008, Institute of Mental Health”.***

- ***Improved outlook for those recovering from mental ailments***
- ***More person centred programmes that restore functioning and enhance integration***

The Institute of Mental Health is pleased to present the inaugural Asia Pacific Psychiatric Rehabilitation Conference as part of our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. The theme “Transforming Lives in Every Aspect of Our Work” was chosen because of the critical role of rehabilitation, its potential and its successes in empowering patients so that they may recover well. “As the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we are pleased to see an increasing number of innovations and adaptations in the delivery of rehabilitation programmes. In the past clinical concept of recovery focuses on the remission of symptoms and restoration of functioning. Now there is the focus on wellness, with a redefinition of recovery from the beginning of contact, so that patients are equipped with skills to reintegrate back to societal roles. Instead of just treating the patient and the illness, we are focusing on the healing of the whole person,” said Dr Alex Su, Organizing chairman of the conference.

These concepts of recovery means equipping patients with psychosocial education and community living skills to reduce the likelihood of subsequent rehospitalization. At IMH, the community based Psychosocial Rehabilitation Programme administered by its Department of Community Psychiatry achieved a 62% reduction in the length of hospital stay. The total intake of inpatients into the various rehabilitation programmes has increased over six-fold

and the number of our patients who have successfully completed the in-house programme rose from 59% in 2003 to 73% in 2007.

Discussions will centre around treatments in terms of pharmacological, psychological and social interventions for patients and feature international psychiatry experts like Prof Robert Paul Liberman from UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute and Hospital, Prof Marianne Farkas, Co-Principal Investigator, Research and Training Center in Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Prof Kim Mueser Professor, Departments of Psychiatry and Department of Community and Family Medicine, Dartmouth Medical School. Local experts like A/Prof Wong Kim Eng, Dr Eu Pui Wai and Dr Lee Cheng will share the successes and challenges of local rehabilitation programmes as well as local statistics and figures on the mental health trends and outcomes of IMH's 80 years of rehabilitation and care. Topics of the conference include: *Community Integration; Recovery and Rehabilitation: A Paradigm for the New Millennium; Digital Psychiatry, Treatment for Depression; Men's mental health.*

"As IMH works towards its vision of being the leading mental health centre in Asia, we are privileged to host this conference. It is important to be at the forefront of research and learning to improve the quality of life for both the patient and caregiver. Together with the strong governmental support through the National Mental Health Blueprint, we are able to integrate care and bring rehabilitation to a higher level. There is indeed improved outlook and hope for those seeking early treatment," said A/ Prof Rathi Mahendran, Chairman Medical Board.

Highlights of the Conference programme are attached at Annex A, and the daily programme can be found in Annex B. For more information, please visit <http://www.apprc.com.sg>

**To arrange for interviews with speakers, recovering patients and ex-patients please contact:**

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***About Institute of Mental Health/Woodbridge Hospital (IMH/WH)***

*The Institute of Mental Health/Woodbridge Hospital (IMH/WH) is a leading mental health centre in Asia offering a multi-faceted and comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and counselling services designed to meet the needs of namely (i) children & adolescents, (ii) adults and (iii) the elderly. IMH/WH's multi-disciplinary approach to patient care is supported by the departments of Nursing, Clinical Psychology, Occupational Therapy, and Medical Social Work. Offering inpatient care and outpatient care, it has also established various satellite clinics around Singapore. IMH/WH provides community education and supports corporations in the promotion of mental health and wellness. As a specialist centre, it integrates research in the best interest of patient-care. For its outstanding contribution to research in health promotion, IMH's Early Psychosis Intervention Programme won the World Health Organization's inaugural State of Kuwait Prize in 2006 as well as one of the inaugural National Medical Excellence Awards conferred by the Ministry of Health in 2008. IMH/WH is the first mental health institution in Asia to receive the Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation, an award that represents a worldwide consensus on quality patient care and international best practices.*

## Annex A

### **Recovery and Rehabilitation: A Paradigm for the New Millennium**

Prof Marianne Farkas

*Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University, USA*

In the past, practice in mental health was guided by the belief that individuals with serious mental illnesses do not recover. The course of their illness was either seen pessimistically, as deteriorative or optimistically, as a maintenance course. Research over the past thirty to forty years has indicted that belief and shown that a vision of recovery can be achieved for many individuals.

In North America and other regions, policies have been developed to make recovery the guiding vision of services. The Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University has been engaged, along with others in the field in trying to clarify the meaning and implication of this vision and the role that rehabilitation services can play in facilitating recovery. This presentation clarifies the meaning of the term “recovery”, reviews the research and first person accounts providing a rationale for recovery, and sets out implications for developing recovery oriented rehabilitation practices.

### **Mental Health in Singapore, 80 Years and More**

Prof Wong Kim Eng

*Institute of Mental Health (IMH), Singapore*

From a colonial custodial psychiatric institution, Woodbridge Hospital evolved 15 years ago into the Institute of Mental Health, a modern tertiary hospital with an emphasis on training, research, and education. Mental healthcare in Singapore began with Woodbridge Hospital 8 decades ago and, today, it remains responsible for some 80% of the public mental healthcare. IMH’s dominance has remained. The plenary sessions traces the evolution of modern mental healthcare and charts the path for the years ahead through the implementation of the National Mental Health Blueprint.

### **Personal Effectiveness for Successful Living: A Social Skills Training Experiential Workshop**

Prof Robert Paul Liberman

*UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute & Hospital, USA*

Social skills training is an evidence-based practice for persons with all psychiatric disorders, but is essential for those with schizophrenia and other mental disabilities.

In the modality *Personal Effectiveness for Successful Living*, clients or participants are empowered to identify their personally relevant goals in life and set weekly interpersonal goals that provide a stepwise pathway to longer-term goals in areas such as friendship and intimacy, finding and keeping a job, improving family relationships, dealing successfully with social agencies and mental health practitioners, establishing independent living, acquiring stress management and recreational activities and developing social problem-solving skills.

Participants will learn how to set individualized, attainable, feasible and collaborative goals with their clients and use social modeling, behavioral rehearsal, coaching, contingent positive reinforcement, homework assignments and generalization training.

### **Men’s Mental Health**

Dr Nelson Lee

*Institute of Mental health, Singapore*

Men and women show considerable variation in the proportion that they are afflicted with mental illnesses. They are also different in their presentation for the same disorders. Coping mechanisms as well as employed defence mechanism in times of crisis and illness are also significantly different. It is important to be aware of this for good therapeutic relations. Men's mental health has often also been more neglected compared to that of women's mental health. This presentation aims to show the differences and also gives insights into how men cope differently and strategies to employ when dealing with male clients.

### **Community Psychiatry: Services and Stories**

Dr Lee Cheng

*Institute of Mental Health, Singapore*

The needs of persons with mental illness (PMIs) can no longer be served adequately by treating them in large psychiatric institutions. Worldwide, mental health professionals have been advocating the use of community-based treatment to improve the quality of life for PMIs. In Singapore, the process of de-institutionalization and the management of mental disorders within the community have been gradual but perceptible. As part of the IMH's strategic moves, the hospital's outpatient clinics have been operating out of its three satellite specialist clinics. The clinics not only provide convenience to PMIs staying within their vicinity, but have also begun patient education and networking efforts with the community agencies near them. IMH has also set up the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT), a community-based outreach programme which comprises the Assertive Care Management (previously known as Assertive Community Treatment), the Standard Care Management and the Mobile Crisis Service. CMHT aims at providing home-based psychosocial rehabilitation as well as crisis resolution within the community. This presentation will focus on the mental health services provided within the community and highlight successful stories to support such interventions.

### **Psycho-Dynamic Aspects of Depression**

Dr George Fernandez

*Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Institute of Mental Health, Singapore*

There are many people who suffer from chronic depressive symptoms that can be pervasive or occurring repeatedly throughout the patient's life — causing recurrent problems to quality of life, functioning and relations with others.

These unconscious patterns and "issues" often affects our lives more than we expect.

Uncovering these "unconscious" issues through psychodynamic psychotherapy will allow the conscious awareness of these issues and help us to work through them, thus releasing trapped psychic energy for a more fulfilling life.

### **Asian Perspective for Psychiatric Rehabilitation**

Psychiatric rehabilitation has a predominantly western background. Additionally, many of the degreed professionals in Asian countries who are seeking to "import" psychiatric rehabilitation have been trained in science-based models of western psychiatric care.

This presentation will explore the link between the principles and practices of psychiatric rehabilitation and the mainstream cultural values of the United States; it will also highlight the contrast with traditional Asian cultural values. Broad suggestions will be described for adopting and translating psychiatric rehabilitation and recovery-oriented practices within Asian societies.