



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Date: 16 October 2014**

### **Integrated Community-based Approach to Meet Singapore's Mental Healthcare Needs**

Singapore Mental Health Conference  
17 - 18 October 2014, MAX Atria, Singapore Expo

1. Themed 'Mental Health and Resilience: It Takes a Whole Community', Singapore Mental Health Conference (SMHC) 2014 will feature both international and local speakers who will discuss opportunities and challenges related to the care of persons with mental illness (PMIs) and how to better create a holistic care model that cuts across the health and social sectors. The conference will showcase collaborative efforts that are in place, and across a variety of contexts, be it in community mental health, mental well-being, community reintegration, primary care, or in the home.
2. This year's event is jointly organised by the Institute of Mental Health, National Council of Social Service (NCSS), Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), and Health Promotion Board (HPB), reflecting the strong partnership that is required across sectors to promote mental wellbeing and to coordinate and provide care for those affected by mental health problems.
3. The opening event will be held at MAX Atria, Singapore Expo, on 17 October, with Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health, as the Guest of Honour. The conference has attracted some 500 professionals from the healthcare, social service, and Intermediate and Long-term Care (ILTC) sector, as well as community-based workers and consumers of mental health services.
4. Since SMHC was first launched by IMH in 2013, it has become a national platform for learning and networking. Over two days, the conference, comprising keynote presentations, five plenary sessions, eight tracks and 12 breakout sessions, will challenge participants to examine the issues and opportunities currently facing PMIs as well as mental health service providers and allow everyone involved to discover new approaches and ideas to address the evolving mental health needs of Singapore.
5. The conference's keynote plenary speaker Mr Kevin W. Sowers, President of Duke University Hospital and Clinics, US, will identify key drivers of change in healthcare and mental health and explore how the provision of healthcare services in communities is slowly moving away from the previous clinically-centric model.

6. A/Prof Chua Hong Choon, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), IMH and Co-Chairperson, SMHC 2014 Advisory Committee said, “SMHC 2014 represents a major milestone as this is the first time that the four key agencies involved in driving initiatives related to mental health and social service - IMH, AIC, HPB and NCSS, have collaborated as co-organisers of the conference. It is a true affirmation of the commitment of all stakeholders to keep pace with the changing needs of our population and address mental health issues more effectively.”
7. Ms Tina Hung, Deputy CEO and Group Director of Service Planning and Development, NCSS, and Co-Chairperson, SMHC 2014 Advisory Committee added, “This conference is a step forward in forging closer collaboration between mental healthcare and social service professionals towards providing holistic and critical assistance to persons with mental health issues and their caregivers. NCSS is committed to work with our partners and member agencies to give them the needed support. Much remains to be done to break the silence around mental illness, to increase public awareness and empathy for persons with mental health issues and for those who care for them.”

### **Launch of “Essential Guide to Psychiatry”**

8. Minister Gan will officially launch the new “Essential Guide to Psychiatry” at the opening ceremony. Published by IMH, with contribution by various mental healthcare professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, case managers and counsellors, this guide book on psychiatry is written from an Asian and multidisciplinary perspective. It adopts a learner-oriented approach, made relevant with up-to-date evidence and illustrations of local culture and setting. This book will benefit medical students, psychiatry residents, psychiatrists, medical doctors, allied health and other mental health professionals from various fields in Singaporean and Asian settings. It will also serve as a useful resource for those outside the healthcare sector but involved in supporting PMIs and their families.

### **Testament of Community Efforts**

9. A photo montage video will be screened at the event reinforced the collaborative efforts of various health and social agencies and community partners to build mental wellness. This includes the Local Community Support Network, an initiative by AIC in partnership with IMH, voluntary welfare organisations and relevant government agencies to support the grassroots and their residents on mental health issues in their respective constituencies.

### **Highlights of SMHC 2014**

10. This year, SMHC 2014 has lined up a broader programme to engage a wider audience from across the medical, social service and intermediate and long-term care sectors for an enriching learning experience. Topics will include clinical and socio-psychological aspects of mental health, caregivers’ challenges and support, as well as other community care for successful rehabilitation of PMIs. Here are some of the event highlights:

### **Pre-conference Workshop on “Open Dialogue”**

11. “Open Dialogue”, a Finnish alternative to the traditional mental health system for persons with mental illness, was the focus of a half-day pre-conference workshop held on 16 October at the AIC. This approach aims to build a support network involving the recovering person’s family and friends while at the same time, allowing and respecting the individual in decision making.

### **Community Engagement and Empowerment (Track 1)**

12. This session will explore community-based services and outreach programmes and discuss key measures taken to help detect mental illness and encourage early treatment. These programme partners will share their experiences in working with different stakeholders to support their clients and their caregivers in a holistic approach, and how they overcome challenges such as social stigma. They will also share plans to further enhance their programmes and community partnerships to reach out to more people and promote greater awareness.

### **Empowerment through Employment (Track 5)**

13. This track covers practical methods and tools to assist persons with mental health issues in gaining and sustaining employment, in a way that supports recovery. Participants learn to create a recovery culture that supports employment of persons with mental health issues across social service agencies, at home and at their workplace. This employment track will be held on Day 2 from 11.30am to 3.30pm.
14. Dr Lori Ashcraft, the speaker for the plenary on “Redefining Recovery: Community-based and Employment Initiatives”, will share her experiences in providing vocational rehabilitation and supporting employment for persons with mental illness. Having personally struggled with severe depression most of her life, Dr Lori is an advocate for employment as a key driver of recovery for persons with mental health issues, in particular employment. More information on Dr Lori and the two-day workshop she will be conducting in Singapore on developing and sustaining peer specialists to work alongside professional staff in mental health agencies can be found in Annex 5.

### **Living with Mental Illness – Legal & Other Considerations (Track 6)**

15. This track examines the very relevant and real life challenges PMIs and their families face today. A key concern among families of PMIs is the caregiving arrangement when the sole caregivers are no longer around. The Writing of Wills for PMIs will be looked at, as well as other issues such as consent, parenting and advanced medical directives.

### **The Next Frontier – GP Partnership (Track 7)**

16. This GP Symposium on Day 2 of the programme aims to reach out to general practitioners (GPs) with a keen interest in mental healthcare. Often, the first point of contact for persons with acute illness, GPs need a reliable and robust support system to help them provide better continuum of care in the community. The integration of mental health and primary care to manage an individual’s physical and mental conditions is thus an emerging trend. Through this symposium, participants learn how doctors from hospitals and GPs work closely with community partners to better support PMIs in the community. AIC will also launch the newly initiated Special Interest Group (Mental Health) for GPs at

this session, to further champion and build a supportive network for mental health by recruiting more GPs to manage PMIs and collectively work on areas such as standardising the training curriculum for GPs.

### **Enabling and Supporting Caregivers (Track 8)**

17. This year's conference will, for the first time, shine the light on caregivers. Caregivers experience immense burden when caring for their loved ones with mental health conditions. They play a key role in helping PMIs maintain their independence and live a satisfying life. Other than learning about the conditions, there is a strong need for caregivers to pick up coping skills and seek support. This session will provide useful advice to promote resilience and self-determination. Fellow caregivers will share their personal experiences on how they cope with their challenging roles while invited speakers will present on community resources that can empower caregivers in this journey. This Caregivers' Track will be held on Day 2 and is opened to the public from 9am to 5.30pm.

### **World Mental Health Day Bazaar**

18. This bazaar, which is held in conjunction with SMHC and World Mental Health Day 2014, showcases handicrafts created by recovering patients and caregivers. Despite their illness, PMIs are talented, creative and have dreams which, with support and encouragement, they are able to fulfil. The sale of these unique crafts will further encourage PMIs that they are capable of living a productive and purposeful life. Mental health advocates will also be selling their books and CDs at these booths to raise awareness of mental health issues. Participating agencies include Caregivers Alliance Limited, Singapore Association for Mental Health, Craft Creates, Alzheimer's Disease Association, Home-Bethesda C.A.R.E. Centre, Singapore Anglican Community Services, Club HEAL, Lejia Society, and O'Joy Care Services.

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***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 counselling 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](http://www.imh.com.sg)*

***About the Agency for Integrated Care***

*The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) is set up by the Ministry of Health (MOH) to oversee, coordinate and facilitate all efforts in care integration. Our mission is to achieve best care outcomes for our patients by empowering them with health and social care information and arranging for their care when they are discharged from hospitals. We enable stakeholders to raise the quality of care, and also enhance collaboration by working with health and social care providers to increase services to support the ageing population. Our work in the community brings care services and information closer to those in need. For more information, please visit [www.aic.sg](http://www.aic.sg).*

***About the Health Promotion Board***

*The Health Promotion Board (HPB) was established as a statutory board under the Ministry of Health, Singapore, in 2001 with the vision of building “A Nation of Healthy People”. HPB aims to empower the people of Singapore to attain optimal health, increase the quality and years of healthy life and prevent illness, disability and premature death. As the key driver of national health promotion and disease prevention programmes, HPB spearheads health education, promotion and prevention programmes as well as creates a health-supportive environment in Singapore. It develops and organises relevant health promotion and disease prevention programmes, reaching out to the healthy, the at-risk and the unhealthy at all stages of life – children, youths, adults and older Singapore residents. Its health promotion programmes include nutrition, mental health, physical activity, smoking control and communicable disease education. HPB also promotes healthy ageing, integrated health screening, and chronic disease education and management. For more information, please visit: [www.hpb.gov.sg](http://www.hpb.gov.sg)*

***About the National Council of Social Service***

*NCSS is the umbrella body for over 400 member voluntary welfare organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in social services, to enhance the capabilities of social service organisations, and to promote strategic partnerships for social services.*

***About the Social Service Institute, NCSS' human capital development arm***

*The Social Service Institute was appointed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) on 1 October 2013 to be a Continuing Education and Training (CET) centre for Community and Social Services. The Institute is a social service learning hub that serves as a focal point for training, resource, practice and career services. The Institute now offers programmes that adhere to the Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) framework, which further enhances the competency and skills-readiness of our learners.*

*Since its inception in June 2003, the Institute has been offering an extensive range of services and programmes dedicated to building manpower capability and enabling social service professionals in the social service and non-profit sectors for upskilling and career progression. Those who are interested in the Social Service Institute's programmes may visit the website at [www.socialserviceinstitute.sg](http://www.socialserviceinstitute.sg) for more information.*

## Chinese Translations

## Annex 1

Institute of Mental Health	心理卫生学院
Agency for Integrated Care	护联中心
Health Promotion Board	保健促进局
National Council of Social Service	国家福利理事会
Social Service Institute	社会服务学院
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
Ms Tina Hung Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Group Director for Service Planning and Development National Council of Social Service	王玉珍 副执行理事长以及 服务策划与发展总处长 国家福利理事会
Caregivers Alliance Limited	照顾者联盟
Singapore Association for Mental Health	新加坡心理健康协会
Singapore Anglican Community Services	新加坡圣公会社区服务
O'Joy Care Services	海悦辅导中心
Lejia Society	乐家心会
Persons with mental illness	精神病患者

### INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

## Factsheet - Mental Health Helpline (MHH) – 6389 2222

MHH was launched in August 2012 under the auspices of the Community Mental Health Masterplan. Trained counsellors man the helpline, provide risk assessment, de-escalate crisis and link cases to relevant social services for assistance. They receive an array of calls from patients, their caregivers as well as members of the community such as counsellors from Family Service Centres (FSCs) asking for help for their clients.

The team works closely with community partners such as FSCs and the Community Rehabilitation Support Service (CRSS). Sometimes, the police are also enlisted to address the needs of the distressed callers.

The role of MHH has since evolved. It is now an integral part of inter-agency community network in Singapore to build capabilities of community partners, such as AIC, FSCs, Singapore Police Force, Housing and Development Board, other government hospitals and resident committees and town councils.

### Training of Constituencies

Although the majority of PMIs do not seek assistance from FSCs or Town Councils, their issues are often highlighted to grassroots leaders who are usually in the frontline dealing with citizens' problems (be it mental health related or otherwise). As such, proactive engagement with the various constituencies is beneficial to both the PMIs as well as the grassroots leaders.

Together with AIC, the MHH team also provides training to constituencies and grassroots leaders to help them to identify basic mental health illnesses and issues as they are usually the first touch point for residents who seek assistance in the community. The training also helps the participants to understand and learn some essential skills on working with PMIs.

To date, the MHH team has trained these four constituencies:

- Macpherson
- Kembangan-Chai Chee
- Taman Jurong
- Mountbatten

### Case Conferencing

MHH team supports PMIs in the community by networking with community partners to ensure continuum of care for PMIs in the community, identify service gaps as well as assess the training needs of our community partners.

Regular and adhoc meetings are set up for community partners to consult IMH's psychiatrists, nurses and counsellors on difficult issues involving PMIs living in the community. IMH's team works closely with these partners to provide care strategies and care transition of PMIs.

**Conclusion:**

In addition to IMH's provision of clinical services, helpline assessment and counselling, right-siting of care and home visits, it is also essential to engage, educate and build the capability of our community partners and grassroots organisations. It is only with such multi-agency collaborations that we can work towards:

- Reducing the stigma and its subsequent impact of mental illness;
- Nurture a more informed and accepting community who is well-trained and equipped to handle PMIs within the community;
- Build up an identified extensive multi-level support network and resources within the various regions in the community.
- Better assist and maintain PMIs in their homes, support their families and build a socially-inclusive community.

### AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED CARE

## Factsheet – Local Community Support Network

### Background

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) works closely with the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), government agencies, grassroots, service providers and community partners to form a Local Community Support Network to better support and engage each constituency in managing its at-risk residents.

The support network discusses the cases encountered in the neighbourhood, identifies care needs and refers residents to appropriate services.

### Aims

- Raise mental health awareness of grassroots and community partners and empower them to recognise residents at risk and better support them in the community.
- Work with multiple agencies to link residents who have more complex needs with appropriate resources and services so that they can access help earlier.
- Enhance the integration of mental health care and social services by collaborating with partners to provide holistic care to residents. The partners are,
  - Grassroots
  - Community Development Councils and Town Councils
  - Social Service Agencies (Senior Activity Centres and Family Service Centres)
  - Government Agencies (Singapore Police Force and Housing Development Board)

### Services

- These community partners are equipped with mental wellness-related knowledge and skills such as communications skills and understanding of self-care. Customised workshops are conducted to meet the community partners' specific needs for understanding mental health issues.
- The network partners will meet on a regular basis to discuss about identified residents' needs and co-create social and health care solutions to provide holistic care.
- The network partners are also supported with resources to facilitate their support to the residents. For example, AIC works closely with the network partners to develop and implement a structured process of identifying and categorising care support needs. This will help to expedite referral to appropriate service providers.
- The community partners are supported by IMH's Mental Health Helpline and AIC's Community Care Coordinators who will provide quick triaging and support. For clients with more severe or complex needs, and who require home assessment and hospitalisation, AIC will work with IMH to expedite admission so that they can seek early treatment

## **Locations**

Presently, AIC has engaged more than 12 constituencies and helping them to support their residents. Among these constituencies, two networks have been established. They are for Macpherson and Kembangan-Chai Chee.

More than 300 grassroots leaders and community partners have undergone educational and training workshops to date. Over 70 residents have benefitted from the support provided.

Learning from current collaborations with the constituencies, AIC plans to roll out the support network to other constituencies to better support them and create an inclusive society.

### AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED CARE

## Factsheet – Mental Health General Practitioner Partnership

The Mental Health General Practitioner (GP) Partnership programme was augmented in 2012 by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) to engage and enhance the capability of GPs to manage new and/or existing patients with stable mental illnesses in the community.

### Aims

- To enable GPs to provide more holistic care to patients with chronic physical and/or mental illnesses, as referred by restructured hospitals.
- To encourage patients to seek help early as they are more familiar with their neighbourhood GPs and to encourage them to continue with follow-up consultations.

### Services

- The GP Partnership programme complements AIC's Integrated Mental Health and Dementia Network, which consists of CRESTs, COMITs and ASCATs to provide medical care within the community.
- It recruits GPs who are keen to manage different mental health conditions including psychosis, depression, dementia or anxiety so that care can be right-sited within the GP network.
- It provides customised training to GPs on common mental health illnesses and how to manage them in the community.

### Programme Development

- AIC targets to recruit 100 GPs for the programme by FY2016.
- Presently, 70 GPs have been recruited. 29 of them are trained to see new mental health patients. They have received specialised mental health training through case discussions. The GPs are also supported by links to other care services such as clients' referrals, and drug procurement. The list of GPs can be found on <https://careinmind.sg>.

### Programme Enhancement: Special Interest Group (SIG)

In supporting and sustaining the interest of the GP, AIC has formed a Special Interest Group (Mental Health) for GPs. This will be officially announced on Day 2 of the Singapore Mental Health Conference on 18 October 2014.

### GP SIG Aims

- Champion and build a supportive network for mental health by
  - Encouraging GPs to seek and recruit more of their peers to manage persons with mental illness or who are at risk;
  - Acting as a peer-support platform to facilitate the learning and sharing of best practices in the management of clients with mental illness.
- Advocate for a better community mental health service system by
  - Developing a standardised curriculum or training element to enhance the skills and knowledge of GPs in mental health areas;
  - Developing structured clinical protocol to enable and empower GP to better manage clients in the community setting;
  - Advocate and facilitate new mental health initiatives for the community.

### Team Members:

- The SIG comprises 11 mental health-qualified and passionate GP members who have undergone a one-year Graduate Diploma in Mental Health, consisting of six modules, jointly offered by the Institute of Mental Health and the Division of Graduate Medical Studies, National University of Singapore.
- The SIG members are:

S/N	Names	Names of Clinic	Address
1	Dr Alvin Lum (Chairman)	Shenton Family Medical Clinic	Blk 372, Bukit Batok St 31, #01-378, Singapore (650372)
2	Dr Rodney Lim	Healthlink Medical Clinic and Surgery	Blk 5, Upper Aljunied Lane, #01-46, Singapore (360005)
3	Dr Kwek Thiam Soo	Bukit Batok Medical Clinic	Blk 207, Bukit Batok St 21, #01-114, Singapore (650207)
4	Dr Gregory Ko	Ko Family Clinic	Blk 18, Upper Boon Keng Road, #01-1133, Singapore (380018)
5	Dr Mark Yap	Cashew Medical and Surgery Clinic Pte Ltd	Blk 445, Fajar Road, #02-522, Singapore (670445)

6	Dr Yeap Eng Hooi	Bedok Life Clinic	Blk 123, Bedok North Street 2, #01-160, Singapore (460123)
7	Dr Chua Teo Ngee	Chua Medical Centre Pte Ltd	Blk 248, Simei St 3, #01-134, Singapore (520248)
8	Dr Grace Cheng	Joy Health Medical Clinic and Surgery	Blk 825, Tampines St 81, #01-50, Singapore (520825)
9	Dr Peter Yeo	Fullerton Healthcare Group @ARC	Alexander Retail City, 460, Alexander Road, #02-18, Singapore (119963)
10	Dr Eugene Ung	Meridian Medical Centre	Blk 327, #01-162, Hougang Ave 5, Singapore (530327)
11	Dr Vincent Tan	Tan Clinic and Surgery	Blk 725, Clementi West St2, #01-194, Singapore (120725)
		Viva Medical Clinic	Blk 450A, Tampines St 42, #01-356, Singapore (521450)

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE**

**About SMHC 2014 Plenary Speaker Dr Lori Ashcraft**

- Dr Lori Ashcraft is the Executive Director of the Recovery Opportunity Centre in the United States of America (USA). She was formerly the Director for Adult Services for the Regional Behavioral Health Authority in Arizona, USA and served as a professor for the University of Arizona teaching psycho-social rehabilitation and managing one of eight Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration-funded employment demonstration programmes.
- Dr Lori is the speaker for Plenary 4 “Redefining Recovery: Community-based and Employment Initiatives”. She is also one of the speakers at Plenary 5 “Special Dialogue on Mental Health Issues and Challenges”, Breakout 10 “The Manpower Challenge: Possibilities for All?” and Breakout 12 (Partnering and Empowerment in Care-giving)”. More information on Dr Lori and the individual sessions can be found on Singapore Mental Health Conference 2014’s website (<http://smhc2014.com.sg/>).
- Dr Lori has accepted the National Council of Social Service (NCSS)’s invitation to train its member agencies to develop and sustain peer specialists trained to work alongside professional staff in mental health and employment support settings for persons with mental health issues. This two-day workshop “Recovery Practices in Leading and Coaching: Developing and Sustaining a Peer Support Workforce” will be conducted at NCSS’ human capital development arm, the Social Service Institute, on 23 and 24 October 2014.

### HEALTH PROMOTION BOARD

## Factsheet – Adult Mental Well-being

### What is adult mental well-being?

In the first of a kind study completed by the Health Promotion Board in 2010, it was found that Singaporeans understand mental wellbeing to be related to five dimensions or areas: self-esteem, resilience, cognitive efficacy, social intelligence and emotional intelligence. Read on to find out more about each dimension.

### Self- esteem

Self-esteem is about how we think and feel about ourselves. It is about having confidence and believing in our abilities. People with high self-esteem are not limited by their weaknesses. Instead, they are often motivated to find out how they can improve themselves these areas. Such individuals are also driven to learn new skills and believe that they can make a difference to others around them.

### Resilience

In the face of stressful and challenging situations, some people may find it difficult to cope while others are able to take things in their stride. The ability to bounce back from adversity is what we call resilience. People with high resilience see challenge as opportunities instead of threats. Resilience helps us to manage situations effectively and turn them into useful life experiences.

### Cognitive Efficacy

Taking things step-by-step and weighing the pros and cons before deciding, are some of the ways people with good cognitive efficacy handle situations and make decisions. So the next time there's a problem, try taking a step back for an objective view. Break the problem up into smaller pieces and solve them one at a time. Do not be afraid to ask for help if it is needed! You could ask a friend, family member or colleague for ideas.

### Emotional Intelligence

People with high emotional intelligence understand what situations trigger their corresponding emotions and behaviours. They are able to identify situations that make them feel positive, so they can keep returning to those situations. Try taking note of the situations which make you feel happy or relaxed, so you can do them again. Having high emotional intelligence also means we are mindful of our reactions to situations that arouse strong negative emotions, such as anger. Note such instances and prepare a list of strategies you can use to ensure your response is effective. Distracting yourself, practicing relaxation techniques or even talking to friends are all methods that can help you manage your emotions and responses well.

### Social Intelligence

Some people seem to get along better with everyone, whether they are at work or in casual situations. Such people have what we call high social intelligence.

Social intelligence is the ability to interact well with others. Good social intelligence helps us connect emotionally with others and build trusting and meaningful relationships. These relationships form our social networks which can provide us support in good and bad times. People with high social intelligence often take time to listen to others. By doing so, you not only make them feel valued, you gain a better understanding of their perspectives and needs. This helps us forge trust and acceptance, and build rapport.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.hpb.gov.sg/HOPPortal/health-article/202>