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We welcome your views and prayer support.  
Please drop us a line if you would like to find  
out how you can contribute in any way.

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## Seamless healthcare for outpatients

From April, outpatients seeking treatment need to travel to just one place - St Luke's Outpatient Centre. The centre offers a follow-up clinic, dental clinic, X-Ray facility and diabetic retinal photography.

Head of Medical Services Dr Tan Boon Yeow envisioned a centre that works seamlessly together with the hospital's inpatient and rehabilitation departments. He said: "The aim of opening an outpatient facility is to give patients a continuous, seamless healthcare service. We want to be responsive to our patients need for these services under one roof."

The opening of the centre is in line with the hospital's thrust of holistic care, covering prevention, treatment and continuing care.

"Our equipment such as the x-ray facility enables us to offer more comprehensive care," said Crystal Chee, Manager of Outpatient Services.

Dr Tan said that in future, the outpatient centre will introduce a healthy aging component that screens the elderly. Early detection will ensure prompt interventions that prevent health issues



*Continuous Seamless Care:  
Patients receiving a range of outpatient treatments  
under one roof*

from escalating. Issues that can be detected early include the risk of falls and strokes, memory impairment and heart disease. Specialty services such as falls and wound clinics will be available eventually.

Dr Claire Thumboo, member of the outpatient and homecare medical team, foresees an efficient flow of services from inpatient to outpatient. She said: "We have an interest in geriatrics. We know their medical histories, and the sheer convenience of our services will be a bonus."



*Outpatients continue  
on their road to recovery  
at St Luke's Hospital day  
rehabilitation gym.*

# Balanced advice for fall prevention



Dr Jennifer Bottomley views the inpatient rehabilitation gym

Older people adopt a slower walking speed in compensation for their reduced physical capabilities. However, the gait changes associated with a slower walking pattern put them at risk for falls as each step becomes a more deliberate start/stop cycle in itself. Hence it is not always true that the older people are less likely to fall if they walk slower.

This and other knowledge was shared when Dr Jennifer Bottomley, an expert in geriatric physiotherapy, visited

St Luke's Hospital at a Health Manpower Development Programme conference on 13 January.

Dr Bottomley, who has a double doctorate degree in gerontology, also told the audience about differences in walking patterns between younger and older people.

The conference was attended by staff and healthcare professionals from other institutions.

When she went round the hospital with St Luke's staff, Dr Bottomley suggested that upon admission, patients over 65 should be screened for functional deficits, regardless of the conditions they were admitted for.

"Basically, we have to shift our focus towards prevention. This way we can address these problems sooner and reduce falls incidence and gait problems in the future," she said.

Dr Bottomley is the President of the Section on Geriatrics of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). She has more than 20 years' experience in acute and home care, outpatient clinics, nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

She decided to become a physiotherapist for the older people at the age of 13, when she saw how depressed her grandmother became after breaking her hip and becoming wheelchair bound.

More information on Dr Bottomley can be found on the Section on Geriatrics, APTA website <http://www.geriatricspt.org/leadership.cfm>.



An insightful exchange with staff of St Luke's

## St Luke's Helpline Aid for walking

Reduction in bone mass density and stroke may cause the elderly to lose their mobility. Besides regular rehabilitation, they may need the help of walking aids. Senior Physiotherapist Kung Beng Keng from St Luke's Hospital gives some answers to frequently-asked questions about walking aids.

**Q: How do I choose a walking aid?**

**A:** Factors to consider include the patient's ability to walk, balance and hand usage. For example, a walking frame may not be suitable for a stroke patient who has only one functional hand.

Buy a walking aid only with the advice of a physiotherapist. As a patient may progress physically with rehabilitation and require less support over time, the walking aid may become a white elephant.

**Q: What are the walking aids available?**

**A:** Currently, there are four types of walking aids.

**1. Walking frame:** Has a four-legged base and the patient needs two hands to use it. This may not be suitable for a patient who may have only one functional hand after a stroke.

**2. Quadstick:** One handhold with a broad or narrow base. This can be used by a patient with only one functional hand.

**3. Walking stick:** One handhold with a one-legged base. The patient needs to have a fairly good balance to use it.

**4. Crutches:** Have both axillary and elbow rests. Users should have good balancing ability.



St Luke's Hospital has inpatient and day rehabilitation programmes for patients who need to improve their functional ability, which includes recommendations for walking aids. To make an appointment for assessment into these programmes, please call 65632281 ext 204.

# Different strokes for different folks



*An outdoor poolside party held for St Luke's Hospital Day Rehabilitation and Eldercare participants*

A poolside party hosted by the Police Academy took into account the fact that its 30 visitors were stroke survivors from St Luke's who had some difficulty moving about.

The police organised activities with elements of safety, education and entertainment. This was done through a combination of karaoke, charades and "pass the parcel" games.

A parcel with mystery clues was passed around while karaoke favourites were played in the background and sung by the participants. Once the music stopped, the person holding the parcel had to identify a crime re-enacted by police trainees.

The visitors learnt about the "magic stone" cheat, fake TOTO coupon tout and the infamous pick-pocket. Through the game the elderly learnt how not to fall into these traps.



*Singing their hearts out: Belting out all-time favourites*

Police trainees hosted the party as a result of a wish list sent by St Luke's Hospital to National Council of Social Service as part of President's Challenge last year.

"One of the key thrusts of the Singapore Police Force is community involvement," said Philip Ong, the Police Academy's Community Involvement Project Coordinator. "We hope that through this poolside party, we will be able to expose all trainees to share our joy with the elderly this festive season."

Occupational therapist Ong Lee Mei was heartened by the efforts to re-integrate the patients back into society.

Lim Ah Ha, a participant from St Luke's Hospital, said, "I'm very happy! I can come here with my good friends and have fun."

## Language of understanding

*Kee Lah is a therapy assistant with St Luke's Hospital. This is her story of how she touched patients by learning their language.*

When I was employed as a therapy assistant in St Luke's Hospital, I worked with patients alongside the therapists. Although I knew about physiotherapy exercises, I could not understand or speak dialects.

I wanted to befriend the patients and assure them the exercises were good for them. For many nights, I cried out of frustration. "Why were the patients not doing the exercises correctly? What were they talking about?"

My frustration ended when I attended a dialect course organised by the hospital. I learnt Teochew from a volunteer teacher once a week. The teacher gave students a handbook with phrases of commonly-used words in the hospital. When she walked round the gym or the wards, students would ask for her help when we had problems communicating.

The classes made a world of difference for me and my work. With my knowledge of Teochew, patients now understand my intentions and exercise the right way.



*Kee Lah and her patient speaking a common language*

Now, when they are afraid or need encouragement, I tell them 'bo kia'; do not be afraid.

In future, I want to learn Cantonese and Malay and help more patients.

# Nutrition and You (part 2)

*Continuing from last issue's discussion on nutrition for the older person like their calorie needs, fat intake and fibre, dietician Ong Li Jiuen from Alexandra Hospital concludes her article on elderly nutrition – in the areas of fluid, calcium and sodium intake.*

- **Adequate fluid intake**

The sensation of thirst can diminish and the body's signal for lack of fluids can get weaker as one gets older, resulting in inadequate fluid intake. Adequate fluid intake is needed to prevent constipation and dehydration. The recommended fluid intake is six to eight glasses of fluid (1.5 liter) daily, depending on their activities or needs. Besides water, clear soups, juicy fresh fruit, fresh fruit juices and unsweetened drinks are good choices of fluid. Tea or coffee should be avoided as they are diuretic substance that increases urine output.

- **Calcium intake**

Dairy products such as cheese, yogurt and milk are the richest sources of calcium. It is recommended that two to three servings of dairy products should be consumed everyday to obtain the adequate amount of calcium the body needs. For elderly above 51 years old, between 1,000 mg to 1,200 mg of calcium is needed to reduce the risk of osteoporosis (reduced bone density or "brittle" bones).

- Lactose intolerance**

The elderly may suffer from lactose intolerance (milk sugars sensitivity) thus making it difficult for them to consume milk products. They can opt for lactose free or low lactose milk.

- Other calcium sources**

Calcium can also be obtained from other foods such as leafy vegetables, canned sardines with bones, dried beans and peas, tofu, and calcium-fortified foods to increase their calcium intake. If the diet is inadequate in calcium, the doctor should be consulted for calcium supplementation.

- **Sodium intake**

Too much of sodium intake may contribute to a rise in blood pressure and accelerate calcium loss. Salt, sauces and artificial seasonings like cubes, preserved/canned vegetables or meat contain large amount of sodium.

*There are also other special considerations that may prevent an older person from eating well. This could include mechanical issues such as unfitted dentures and inability to prepare meals for themselves. In order to maintain health, it is always recommended that a wide selection of foods be consumed to ensure adequate intake of other vitamins and minerals that are also needed to maintain health.*

*Written by Ong Li Jiuen, Dietitian, Alexandra Hospital*



## About St Luke's Hospital – Part V

### Home Care Services

Frail, home or bed-bound clients who need continuing care can be referred to our Home Care Services. These include medical care where our doctor will follow-up on the medical conditions of the patients; and nursing care such as maintenance of naso-gastric tubes, gastrostomy tubes and urinary catheters, wound dressings and stoma care, injection, as well as monitoring of blood pressure and blood sugar. The healthcare team work closely to meet the physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual needs of the clients, ensuring that holistic care is delivered to clients even when they are at home.

The staff also provides support to caregivers such as helping them gain competency and confidence in looking after housebound elderly, addressing caregiver stress and end of life issues.

# Amputee gets back on her feet

Faridah Bte Agil almost lost her life to a virus infection. In the process, she lost her foot and six of her fingers.

Her situation has not stopped her from getting on with her life and, in the process, bring joy to St Luke's staff.

After staying at the hospital for two and a half months, she was well enough to walk with prosthesis.

Out of appreciation, she prepared lunch for the doctors, nurses, therapists and medical social workers. It was an uplifting experience as staff relished the spread of curry chicken, fried mee hoon, tasty bread and kuehs, all lovingly prepared with gratitude.

She said: "The staff here are very nice to me. When they are happy, I am happy!"

When she was discharged from hospital, Faridah invited the staff to her home for a Hari Raya Puasa party. Friends and families shared how Faridah conquered her condition and in the process grew stronger.

Faridah's meals did more than just fill stomachs. St Luke's staff were encouraged, knowing that their work have a positive impact on patients in their care.

Faridah plans to publish her autobiography. She's looking for a sponsor and hopes to donate proceeds from the sale of her book to help more lives in need.



Faridah brought joy and laughter when she visited St Luke's Hospital



Staff celebrated Hari Raya Puasa at the home of Faridah.



Sumptuous spread for the hungry stomachs

Potential sponsors may contact St Luke's Hospital (Corporate Services Department, Tel: 65632281) for details.

## Food For Thots

# Helping others in need

The tsunami disaster that brought death and destruction to countries bordering the Indian Ocean has shaken the nations of the world. However, in the midst of all the ugly scenes of pain and suffering, we are also witnessing something beautiful - the bright light of human compassion. All over the world, people are responding to the tragedy on an unprecedented scale.

The Christian community has been coming forward to do their part. This is to be expected of us. Jesus once told his disciples, "to whom much is given, much is expected." (Lk 12:48). God has blessed us with much in Singapore and we must do our part to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Jesus set the example when he "went around doing good" (Acts 10:38). He fed the hungry, healed the sick, welcomed the outcast and restored the fallen.

The church has a long tradition of helping others. Christians have counselled the distressed, educated the young, cared for the elderly, rehabilitated drug abusers, and many other area of service. May we continue this good work as we respond to the tsunami crisis.

Dr Bobby Sng

A hospital staff (Kenneth Lam, 4th from left), assisted in relief work in Sri Lanka, while others contributed over S\$2,700 in funds to help the victims under the umbrella of Crisis Relief Society (Singapore)



St Luke's Hospital gave over 60 cartons of medical supplies, dressing gowns and blankets for relief works in Aceh and Phuket, spearheaded by City Harvest Church and Church of Singapore.

## The Giving Spirit

The Lunar New Year marks a new beginning as we cross over to another year of God's abundant blessings. We hope you had a great time indulging in the festivities!

While you are counting your red packets or Hong Baos, please do not forget the needy patients in our care who need your kind donations for their road to recovery in St Luke's.

As a volunteer welfare organisation, St Luke's Hospital and St Luke's Eldercare (five elderly day care centres affiliated to St Luke's Hospital) depend heavily on donations to fund our services to hundreds of people. Your generosity will help us to continue giving affordable quality care to our elderly patients and clients.

To donate, please fill in the form and mail your cheque to the address stated.

Thank you for caring.

Yes, I want to contribute!	
Name IN BLOCK LETTERS (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Mdm/Miss/Ms)	NRIC
Address	
Postal Code	
Tax Exempt receipt will be issued for donations of S\$50.00 and above.	
I wish to donate S\$ _____ to:	
<b>St Luke's Hospital Ltd</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> One-time contribution Cheque No. _____ payable to St Luke's Hospital Ltd	<b>St Luke's Eldercare Ltd</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> One-time contribution Cheque No. _____ payable to St Luke's ElderCare Ltd
Type of Donation (For issue of tax exempt receipt)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal <input type="checkbox"/> Company (Please provide company's name and address)	
Please enclose this coupon with your cheque and send it to us at: St Luke's Hospital or St Luke's ElderCare 2 Bukit Batok Street 11, Singapore 659674	

### Dear Readers

We hope you've enjoyed reading this issue of St Luke's Happenings.

We like to ensure that every issue of our newsletter reaches you and would appreciate an update from you should there be a change in your mailing address. The newsletter can also be forwarded via email if this is your preference. Kindly inform **Jia Hui** at **65632281x305** or email **siajihui@slh.org.sg**

Thank you.  
*Magdalene Choo, Editor*

## Continuing Education Programme 2005

Venue : Multi-Purpose Hall  
 St. Luke's Hospital  
 2 Bukit Batok Street 11  
 Singapore 659674  
 Tel : 65632281  
 Fax : 65618205  
 Time : 1 – 2pm  
 Contact : Florence Ho (ext 279)

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
1 Feb	Alternative & complementary medicine for the elderly	Prof Lee Tat Leang
1 Mar	Management of IHD (Ischaemic Heart Disease) in the elderly	Dr James Yip Wei Luen
5 Apr	Management of the elderly amputee	Dr Tjan Soon Yin
3 May	Practical approach to hearing loss in the elderly	Dr Goh Yau Hong
7 Jun	Dietary management of malnutrition in the elderly	Ms Gladys Wong Hooi Chuan

## In-Service Educational Programme

Venue : Multi-Purpose Hall  
 St. Luke's Hospital  
 Time : 1 – 2pm  
 Contact : Monica Michael (ext 220)

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
8 Mar	Fever in Long Term Care Facilities in the elderly	Dr Colin Ngeow
12 Jul	Infection Control in Long Term Care Facilities	Mr Edward Poon