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St Luke's Happenings is published by  
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We welcome your views and prayer support.  
Please drop us a line if you would like to find  
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## Tender loving care through Home Care

**G**. Neelakantan was a strong 86 kg man who once worked under the sun. Now, he is half his former size as a result of a major stroke, which he nearly died from. He is still unable to speak normally.

He received St Luke's Home Care Service after he was discharged from hospital and is now well-taken care of by his loving family

His son Suresh said, "With the help of home care nurses from St Luke's Hospital, we learnt how to feed and bathe my father. We helped him to do simple rehabilitative exercises at home. We learnt why it is important to regularly turn him in bed to avoid getting bed pressure sores. Your doctors, nurses, therapist, social workers took care of him while he was at the hospital and even now, when he is at home."

**St Luke's Home Care Service  
has helped the family to  
support one another so that  
they can care for him in a  
cosy home environment.**

St Luke's Home Care Service has helped the family to support one another so that they can care for him in a cosy home environment. A nurse checks on him once a month and teaches the family how to look out for medical symptoms. They also learnt what type of food is suitable for his diabetic condition.

Before his stroke, G. Neelakantan enjoyed friendly bickering sessions during festive home gatherings.



*Home Care is the best care*

Now, he enjoys listening to these sessions in the family living room. Like before, they would watch television, eat, talk and play with the children.

When his 3 years old grandson plays at his bedside and laughs, G. Neelakantan reacts with certain facial expressions and soft moaning.

Even in his quietness, his family has not forgotten him. Suresh says their home is like a garden with no birds, but they hope that his father would fully recover one day.

*For information on  
Home Care Services, please refer  
to SLH Helpline, page 2*

# The Travelling Doctor



*Dr Claire Thumboo - The Travelling Doctor*

It was a day when I had two new patients to visit. One had suffered a massive stroke recently. The other had chronic renal failure and diabetes.

At the first home, I saw that the patient was depressed as he looked away from me when I called his name.

The caregivers had difficulty turning him over for me to examine his bed sore. Although the wound was not big, the sore had not improved since he was discharged from hospital. I suggested

**Dr Claire Thumboo travels to provide medical care in patients' homes. She tells her story of what a home visit is like.**

that a ripple mattress would help prevent further bedsores. I also advised them to consider getting a hospital bed, which would make nursing easier. I offered to check if a donated bed was available. The patient's diabetes and blood pressure were well controlled, but he had a mild chest infection. I prescribed the appropriate antibiotics.

The caregivers were obviously stressed, as they teared when I asked them how they were managing. I spoke to them at length to get a better picture of the stress they were facing. After a few words of encouragement, I left and made a mental note to have the home nurse visit in a week's time to check on the wound and see how the caregivers were coping.

At the second home, the patient was able to sit out of bed and converse with her family. She had been very sick when she was discharged from the hospital. It seemed like the grandchildren and home cooked food had done wonders!

I changed her urinary catheter and drew blood samples to check her kidney function and blood sugar level. The caregiver listened carefully as I advised her on how to monitor her urine input and output and diabetic diet. I advised the family to consider enrolling the patient in a day rehab centre now that she had improved.

Caregiver stress is very real in home care situations where the provision of 24-hour care for a home bound and bed bound patient can be very draining. A very important role of the home care doctor is to empower the caregiver and family to be competent and confident in caring of their loved ones. This is done by educating the family about the patients' illness, possible complications and prognosis. Lending a sympathetic ear to understand their frustrations and fears, and encouraging them also helps.

## St Luke's Helpline

# Bringing care to the frail at home

When frail elderly persons need medical and nursing care, but are unable to travel to seek treatment, where can they turn to? The answer is "home care services". St Luke's Acting Manager of Outpatient Services, Kenneth Lam, tells us more.

### **Question: What is home care services ?**

**A:** Home care services provide homebound patients with the care and resources needed to maintain health and independence at home for as long as possible. This is to prevent repeated unscheduled hospitalization or premature institutionalization. The care enables patients to stay at home and helps to promote the patients' self-esteem.

St Luke's Home Care Services includes Home Medical Care and Home Nursing Care.

In home medical care, the doctor visits patients with chronic illnesses to make a comprehensive assessment of the

medical condition, followed by periodic health checks and medication. The doctor may refer patients to specialists where appropriate, and educate patients and caregivers on the illness and management plan.

In home nursing care, a nurse visits patients to monitor chronic medical problems, assess the control of diseases and detects any potential problems.

Specific nursing procedures are performed, eg. Wound dressing, stoma care and care of urinary catheters, nasogastric tubes and gastrostomy tubes. The nurse also educates caregivers on nursing care, such as proper feeding techniques and prevention of pressure sores.

### **Question: What type of patients benefit from home care services?**

**A:** Home care services benefit frail elderly patients with chronic diseases and ambulatory problems, and who do not have ready access to mobile health services.

### **Question: How do I apply for home care service?**

**A:** You can get a doctor or a medical social worker to refer you to the service. A copy of the referral form may be obtained from St Luke's Outpatient Services Department. Besides getting someone to refer, you may also refer yourself. Please call our Outpatient Services Department at 6895 3230 for more information.

## Hassle-free specialist consultation for patients

Patients admitted to St Luke's Hospital for rehabilitation due to joint or bone problems can now see a specialist orthopaedic consultant with little hassle.

The consultant, Adjunct Associate Professor Khong Kok Sun of National University Hospital, comes to St Luke's every fortnight to examine patients together with the St Luke's team of doctors and therapists.

Before this, patients had to return to their referral hospitals to see the bone specialists there. Families had to accompany them to radiological clinics for X-rays. Sometimes specialist appointments are delayed, thus affecting patients' rehabilitation.

With the consultant's visit, patients and their families have benefited from faster review of cases without the inconvenience of traveling to other hospitals for specialist appointments. Moreover, X-rays can be taken at St Luke's Outpatient Centre.



*Dr Khong Kok Sun discussing a patient's progress with St Luke's doctors*

A/Prof Khong Kok Sun is the Adjunct Associate Professor with the National University of Singapore and a visiting consultant with the National University Hospital. He specializes in treating patients who suffer bone trauma as a result of falls and fractures. He is currently in private practice.

## Better patient care through electronic medical records

Instant availability of accurate and relevant medical information is important for better patient care. Hence, St Luke's doctors have been working with National Healthcare Group (NHG) to open up access to patients' electronic medical records.

On 23 August 2005, St Luke's doctors gained read-only electronic access to the National NHG Cluster-Shared Patient Record System (CPRS). This means that our doctors can now read online, detailed medical records of patients who are admitted here from NHG hospitals. This seamless and secure access allows for faster response time by our admission team when processing referrals from the

NHG clusters of National University Hospital and Alexandra Hospital. As a result, patients can be admitted to St Luke's within a shorter waiting period.

Also, St Luke's doctors can now gain better overall understanding of a patient's clinical progression without having to find out from family members, who often are unable to provide comprehensive information of the patient's condition. "I am able to access a patient's records and immediately tell a confused family regarding the patient's history and outstanding issues," said Dr Kevin Awyong.

Online information on drug allergy data and medications previously prescribed



*Dr Kevin Awyong explaining a patient's condition to a family member*

also ensure a safer prescription environment for the patients in St Luke's.

# "Concert in the car-Park" for therapy

Healthcare at St Luke's Hospital is not just about giving professional medical treatment. It is also about improving patients' quality of life, as this can create a sense of well being and increase motivation, which in turn can improve rehabilitation. To this end, the hospital held several open-air "concerts in the park" recently, involving over 400 caring partners from various schools.

Young students from the neighbouring Princess Elizabeth Primary School treat patients to an afternoon of performing arts, involving the school band, choir string ensemble, angklung and Malay cultural dance. One of the performers, Cheak Yen Hui, said, "Performing at St Luke's Hospital was both a memorable and delightful

one for me especially when I see the joy on many patients' faces." Her grandfather, Cheak Teng Kwang, 97, had stayed for about a month at St Luke's in 2003. He had told her that it was nice to watch and listen to performances here, instead of feeling lonely and bored in bed.

Two hundred students from Singapore Chinese Girls' School came in bus loads to charm the audience with their soothing angklung music and melodic choir singing. They then bowl the audiences over with their giggles and laughter.

Coral Secondary School's lion dance troupe exudes energy and zest. The drummer awakes the lion and his mate from their slumber and uplifts the audience.

Lanterns are strung across the hospital car-park for the Mid-Autumn Festival Performance of Chinese orchestra instruments, string ensemble and a capella rendition of popular Chinese songs by Hwa Chong Junior College.

"We are singing this song 'dang ni gu tan' from our hearts to you," said a student. "Remember us whenever you feel lonely." A patient, See Toh Sui Wan, replied, "Even in my dreams, I will remember you."

Another student, Chai Hui Zhong, was very encouraged by the reception of the audience. She said, "An old man sitting in the first row clapped and cheered loudly whenever a performance ended, flashing a megawatt grin at the performers and acknowledging their efforts with a huge thumbs-up. It warmed my heart to see that he had truly enjoyed the concert."

Her classmate Lionel Ho said, "It was most rewarding. The appreciation from



*Mdm Lee Siew Eng is pleasantly delighted by the Mid-Autumn Festival performance*



*Patient Tan Kian Hoe gives his thumbs up*



*Cheak Yen Hui of Princess Elizabeth Primary School*



*Upclose and personal with patients*



*Malay cultural dance by Princess Elizabeth Primary School*



*Putting up lanterns for the concert*



*Patients cheerfully embraced by a warm sea of blue*



*A concert in unison of love for the patients*

the patients were undeniably palpable. They thanked us, some with simple words which expressed more than they could imagine. Others spoke in jumbled words from hearts full of thanks."

# Quality medical care through life-long learning



Dr Chia Tee Hien checking on a patient



Dr Shirley Goh

Doctors at St Luke's Hospital inculcate the spirit of continuing professional development and life-long learning so as to deliver high levels of medical care to our patients.

Dr Chia Tee Hian was conferred the Fellowship of the College of Family Physicians Singapore (FCFP), having attained the postgraduate medical degree of Master of Medicine (Family Medicine). FCFP doctors are leaders in family medicine. Besides being able to provide comprehensive care to patients suffering from minor ailments to complex chronic illness, these doctors are also competent in long-term care of diseases such as asthma, diabetes mellitus and hypertension.

"Our patients have varying medical, surgical or orthopaedic problems," said Dr Chia. "The knowledge, skills and clinical acumen

acquired in FCFP training is invaluable in helping me to care for them in a holistic way."

Dr Shirley Goh passed the Graduate Diploma in Geriatric Medicine training with flying colours. This is the only locally accredited one-year training course that focuses on medical conditions and treatment of the elderly.

"The course broadened my medical acumen on geriatric issues of falls, immobility, dementia, impaired sensorium, incontinence and more," she said.



## Food for Thot

*Christmas isn't Christmas till it happens in your heart. Somewhere deep inside you is where Christmas really starts....*

As you read these lyrics, are you thinking ... "Whoopee!!!" or "So soon already ah?"

If your response is the latter, chances are Christmas conjures a time of endless shopping, partying or rushing around frantically. Maybe you want a change? You don't mind the joy of the season as long as you don't have to pay with an energy debt! So what will you do this time?

*"Christmas isn't Christmas till it happens in your heart."* Will you welcome Jesus? He is waiting now as He did so long ago. Jesus brings gifts of truth and life and makes them bloom and grow. So welcome Him with a song of joy. And when He comes, you'll know that *"Somewhere deep inside you is where Christmas really starts!"*

## Loving Kindness, Giving Heart

Each year, we are blessed with resources to care for our clients through generous donations from individuals, churches and corporations.

As the festive seasons of Christmas, New Year and the Lunar New Year draw near, we would like to thank all our donors and supporters for your loving kindness and giving heart. Their big heartedness has made affordable quality care possible for our clients.

St Luke's Hospital and St Luke's Eldercare are voluntary welfare organisations that depend heavily on donations to fund our services to clients.

Every year, St Luke's Hospital provides quality healthcare services to 1,000 patients, while the 5 St Luke's Eldercare centres serve over 500 elderly.

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

Thank you for caring.

We wish you God's joy and blessings this Christmas and in the New Year.

Yes, I want to contribute!	
Name IN BLOCK LETTERS (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Mdm/Miss/Ms)	NRIC No.:
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	

# Nine years of compassion and quality care

St Luke's Hospital celebrated its 9th anniversary on 15 October. Nine community partners and volunteers were presented with awards by Chairman Prof Lee Hin Peng for their contributions to the hospital. In his speech, he also acknowledged the important roles played by the board of directors and function committee members in ensuring the hospital complies with the governance requirements of the hospital's Institution of a Public Character status, and the need for sound financial management of donations.

The hospital has grown over the years as it provides quality care and compassionate service. Executive/Medical Director Dr Fong Ngan Phoon reported that over 1,000 patients had received treatment in the hospital from January to September this year. This is an increase of 18% in admissions compared to the same period last year.

One reason for the increase is the provision of new services with the completion of phase one of the hospital's redevelopment in March 2005. Patients can now continue to receive treatment at St Luke's Outpatient Centre even after they have returned home. In addition, the new X-ray facility means added convenience to those who needs this service. In phase two of the redevelopment, more improvements are expected, such as wider bed space and new activity areas for patients.

Also speaking at the anniversary thanksgiving celebrations was Dr Tan Lai Yong, a Singapore International Foundation award recipient. In his message "Remember the Lord your God", he exhorted the audience to keep their eyes on the Lord because He always watches over them. He shared how God took care of him as he ventured alone into the Tiger Leap Gorge in Yunnan some years ago.

"We must remember the Lord as we work together in St Luke's," he said.

Dr Tan's book, *Waiting for Growth*, is dedicated to St Luke's Hospital as well as Dr and Mrs Bobby Sng. The book was launched at the anniversary celebrations. Bethesda Frankel Estate Church, one of the hospital's founding members, sponsored the production of the book. Gift copies were given to over 200 guests who attended the service.

Copies of the book are on sale. All proceeds will go to the hospital's Chaplaincy Fund. Please see insert for details.



*Award Recipients with Chairman, Prof Lee Hin Peng and Executive/Medical Director, Dr Fong Ngan Phoon*



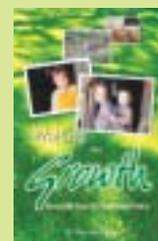
*A guest, Nesta Freathy, getting a personal autograph from Dr Tan Lai Yong*

## "Waiting for Growth"

- a personal glimpse

Tan Bee Ker, Chaplain, St Luke's Hospital

In "Waiting for Growth", Lai Yong reminds us of the need to learn to wait on God in our busy world and the folly of rushing headlong into life wounding and being wounded, or worse, away from God.



We often fail to pause and ponder the fact that "the Lord is the Builder and any results that are of eternal value are in His good hands and not ultimately dependent on frail human effort." No wonder Albert Einstein said, "I want to know God's thoughts; the rest are details."

Lai Yong calls us to be "at rest once more" by going back to the basic essentials of knowing who God is and who man is. We are exhorted to dwell in God's Word, to rest in Him and to be silent before Him. And as we "resolve to be simple-hearted before God," we re-discover the riches of God's Word and growth takes place.

*"Waiting for Growth" is available at St Luke's Hospital. Price: \$12 per copy or \$10 per copy for purchase of 5 or more copies. Please call Bee Ker at 6895 3401 or email tanbeeker@slh.org.sg*