FOCUS: Celebrating IMH/WH’s 80th Anniversary
Celebrating IMH/WH’s 80th Anniversary

“Embracing the Past, Defining the Future” – This year, the Institute of Mental Health/Woodbridge Hospital (IMH/WH) celebrates 80 years of her establishment as Singapore’s leading mental healthcare centre.

From the early days of basic psychiatric care in Woodbridge Hospital, to the multi-disciplinary range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and counselling services now offered, the development of mental healthcare has come a long way. IMH/WH is now involved not only in the provision of integrated treatment to patients at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, but also in conducting proactive mental health education programmes for the general public.

Over the years, the development of subspecialties and expansion of services has attested to the leaps and bounds made by IMH/WH. The Department of Early Psychosis Intervention, Community Psychiatry, Geriatric Psychiatry, and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry are just a few of the many subspecialty services offered by IMH/WH. Many of the departments also helm related initiatives for treatment and outreach, such as the GP Partnership Programme (under the Department of General Psychiatry), the Aged Psychiatry Community Assessment & Treatment Service (APCATS) under Geriatric Psychiatry, and the Response Early Intervention and Assessment in Community Mental Health (REACH) programme for children within the school clusters, just to name a few.

With two Behavioural Medicine Clinics (BMCs) and a Community Wellness Centre, IMH/WH’s move to community-based care is fairly accessible. These centres provide specialised consultation and treatment for various mental health conditions at strategic locations throughout Singapore. Through these, mental health and wellness services are no longer confined to IMH/WH premises, but are accessible to the wider community.

Over the years, IMH/WH has gained a name for quality psychiatric research, and won many local and international accolades. The exemplary standard of service rendered to patients and the quality of programmes implemented have also garnered many awards for staff of IMH/WH.

IMH/WH’s pursuit for excellence is relentless and their efforts have been recognised both locally and internationally. In 2006, IMH/WH was presented the prestigious State of Kuwait Health Promotion Award by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for its Early Psychosis Intervention Programme (EPIP). The EPIP programme has also just bagged the National Medical Excellence Award 08 conferred by the National Medical Research Council.

In the Hospital Management Asia 2007 Conference, IMH was presented with the Most Outstanding Customer Service Category for its relentless efforts in reducing the rate of unplanned re-admissions to the acute psychogeriatric ward. Within 3 months unplanned re-admission rates of elderly patients was reduced from 13.8% to 1.04%.

The hospital’s continuing efforts in transforming its 25-hectare campus – the Buangkok Green Medical Park – into a bustling medical park also garnered the Merit award at the inaugural The Enterprise Challenge (TEC) Public Service Innovation Award 2006.

“It is a fact that none of the above could have been achieved without the contributions our staff and many stakeholders. So let us continue together in our journey of making a difference, as we achieve incremental steps and milestones in the years to come,” said Mr Leong Yew Meng, CEO of IMH/WH.

With this spirit of excellence, there is no doubt that IMH/WH is cementing its reputation as a principal tertiary mental health centre and well on track to achieve its vision of being the leading mental health centre in Asia by 2012.

To celebrate and encourage community participation on our 80th anniversary, IMH/WH presents a series of initiatives and an exciting range of events for mental health professionals, as well as the public. Dr Alex Su, Chairman of the 80th Anniversary Organising Committee, says: “I feel very privileged to be part of this committee. We have achieved a lot in the past 80 years, and I am positive that we will reach even greater heights in the years ahead. The line-up of events will actively engage the community and create greater awareness of the importance of mental health.”

An 80th Anniversary commemorative book, “Heartening Minds” has been published to honour this milestone in the history of IMH/WH.
庆祝心理卫生学院成立80周年

继往开来——今年，心理卫生学院/板桥医院(简称IMH/WH)将欢庆其作为新加坡初级心理卫生保健中心成立80周年。

自从早期板桥医院所提供的基本精神保健服务，到如今综合精神学科的康复学、咨询学、以及学科的多学科心理卫生服务，心理卫生保健的发展走过了一段漫长的里程。目前，IMH/WH不仅致力于为病人提供多层次、一体化的服务，而且积极为公众开展心理卫生教育。

这些年来，IMH/WH的迅速发展集中体现在学科细分和服务扩展方面，比如精神分裂症的早期干预科、社区精神科、老年精神科、儿童及少年精神科的建立等等。许多部门还推出了标新立异的治疗和社区关怀项目，像精神科的家族医生伙伴计划、老年科的老年人精神病社区评估和治疗服务、儿童及少年科的在校学生心理卫生早评估、早干预、早治疗活动等等。

此外，随着两个行为医学门诊(BMCs)和社区健康中心的设立，IMH/WH向心理卫生保健社区化又迈进了显著的一步。这些门诊及中心的分布都经过慎重权衡，以方便为全体国人提供全面专业的心理咨询服务。通过这些举措，心理卫生保健服务已不再局限于IMH/WH院内，而是走进了广大的社区。

这些年来，IMH/WH在精神科学的研究方面取得了显著的成就，曾荣获多项本地及国际大奖。学院也在医护服务方面也多次获奖。IMH/WH总裁梁友铭先生感言，"事实证明，我们的成就是我们的医护人员及有关部门共同努力的结果。让我们在促进心理健康，治病救人的道路上再接再厉，再创佳绩。"有了这种力争上游的精神，IMH/WH无疑将更加巩固其作为全国最精良的心理卫生保健中心的地位，进而稳步走向2012年成为亚洲首屈一指的心理卫生中心的目标。

为庆祝建院80周年以及促进社区的积极参与，IMH/WH将为从事心理卫生保健的专业人士与公众呈现一系列新举措以及丰富多彩的活动。庆典筹委会主席苏心荃医生说，"我很荣幸成为庆典筹委会的主席。我们在过去的80年里取得了众多成就，我相信在未来的日子里，我们还会百尺竿头，更进一步。我们所策划的一系列活动将吸引社区的积极参与，从而帮助公众提高对心理卫生重要性的认识和增进对心理健康的理解。"

与此同时，IMH/WH也将出版一本名为"Heartening Minds"的80周年纪念册，以纪念IMH/WH 80岁这个重要的里程碑。

欲知庆典活动详情，请到以下网址查询：www.imh.com.sg。若需庆典宣传资料，请电邮新闻与通讯部至enquiry@imh.com.sg。

### Event Highlights

1. Occupational Therapy Day – 11 Jan 08
2. Public Forum on Managing Difficult Children – 19 Jan 08
3. ViBes’08: Voices through the Arts (in collaboration with NTU) – Jan 08
4. Saving Grace – A Musical for the Mind (in collaboration with NUS) – 26 – 28 Mar 08
5. Social Workers’ Day – 11 Apr 08
6. "Ode to Wellness"Charity Concert & Launch of 80th Anniversary Commemorative Book – 20 Apr 08

For more information on IMH/WH’s 80th anniversary line-up of events, please log on to www.imh.com.sg. If your organisation wishes to have a copy of the 80th Anniversary collaterals, kindly e-mail the Corporate Communications Department at enquiry@imh.com.sg.
**80th Anniversary Keynote Event**

**“ODE TO WELLNESS” CHARITY CONCERT**

In aid of the Woodbridge Hospital Endowment Fund

Experience the healing effects of fun and laughter in this charity concert with a difference, brought to you by the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) and presented by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO)! Enjoy the best of Eastern and Western music that is educational, entertaining, and therapeutic all at the same time.

Part of the popular “SCO Casual Classic” series, “Ode to Wellness” continues the success formula of introducing Chinese orchestral music in a lively and interactive manner. You can also expect an innovative infusion of creative work by our psychiatrists and patients, as well as a relaxation session.

Local celebrity Dick Lee will host the concert and tell you the story of Dizi, Xiao and Xun - wind instruments with unique characteristics. In a delightful celebration of wellness and life, the music combines the sharp, clear notes of the Dizi and the serene, meditative sounds of the Xiao and Xun. Other interesting pieces include Leroy Anderson’s Chicken Reel, Fiddle-Faddle and The Syncopated Clock, which will showcase the fun-loving, animated facets of Chinese music.

President S R Nathan will grace the event as our Guest-of-Honour.

With your continued support, IMH continues to strive ahead in improving the mental well-being of our nation.

**WOODBRIDGE HOSPITAL ENDOWMENT FUND**

The Woodbridge Hospital Endowment Fund (WHEF) supports projects and programmes in psychotherapy, rehabilitation, welfare, early detection and intervention, as well as provides financial assistance to needy patients of IMH including children. Our patients aspire to a normal life just like any other person:

“I want to get a job. I want to see my son grow up.”
Ms E

“I would like to find a simple job. Rent a flat and stay with my mother.”
Amena B

“I want to go home because I miss my family and home. I want to earn money so as to not let my mother worry.”
KK

“My goal is to get well and be discharged. I want to support myself.”
Lim MH

“I want a stable office job and be married to my fiancé.”
Mr M

Your contributions to the WHEF will make a difference to the lives of our patients, who need more than just medical treatment to help them get back on their feet.

The Woodbridge Hospital Endowment Fund (WHEF) is a registered charity (Charity Registration No.: HEF0065/G).

板桥医院慈善基金(WHEF)是用来为我院患者开展心理治疗，复健治疗，病人福利，早期发现与预防等项目和活动，也为院内包括儿童在内的贫困患者提供经济援助。精神疾病患者往往需要这些非药物治疗才能重归社会。您给予WHEF的捐款将对他们的康复有重大深远的意义。

板桥医院慈善基金(WHEF)是一个正式注册的慈善组织（注册号码：HEF0065/G）。

**Tickets 票价**

$138, $88, $58, $38

**Early Bird Price till 7 April 08 优特价 (于2008年3月31日前)**

$88, $58, $38, $28

**Group Booking 集体票价**

A further discount of $5 off per ticket will be given for purchases of 10 tickets or more.

For tickets and more information, please contact: enquiry@imh.com.sg; 6389 2826 or 6389 2866.

有意购票或需要更多讯息者，请发电邮至enquiry@imh.com.sg或拨电 6389 2826 或 6389 2866。
Awards, Accolades, Applause!

**National Medical Clinical Excellence Award**

The Early Psychosis Intervention Programme (ePIP) has won the inaugural National Medical Clinical Excellence Award. Presented by the National Medical Research Council (NMRC), this award recognises teams or organisations in Singapore that have undertaken a clinical quality/practice improvement project that succeeded in making an outstanding contribution to improving patient safety and care through exemplary innovative transfer of benefits of research, novel methods or care delivery resulting in improved standards of care, health outcomes, higher efficiency and/or more effective patient-centred services.

The ePIP team demonstrated their achievements through successful population of novel care delivery services beyond the unit/ward/department. For its outstanding research towards the understanding of psychosis and its management, and for its exemplary and innovative approach towards the detection and treatment of first episode psychosis following its inception, ePIP was honoured with this award.

The award was presented to ePIP at a special formal ceremony where the Guest-of-Honour was the Minister of Health. ePIP was represented at this ceremony by A/Prof Chong Siow Ann (Project Leader), Dr Swapna Verma (Co-Leader), Ms Poon Lye Yin and Ms Helen Lee (team members).

The award comprises S$10,000 prize money, a plaque, and a citation.

**Conferement of Doctor of Medicine Degree (MD)**

A/Prof Chong Siow Ann has been conferred Doctor of Medicine Degree (MD) by the National University of Singapore on 14 February 2008. The MD was conferred for his thesis “Risk Factors for Tardive Dyskinesia among Asian Patients with Schizophrenia”.

**Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence**

Dr Alex Su was chosen to receive the Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence from Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore. This award recognises his consistently high standards of excellence and dedication in the education of medical undergraduates.

**Pharmaceutical Awards**

Congratulations to Senior Pharmacist Mr Ng Boon Tat who is now registered with the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties (BPS) as Board Certified Psychiatric Pharmacist (BCPP) and Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist (BCPS). Mr Ng is the first in Asia to achieve both awards of international acclaim.

The BCPS is responsible for the individualised and system-based pharmacotherapy in general medical disciplines, such as in disorders of the bone/joint, cardiovascular, renal, endocrine, gastrointestinal and respiratory systems as well as in infectious diseases, pediatrics, geriatrics, hematology, oncology support and critical care. The BCPS also covers applications of pharmacoeconomics and pharmacogenomics, in addition to the clinical and statistical appraisal of biomedical research. To maintain their competency and global recognition, BPS-certified pharmacists must undergo continual training and recertification examinations at least once every seven years.

Mr Ng hopes to enhance his roles as part of clinical teams ensuring the safe, appropriate and economical use of drugs in patient care. He looks forward to also teaching at the National University of Singapore and developing more pharmacist colleagues as fellow specialists in psychiatric therapeutics and general medicine.

The BPS online-register updated on 18/12/07 shows that all other double-certified specialists in Asia are “oncology + pharmacotherapy” (3 in S’pore, 1 in Japan).

**NMRC Medical Research Scientist Award**

Ms Janhavi Vaingankar, Clinical Research Coordinator from the Research Division received the NMRC Medical Research Scientist Award in September 2007.

The award will cover Ms Vaingankar’s course fees for a Masters Degree in Epidemiology offered by the prestigious London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine at the University of London.

Says Ms Vaingankar: “It is my professional aspiration to be an investigator in epidemiological research studies, particularly in the field of psychiatry. This award allows me to equip myself through further academic training in this area while continuing to gain practical skills through research projects with A/Prof Chong Siow Ann. I look forward to acquiring the relevant research expertise and also becoming an active researcher.”
Ask The Expert

Dr Alex Su, Head of Emergency Services, IMH

QUESTION
What is a crisis? What can I do if it happens to me?

ANSWER
A crisis is defined as a sudden unexpected situation with a severity that overwhelms a person’s coping mechanisms.

What determines a ‘crisis’ can differ from person to person. For example, a child whose pet dies may face a crisis, as may a person who faces the loss of a spouse or friend.

When undergoing crisis, a person may show the following responses:

- **Emotional**: Feelings of denial, helplessness, shock or anger
- **Physical**: Hyperventilation, lethargy, gastric pain, insomnia, weight loss

In cases of major crisis, a person may experience hallucinations, have suicidal thoughts, pose a danger to self or others, or display symptoms severe enough to affect functioning. In these cases, professional help is recommended and there are many resources in the community. General Practitioners (GPs), Family Service Centres (FSCs), school or company counsellors, and helplines like the Samaritans of Singapore (SOS: 1800-221-4444) can serve as a first-stop. If necessary, the person may be referred to IMH/WH for further help.

How to Help Someone In Crisis

- Don’t belittle or mock what the person is going through.
- Don’t pay too much attention to the person e.g. checking constantly is he’s ok. This may make the person feel that his responses are abnormal. The experience of certain emotions, etc is a normal process in times of crisis.
- Don’t blame a person for recovering from a crisis too slowly or even quickly, because different individuals have different recovery rates.
- When speaking, lower your tone of voice and ensure that your body language is non-confrontational and receptive.
- Practise active listening. You may try to identify and reflect the person’s emotion e.g. ” I sense that you are feeling helpless about what has just happened.”
- Calm yourself down first. The person is likely to mirror your calmness, and calm down too.

While it is a fact that crisis can happen to anyone, some important things to note are:

- **Everyone** can be affected by a crisis, but may react differently in their own ways
- **Everyone** can recover from a crisis, but at their own pace
- **Everyone** is capable of attending to and helping another person in distress
- **Caregivers** need to take care of themselves as well, while caring for the person in distress

In crisis management, it is vital to build up mental resilience.

IMH’s Corporate Consulting Services offers Crisis Management Workshops for organisations and individuals from time to time. Conducted by a multi-disciplinary team of specialists, the workshops seek to give participants a basic understanding of psychological reactions in a crisis, and to equip them with basic counselling skills to assist affected persons during any incidents.

For more information, please contact Ms Annette Aw at 6389-2832 or at ccs@imh.com.sg.
问咨询专家

问题
什么是危机？遇到危机时我应该如何应对？

答案
危机是指突发，意外情况，其严重性足以使人无力应对。

什么样的情况构成‘危机’因人而异。举例来说，就一个孩子而言，失去一个宠物即可构成危机，正如人们失去亲人和朋友一样。

身处危机时，一个人可能会有如下反应：

• 情绪方面：不能面对现实，无助，惊慌，和愤怒

• 身体方面：气喘，无精打采，胃痛，失眠，和消瘦

当发生严重危机时，一个人也有可能出现幻觉，产生自杀倾向，有伤害自己或他人的危险，以及其他影响正常生活的严重症状。当发生这些情况时，最好寻求专业援助。我们的社区里有很多这类援助资源，家庭医生，家庭服务中心，学校以公司的辅导员，以及新加坡援人协会这样的求助热线都可以作为第一线的求助对象。如有必要，这些机构可以转诊，为身处危机的人寻求进一步的帮助。

虽然众所周知每个人都有可能遇到危机，几点重要的事项仍需要注意：

• 每个人都有可能受到危机的影响，而且，不同的人有不同的应对方法

• 每个人都能够走出危机，不过，不同的人需要不同的时间

• 每个人都有能力关心，帮助身处危机的他人

• 看护人员在照顾身处危机的人时，也应注意自己的健康

在处理危机的时候，最重要的是增强心理的忍性。

如何帮助身处危机的人

• 不要小看或嘲笑对方的处境

• 不要过度关注对方，比如不停地查看对方是否有事。那样做可能会使对方感到他／她的表现异常。事实上，在面临危机的时候出现某种情绪是完全正常的

• 不要指责对方太慢或太快走出危机，因为每个人都有自己应对危机的节拍

• 与对方说话的时候，要放低声调并确保肢体语言亲切和蔼，而不是咄咄逼人

• 练习细心聆听。要尽量去体会对方的情绪并反馈给他／她。

• 你自己首先要沉着冷静。你的沉着会为对方作个榜样，帮助对方镇定下来
The 3rd Occupational Therapy Day held at IMH on 11 January 2008 turned the spotlight on healthcare professionals, and focused on burnout. Themed “Helping Clients and Ourselves: Therapeutic Intervention for Managing Burnout”, attendees were taught how to recognise signs of burnout in themselves, and how to manage it before helping their clients manage theirs.

Mr Leong Yew Meng, CEO of IMH, launched this year’s event with the lighting of candles, symbolic of hope and inspiration for the recovering patients. Prof Wong Kim Eng, Chairman, IMH Medical Board, gave the address and highlighted the increasing presence of burnout in our lives today.

The seminar started with Dr Sim Kang, Consultant, Department of General Psychiatry explaining the phenomenon of burnout in the work context. Burnout is distinguished from stress in that it is more a reaction to long-term stress, occurring with physical and emotional fatigue. A burned-out person may lose interest in his work, become isolated from his colleagues and find work a chore.

Other speakers included Ms Sim So Sin, Senior Occupational Therapist from Changi General Hospital, who spoke about lifestyle management in the treatment of burnout; and Mr Kamaldin Ibrahim, Senior Occupational Therapist from IMH, who spoke on “Healing Burnout through Art” and also conducted an art experiential session, using clay as a medium.

These informative lectures enabled the audience to better understand the nature of burnout, and how they could go about treating it with appropriate methods.

“The tips given were professional and benefited me well. I would definitely encourage others to join the next time,” said Mr John Cheang, Director of Adventist Community Centre.

Ms Fang May Lee, a physiotherapist at Queenstown Rehabilitation Centre, agreed fully. “I could appreciate the visualisation exercise because I do face problems at work too. The session was very practical for me.”

After the seminar, participants were free to browse through the booths set up displaying craft and artwork creations by our patients.

Multi-media interactive stations were also set-up for public browsing, courtesy of computer terminals donated by Hewlett Packard. Users learned about the importance of lifestyle re-design, resilience at work, and tips on preventing a burnout at work. A panel exhibition detailing the history of Occupational Therapy also took visitors down memory lane.

The seminars and hands-on exhibits marked the successful organisation of the Occupational Therapy Day 2008.

The ABCs of Preventing Job Burnout:

- Acknowledge and accept your own feelings
- Be willing to communicate with and confide in others
- Clarify job description
- Determine and know your strengths and limitations
- Educate yourself
- Find time off
- Groups – Attend Support Groups
- Ask for transfer if necessary
Forging Partnerships, Renewing Ties

To thank our media partners for their support and to celebrate the Lunar New Year ahead, the Corporate Communications Department organised a special “Lo Hei” lunch on the 12th of February.

Nearly 20 guests from various newspapers and magazines attended the lunch, held in the festively-decorated Atrium Hall. IMH CEO, Mr Leong Yew Meng, gave a welcome speech, followed by a presentation of IMH’s 80th Anniversary events by Dr Alex Su, Chairman of the 80th Anniversary Committee. Psychiatrists and psychologists were also in attendance, networking with the media and providing details on their impending projects.

Together with COO Ms Tan Weng Mooi, CMB A/Prof Wong Kim Eng, CEO led everyone in tossing the yusheng (raw fish), symbolising wishes for continued close partnership and support in the new year ahead.

In addition to the 80th Anniversary events line-up, key news events for the year highlighted during the lunch include:

- Nurses’ Everglow Programme – re-hiring of retired nurses (March 08)
- Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) – innovative psychotherapy with demonstrated efficacy (March 08)
- Commcare – digital psychiatry initiative that makes patient records mobile
- APCATS-Regional Eldercare Agencies Partnership Programme (APCATS-REAP) – community psychogeriatric teams collaborating with eldercare agencies to provide and co-ordinate mental health services for the elderly in the community (Apr 08)

DCAP, IMH Hosts HMDP Visiting Expert

Prof Kendall is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Child and Adolescent Anxiety Disorders Clinic at Temple University, Philadelphia. A clinical psychologist internationally-renowned for his development of cognitive-behavioral treatments for anxiety in youth, Prof Kendall’s work has been translated into 14 different languages and used in many countries throughout the world, including Singapore. Prof Kendall was hosted by IMH’s Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (DCAP) in January 2008 as a HMDP Visiting Expert.

‘Do’s & ‘Don’ts’ in Managing Anxious Children

- Don't maintain the anxiety. “If a child is afraid to go out into the rain, every time it rains, the child is allowed to stay home. This is not a good thing.”
- Do encourage the child to do his best, instead of insisting on “all ‘A’s”.
- Do allow the child to experience negative emotions. Adults who jump in and fix problems quickly may leave the child thinking he can’t do it himself, and also hamper the development of his problem-solving skills.

Extracted from Prof Kendall’s interview with “Mind Your Body”, 6 February 2008

By Vera Soo, Corporate Communications
An Oasis of Wellness in the Community

The Institute of Mental Health’s Community Wellness Centre (CWC) was officially opened on 1 February 2008. There was a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and in view of the Chinese New Year, mandarin oranges were given to all the patients. Positive feedback was received from many of the patients, who were delighted with the cozy new clinic and expressed their hope about the continued delivery of good service by the CWC.

Formerly known as the Alexandra Behavioral Medicine Clinic, this CWC is located in the heart of the community at Stirling Road. Designed as a one-stop community boutique wellness centre that focuses on a continuum of care from preventive effort to treatment and rehabilitation, the CWC is fully-equipped with a multi-disciplinary group of specialists comprising psychiatrists, psychologists, occupational therapists, community psychiatric nurses, counselors, medical social workers and case managers who provide comprehensive and integrated community care for our patients.

Guided by a patient-centred focus, the CWC aims to improve patients’ satisfaction by reducing waiting time and travelling. Care has also been taken through designing the clinic with earthy color tones and cozy furnishing, making patients feel at ease when they visit the CWC.

The facilities also found favour with the IMH staff. Ho Soo Fung, Sr Occupational Therapist, commented, “The multi-purpose room is a lovely place to conduct weekly scheduled occupational therapy-based activities like art, handicraft, and pottery for our various patients.” The room is also equipped with yoga mats and beanbags for therapies involving physiological-related activities.

Staff of IMH at the new CWC

Welcoming warm tones greet patients at the reception

Comfortable waiting area

The CWC is easily accessible from Commonwealth and Queenstown MRT Stations and is served by Bus Services 51, 61, 93, 100, 111, 123, 145, 147, 153, 186, 196, 198, 631, 642, 855, 961, 970 and N5.

Operating hours are:
- Monday - 8am to 12.30pm
- Tuesday to Thursday - 8am to 5.30pm
- Friday - 8am to 5pm

Please feel free to contact the CWC at:
- Community Wellness Centre, 580 Stirling Road (Level 4), Singapore 148958
- Contact: 6474 4872

For Appointment: 6389 3300

Patients may be self-referred, or referred from any General Practitioner (GP) or polyclinic. Please note that prior appointment must be made.
Interested in attending a similar session?

National Museum’s Children’s Season: Windows to a Child’s Mind

Held in conjunction with IMH’s 80th Anniversary celebrations, and in collaboration with the Child Guidance Clinic, IMH

As part of a mental health education programme with the school, occupational therapists from the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) set up two interactive booths and conducted sessions for Primary 4 and Primary 6 students on Stress Management and Using Art as an Expressive Therapy.

In the Stress Management sessions, the pupils had the chance to use their five senses to look at, hear, smell, taste and touch things that helped them to relax and feel good whenever stress became overwhelming.

The "Stress Dough" was one of the popular stations where the pupils were seen pounding, pulling, poking and rolling the piece of giant flour dough. At this observation, a parent exclaimed, “The kids are really having fun with that piece of dough!”

After a briefing on the use of art as a form of expression, the students put their creativity into action through scribbling chalk onto black paper and producing innovative art pieces, while others had a go at painting on paper.

An art teacher commented, “It is interesting how art helps us understand more about the internal world of kids.”

Mrs How Jia Min, teacher from Seng Kang Primary School and organiser of the Health Carnival, expressed her gratitude to IMH, “It was indeed a pleasure to have you sharing with the students and parents such valuable information on health management and healthy living.”

Get in touch with the Institute of Mental Health by calling 6332 3659 or by visiting their website at www.imh.com.sg.

About the Child Guidance Clinic

The Child Guidance Clinic provides psychological and psychiatric services for children and adolescents from 6 to 19 years of age. Its comprehensive services include multi-disciplinary assessment and intervention for children requiring learning, social, emotional or behavioural support. For more information, visit www.imh.com.sg or e-mail enquiry@imh.com.sg.
NHG Conquers “The Adventure Quest”

“Rain, rain, go away…come only when there is no Family Day…” This was the fervent wish of all members of the NHG Family Day 2008 Organising Committee since Day 1, as it rained during the last NHG Family Day held in 2006.

Getting wet and wild during the Inter-Institution Match at Wild Wild Wet

Thankfully, our wish was granted on 8 March, as bright and cheery skies greeted the launch of the NHG Family Day 2008. More than 15,000 NHG employees and their families braved “The Adventure Quest” at Downtown East, explored the mysteries of Atlantis at the Wild Wild Wet water theme park and entered the wilderness of the Amazon at the Escape Theme Park.

The day started with the Senior Management opening the event by igniting “The Fire” on stage. Following that, many were cheering for their fellow colleagues in the Inter-Institution Match held at Wild Wild Wet, in which AH emerged as the overall winner.

At the fields outside D’Marquee, carnival stalls were provided for both the young and old, such as the junior rock wall inflatable, giant bouncers, high striker and gigantic ludo (giant snake and ladder). On the stage, magic shows, healthy cooking demos and games were also conducted to a constant stream of enthusiastic audience.

A total of 186 fabulous prizes were given away, namely in the Early Bird Draw, the main Lucky Draw and the Adventure Quest Draw. “This is my first NHG Family Day and I found it tremendously enjoyable and fun. It is also the first time I have won in a lucky draw, and that was a pleasant surprise!” said Ms Grace Tay, a Senior Accountant from IMH’s Finance Department.

There is always something for everyone in NHG, so keep a lookout for the next Family Day!

The senior management igniting the start of “The Adventure Quest” at Downtown East

A delighted lucky draw winner receiving her prize from Ms Lim Yee Juan, CFO, NHG

Bumping around at Escape Theme Park

By Lawrence Wong, Human Resource
Sending ViBes Through the Youth Community
Raising Voices Through the Arts

As part of the Institute of Mental Health’s 80th Anniversary, the Department of Early Psychosis Intervention came on board the “ViBes ’08 – Voices through the Arts” campaign, aimed at promoting positive mental health among youths aged 15 to 24 in Singapore through the arts.

Spearheaded by four undergraduates from the NTU Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information and held in conjunction with Silver Ribbon (Singapore), the two key initiatives of the campaign included an island-wide song-writing competition and the staging of an educational skit in schools. These culminated in a finale carnival on 2 February at Woodlands Civic Centre Open Plaza, which was attended by more than 500 youths.

Gracing the official ceremony, Ms Ellen Lee, MP for Sembawang GRC, penned a word of encouragement for mental health consumers on a graffiti jigsaw piece, which eventually formed part of a silver ribbon. This served as a pledge to stamp out stigma towards the mentally ill.

Said Ms Lee, “This event is a timely reminder to all that anyone, regardless of age, sex or status, can be afflicted by a mentally unwell state. The most important thing [for youths who face mental health issues] to do is to seek help immediately, and not be too concerned about face or pride.”

Staff from the Early Psychosis Intervention Programme (EPIP) also turned up in full force to support the event. Dr Swapna Verma, Chief of the Department of Early Psychosis Intervention gave a talk to the audience too. She later commented, “It’s great to see youths coming forth to be actively destigmatise mental illness. We’d certainly like to see more of such outreaches to the community through innovative means.” Dr Swapna also commended the ViBes ’08 team on their enthusiasm and successful campaign, which she felt was well-organised.

The highlight of the Finale was the ViBes ’08 song-writing competition finals. 6 finalists vied for the champion title, which included a song-writing contract from Echo Beats Music Production. The contestants had to compose a song based on the preset themes of stress, depression or support.

After an intense competition seeing several groups performing to a live band, Ms Ng Yuin Yan, an accountancy student at NTU, clinched the title. Her song, “Passage of Love”, was written for the times she spent with her friends, providing support and encouragement to one another.

Ms Ng said, “I decided to join the contest because I have always been interested in song writing. The theme was also very meaningful as it deals with mental illness and the rightful support that such persons deserve.”

Apart from the finals, youths caught the first public performance of the ViBes ’08 10- Minute Play, “Paperface”, which was staged in several schools in January. Other performances included a testimony from a recovered person and band performances.
Can an innovative form of psychotherapy, requiring patients to look at a therapist's finger movements while describing distressing memories, be effective?

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an approach that accelerates the treatment of a wide range of pathologies and self-esteem issues related to upsetting past traumatic events and present life conditions. While EMDR is an intervention that has been around in the United States for the last 15 years, it is, hitherto, little known in Singapore.

EMDR makes use of an external stimulus (e.g. therapist-directed lateral eye movements, audio stimulation, etc) while a client describes distressing memories. This is said to enhance information processing and forge new associations between the traumatic memories and more adaptive memories or information, thereby alleviating the distress associated with the traumatic memories.

The current circumstances that elicit distress are targeted, while internal and external triggers are desensitised. Imaginal templates of future events are also incorporated, to assist the client in acquiring the skills needed for adaptive functioning.

Dr Matthew Woo, Deputy Head of the Department of Psychology at IMH, said, "EMDR is a powerful form of treatment. There are the usual skeptics but when applied in the right context with trained professionals, it is highly efficacious. Some patients are pleasantly surprised by its effect."

Dr Woo shared that noticeable changes could occur as quickly as in a single session. "There was a lady who had some problems with her former boss who harassed her at the workplace. Her initial distress, which caused her to be teary at the beginning of the session, turned around completely at the end of her first EMDR session, when she actually ended up laughing about the whole matter! A week after the session, she was still doing well."

Another patient who had received EMDR treatment said, "I do not see the distressing images that much anymore, and I feel that I am less emotionally unstable. I feel more aware of the environment and the present, and less pre-occupied with my inner struggles. I also feel less likely to be paranoid and think that people are always talking about me."

Dr Woo commented, "One of the things to note about EMDR is that it doesn’t take away negative memories, but changes your feelings, thoughts and interpretations about those memories. It may be a helpful tool where the negative experiences are affecting the patient’s present functioning."

“The efficacy of EMDR depends on the extent and severity of the trauma, and also the number of ‘linked’ memories. The number of sessions required will then depend on how well the patient responds to treatment. However, it is up to the practitioner to assess the suitability of the patient to undergo EMDR.”

In March 2008, EMDR expert Dr Sigmund Burzynski visited IMH and conducted training seminars for IMH psychologists as well as healthcare professionals from other institutions. With more staff trained in this novel form of psychotherapy, our Department of Psychology plans to offer EMDR services to more patients in time to come.
Let the Arts Heal

Calling all who believe in the beautiful minds of IMH’s recovering patients!

Spot patients with the X-factor and sign them up for an in-house audition if you think they have potential in the performing arts, be it music, drama or dance. We welcome singers, musicians, finger puppeteers, actors, and patients/ex-patients of any age who can showcase performing talent.

Successful candidates stand a chance to undergo professional training and be invited to perform at various platforms together with staff and volunteers.

**Event:** Let the Arts Heal Your Soul  
**Date:** 9 May 2008, Friday  
**Time:** 2 - 6pm  
**Venue:** Lecture Hall, Level 2, IMH

For enquiries or to request for an application form, please contact the Corporate Communications Department at enquiry@imh.com.sg.

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Bringing the Arts Closer to the Patients

As a non-profit organisation dedicated to serving the community, Esplanade’s raison d’etre is to bring the arts closer to the lives of different community members - to entertain, engage, educate and inspire them. On Valentine’s Day, eight artists from the An Zhi Percussion Troupe from China put up a Chinese percussion performance for some IMH patients, showing them how creative imagination can be fuelled through the arts. 10 youth volunteers from the Esplanade Youths, a youth club to promote the arts among various community groups, were also present at this event, organised as part of Esplanade’s community outreach effort for the Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts.

“It was quite a memorable morning for most of our patients. So much joy was reflected on their faces just by being part of the activity. The rhythmic music and toe-tapping meant a lot to them and they yearn for more of such experiences,” commented Sister Soh Lee Choo, Senior Nurse Clinician, IMH.

A workshop was subsequently conducted for the patients, who had the chance to drum up their spirits and showcase their talents with the Chinese percussion instruments.

“It was good seeing the delight on the faces of the patients, and how they enjoyed themselves trying out the various types of percussion instruments. Their smiles made our work all worth it!” Ms Veronica Goh, Manager, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs, The Esplanade Co Ltd.
New Year, New Smile

It all began when Mr Sim Kah Ling, a talented resident with IMH accepted a media interview and was about to prepare for a photoshoot. A Corporate Communications representative toyed with the idea of fixing a pair of dentures for Mr Sim so that he could complete his smile. This idea became a reality when the Faculty of Dentistry, National University of Singapore stepped in to help address this need. Dr Hilary Thean screened a group of 14 IMH patients and proposed the idea to the Dean of the Faculty, Associate Professor Kesom Tan, who saw this as a good opportunity for both training and community service.

Assoc Prof Tan suggested that these patients be treated by the institution’s fully-qualified dentists who were pursuing their Masters programme in Prosthodontics. This would not only ensure that patients received quality clinical care by specialists in the field, but also that the faculty would benefit from this unique training opportunity.

IMH received the clinical service, which could have cost up to $15,000, at no charge. A separate $3,000 was raised through the Samaritan Fund for services rendered by the dental laboratory.

“We saw a definite win-win situation here. My residents would get the opportunity to manage and treat a different group of patients. Such exposure is hard to come by in our rapidly developing society. The challenges were not just clinical in nature, but also pertaining to the management of this special group of patients. The experience they have garnered is valuable in their overall training,” commented Assoc Prof Tan on this community project.

The happy result? This group of IMH patients received the greatest Chinese New Year gift – a brand new look and smile – not forgetting better chewing power.

“I used to cover my mouth whenever I smiled because I had missing teeth. Now, I can finally be proud of my smile and I will definitely smile more often,” Mr Sim Kah Ling enthused.