

Press Release

For immediate release

28 March 2013

A \$25m gift from Yong Loo Lin Trust to help fight cancer

NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine to work with National University Cancer Institute, Singapore to develop new models of cancer care through research and education

SINGAPORE – The National University of Singapore (NUS) Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine has received a \$25 million gift from the Yong Loo Lin Trust to work with the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) to develop new models of cancer care through research and education.

This gift is in addition to the \$100 million gift from the Trust to the School of Medicine in 2005 which transformed the School's research and scholarship in several diseases, including cancer. The new gift is meant for the development of better ways to prevent, screen, diagnose, and treat cancer at NCIS, which is located at the National University Hospital (NUH).

In appreciation and recognition of the Trust's latest gift, NCIS's upcoming facility at the hospital's soon-to-open NUH Medical Centre will be named the Yong Siew Yoon Wing. Ms Yong is a daughter of the late Dr Yong Loo Lin, a physician-turned-businessman who was a strong proponent of education.

The gift will attract a matching grant from the Singapore Government, bringing the total funding up to \$50 million.

Yong Loo Lin Trust pivotal in shaping medicine, music education

Acknowledging what he said was "yet another transformational gift from the Yong Loo Lin Trust", NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan expressed the University's deep appreciation for the continuing support that the Trust is giving to NUS. "NUS has benefitted tremendously from the beneficence of the Yong Loo Lin Trust over the years; with gifts in 2003 and 2008 totaling \$50 million to the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, then to the Medical School in 2005 with a gift of \$100 million, and now, with this gift of \$25 million to advance cancer research,

education and care in Singapore through the Medical School. The Yong Loo Lin Trust has truly been pivotal in shaping the future of education in medicine and music in Singapore. We are deeply grateful and honoured by this gift.”

The cancer burden in Singapore

NUS Vice-Provost for Academic Medicine and Director of NCIS, Professor John Wong, Isabel Chan Professor in Medical Sciences, said the School has been investing its research and education efforts in key diseases of significance to Singapore. One such disease is cancer, the leading cause of death among Singaporeans. With increased life expectancy, it is estimated that one out of three people will be afflicted with cancer in their lifetime.

Many major milestones in Singapore’s cancer history have resulted from pioneering work done by NUS and NUH faculty over the decades. Today, cancer research and education efforts on campus are spearheaded by NCIS and the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore (CSI) at NUS.

Cancer is a major disease burden worldwide. Globally, approximately 12.7 million people are diagnosed with the disease every year and an estimated 7.6 million die from it.

“Almost fifty-two thousand new cases were diagnosed among Singapore residents between 2006 and 2010. Colorectal cancer is now the most common cancer among men, accounting for almost one in five of all new cancers. Among women, it is breast cancer, accounting for almost one in three new cancers. We need to develop better ways to prevent, screen, diagnose and treat cancer through research and education. We cannot expect other countries to develop solutions for our problems,” Professor Wong added.

Gift to support ongoing and new cancer research at NUS and NCIS

The gift from the Yong Loo Lin Trust will help fund cancer research and education. It will enable clinicians and clinician-scientists in NCIS to work closely together with relevant counterparts across Singapore and internationally to find useful and cost-effective treatments for cancer patients living here, while also providing seed-funding for clinical trials.

These high quality research projects will focus on a range of cancer-related problems, which will benefit Asian patients.

The key clinicians and scientists, several of whom hold appointments in NCIS and jointly in the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, working on important cancer-related research projects, include:

- Associate Professor Yeoh Khay Guan, Dean of the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. He is leading a multi-institutional team that has been able to save lives, detecting gastric cancer at Stage 0, sparing patients surgery, chemotherapy and radiation.
- Associate Professor Goh Boon Cher, who leads NCIS’s drug development programme, and has placed Singapore on the global map for cancer drug development in Asian patients.

- Associate Professor Lee Soo Chin, who is developing molecular signatures to predict which drugs work best for individual patients with breast cancer.
- Associate Professor Chng Wee Joo, who has pioneered work in the treatment of myeloma, a form of bone marrow cancer.
- Associate Professor Allen Yeoh, who has developed molecular markers to tailor chemotherapy for children with leukemia, improving clinical outcomes in Singapore and collaborating centres in Malaysia.

NCIS is also the headquarters of the Cancer Therapeutics Research Group (CTRG), a joint research group comprising nine institutions in Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea. The group collaborates on clinical trials to develop new therapeutic strategies for cancers common to the Asia-Pacific region.

Holistic care for cancer patients

When the Yong Siew Yoon Wing at the 72,000 square metre NUH Medical Centre is ready, NCIS patients will be able to benefit from a one-stop facility for holistic care. The Centre will integrate physician consultations, family and patient counselling, chemotherapy infusion, radiation therapy, diagnostic imaging, and a health resource centre in a single location.

Facilities and services for imaging, dietetics, pharmaceutical dispensing and clinical laboratories will be located close to clinical areas to minimise movement and the time taken to access care, effectively expressing the National University Health System's (NUHS) plan for patients to receive cost-effective care in the most appropriate setting with coordinated, seamless and efficient management through close coordination between specialties. NCIS's location within the 20-storey NUH Medical Centre alongside other NUH specialist medical clinics makes this a reality when it opens in due course. Then, space vacated by these clinics at the NUH's Main Building will be upgraded and reconfigured to accommodate new patient care facilities.

Ambulatory teaching setting enhances medical education

Provisions have also been made to create a conducive, learning environment for medical students and trainees. "This ambulatory teaching setting, in which we move away from conventional teaching in the wards to the clinics, will change traditional medical training. It will enable medical students and residents to learn to tackle real-life problems and gain the clinical experience and knowledge they need to become effective doctors," said Associate Professor Benjamin Ong, Chief Executive of NUHS and Senior Vice-President (Health Affairs), NUS.

This new teaching practice is also aligned with the Medical School's newly revised curriculum, which aims to lay a firm foundation in the basic medical sciences while providing students with high quality clinical experiences through early patient exposure from the beginning of their five-year medicine course.

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About the National University of Singapore (NUS)

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore's flagship university which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise.

NUS has 16 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 37,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives.

NUS has three Research Centres of Excellence (RCE) and 23 university-level research institutes and centres. It is also a partner in Singapore's 5th RCE. NUS shares a close affiliation with 16 national-level research institutes and centres. Research activities are strategic and robust, and NUS is well-known for its research strengths in engineering, life sciences and biomedicine, social sciences and natural sciences. It also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

For more information, please visit www.nus.edu.sg

About the National University Health System (NUHS)

The National University Health System (NUHS) groups the National University Hospital (NUH), the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, the NUS Faculty of Dentistry and the NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health under a common governance structure to create synergies to advance health by integrating clinical care, research and education.

The enhanced capabilities and capacity will enable the NUHS to deliver better patient care, train future generations of health professionals more effectively and bring innovative treatments to patients through groundbreaking research.

For more information about the NUHS, please visit www.nuhs.edu.sg

About the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM)

Established in 1905, the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine was the first institution of higher learning in Singapore and the genesis of what would become the National University of Singapore. The School offers one of the finest undergraduate medical programs in the Asia Pacific region and commands international recognition and respect. In 2012, the School was ranked the top university in Asia for medicine and was placed 21st globally by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS).

From Academic Year 2012/13, the School will admit 300 students to its medical undergraduate degree programme annually. The School strives to fulfill its tripartite mission of providing excellent clinical care, training the next generation of healthcare professionals, and fostering research that will transform the practice of medicine. It plays a pivotal role in producing future leaders in healthcare delivery, discovery and public service as well as in Singapore's Biomedical

Sciences Initiative and Singapore Medicine, an initiative to further develop as a regional medical center.

The School's 16 departments in the basic sciences and clinical specialties work closely with the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies and the Centre for Biomedical Ethics to ensure that teaching and research are aligned and relevant to Singapore's healthcare needs.

For more information about the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, please visit <http://medicine.nus.edu.sg/corporate/>

About the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore

The National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) offers a broad spectrum of cancer care and management covering both paediatric and adult cancers, with expertise in prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. The Institute's strength lies in the multi-disciplinary approach taken to develop a comprehensive and personalised plan for each cancer patient and his or her family. NCIS draws on the expertise of its specialists in the fields of haematology-oncology, radiation oncology, gynaecologic oncology, paediatric oncology, surgical oncology, oncology nursing, oncology pharmacy, palliative care, pathology, radiology, medical specialties including gastroenterology and hepatology, infectious diseases, pulmonary and critical care, psychiatry, epidemiology and public health as well as other allied health sciences. NCIS's strength in research allows patients to access drugs and devices before they are commercially available. NCIS is also closely affiliated with the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore, National University of Singapore.

For more information about the NCIS, please visit www.ncis.com.sg

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