

(HEALTH CITY NOVENA)

A NEW AGE OF HEALT



WHEN COMPLETED, HEALTH CITY NOVENA WILL SERVE THE HEALTHCARE NEEDS OF A GROWING AND RAPIDLY-AGEING POPULATION IN THE CENTRAL SINGAPORE AREA.

BY GENE KHOR

HCCARE DAWNS



EVER SINCE THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY, when Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) moved to Novena in 1909, the area has been the main medical precinct for residents of the central region of Singapore. In more recent times, the area has seen the progressive establishment of various other medical care institutions — Ren Ci Hospital, the National Skin Centre (NSC), HCA Hospice Care, Dover Park Hospice and the National Neuroscience Institute — all of which have been located there ever since.

The latest addition to this major medical precinct is the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine), with its inaugural batch of medical students having commenced their course on 5 August 2013.

Given the close proximity of these institutions to one another, they have often worked together to provide comprehensive healthcare to the public. For example, the wards of Ren Ci Hospital — a community hospital and rehabilitation centre — also accommodate TTSH patients who have been deemed stable and need less clinical care. Such an arrangement frees up beds at TTSH and allows the acute care hospital to help more critical patients.

It was during discussions in 2010 on the upgrading of TTSH, the National Healthcare Group's (NHG's) flagship institution, that the idea to expand and physically link the medical service providers in the precinct was put forth. Thus, Health City Novena was born.

More than just building a bigger hospital or having more state-of-the-art facilities, the Health City Novena master plan envisions a 17-hectare modern integrated healthcare hub, to be completed by 2030, that will serve the future healthcare needs of a rapidly-ageing population in the central Singapore area. In fact, the current proportion of people in that area aged 65 and above is 15 per cent, compared to the national figure of 10 per cent.

Beyond healthcare, Health City Novena encompasses a complete ecosystem. In line with its vision of becoming a precinct where *Healthy Life is Central*, it will offer facilities for health services, research and education as well as commercial, leisure and communal spaces.

The master plan was launched on 30 August by TTSH, NHG, stakeholders, grassroots leaders and the Ministry of Health. Between now and 2030, when Health City Novena is set to be completed, eight new developments will be progressively added, with key expansions in the areas of healthcare, education and research.

It is estimated that by then, some 600,000sq m of floor space will be made available for healing, learning and research — a 150 per cent increase over current availability. Aside from the addition of an estimated 30 per cent more beds, resources will be channelled to intermediate care, including rehabilitation, sub-acute and palliative care.

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES

THE EIGHT NEW DEVELOPMENTS OF HEALTH CITY NOVENA.



PROPOSED INTEGRATED INTERMEDIATE CARE HUB

This multi-purpose facility will cater to the intermediate care continuum with services for sub-acute care, rehabilitative care, palliative care and therapy. Dover Park Hospice and a proposed second community hospital will be housed here. This hub will be connected to TTSH and Ren Ci Hospital for seamless and coordinated patient care and transfers. The centre will also house specialist clinics catering to immediate care.

THE FOUR Cs

There are 4 key components of the Health City Novena master plan: Care, Continuous Learning, Community and Connectivity.

CARE will be characterised by the eight new buildings that will help to raise the level of specialist expertise in Singapore. The buildings are: an integrated intermediate care hub where Dover Park Hospice and a second community hospital will be located; a new national centre; an expanded TTSH ambulatory centre; a national centre for infectious diseases; a medical education and training building; LKC Medicine's Clinical Sciences Building; a future health sciences school; and an extended NSC and NHG headquarters (*see artist's impression*).

The plan is taking into consideration how the new buildings will be linked to current ones, to ensure that complementary functions can be aligned and provided holistically and conveniently to patients.

Besides LKC Medicine, Singapore's third medical school, plans are also in the works for two more buildings for learning — TTSH's medical education and training building, and a proposed future health sciences school. These institutions will create an environment for **CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND INNOVATION** in the Health City. The aim is to create facilities that will synergise with one another and enable healthcare professionals to upgrade their skills. At the same time, they can learn to work in multi-disciplinary teams to address increasingly complex healthcare needs. Under the supervision of world-class experts, they will also gain hands-on experience in hospitals, patients' homes and other settings where healthcare is delivered. To integrate with the **COMMUNITY**, the Health City environment is being designed

with the public in mind. Welcoming architecture, green spaces, parks, plazas, and exercise trails will make it conducive for communal activity. And for easy access to Novena MRT Station, a sheltered boulevard with stalls and shops on either side will cut through the precinct.

A park built around a conservation building will be used for events and family activities. Residents and members of Grassroots organisations will be invited to air their thoughts and expectations during the development of the community arenas.

Bringing these facilities and amenities together is **CONNECTIVITY**. When Health City Novena is completed, about 30,000 people are expected to visit TTSH each day, double the current figure. To ensure that human and vehicular traffic flow is smooth and safe, all buildings will be linked at three levels: above ground, at street level and via the basement.

Healthcare buildings will be connected via sky bridges to give inpatients privacy and facilitate direct movement. The siting of specialist clinics nearer to Novena MRT Station means easier access for outpatients coming for consultations.

All routes will be sheltered and residents need not worry about taking the long way around Health City Novena to reach the MRT station as an underground walkway from Akyab Road has been planned. To keep surrounding roads pedestrian-friendly, drivers will be encouraged to enter the interconnected basement car parks immediately upon arrival. About 4,000 parking lots are expected to be available.

5

NEW NATIONAL CENTRE

A new national centre, whose role is yet to be confirmed, will be sited here.

6

PROPOSED TTSH AMBULATORY CENTRE EXPANSION

This will consolidate and expand the amount of space devoted to the hospital's day care and specialist outpatient facilities.



2

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES

This centre will boost specialisation in infectious disease research and prevention. It is set to be Singapore's first line of response in the fight against emerging infectious diseases and outbreaks, with isolation wards, intensive care units and support facilities such as laboratories and radiology facilities.

3

TAN TOCK SENG HOSPITAL MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING BUILDING

The project will provide students with a strong foundation in clinical training across different healthcare settings. It will have facilities such as an auditorium, multi-purpose hall and library. This building will also be central in raising the skill level of community care providers and will educate patients in healthy living via simulators, e-learning labs and training facilities.

4

LEE KONG CHIAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE'S HEADQUARTERS AND CLINICAL SCIENCES BUILDING

Singapore's newest medical school will have auditoriums, learning studios, seminar rooms, teaching laboratories, libraries and many other immersive learning facilities. Its headquarters will be housed in a beautiful conservation building, which historically had been used to house medical students and nurses. The school offers a prestigious joint NTU-Imperial College degree and boasts of a faculty made up of renowned medical leaders from around the world.

7

FUTURE HEALTH SCIENCES SCHOOL

The new school will train Allied Health Professionals to meet the healthcare needs of the community. It is set to also promote staff training and develop healthcare professionals through continuous learning.

8

PROPOSED EXTENDED NATIONAL SKIN CENTRE BUILDING AND NHG HEADQUARTERS

To help meet growing demand for skin- and skin-related care, this building will house outpatient and day treatment clinics, clinical laboratories, a pharmacy, patient education rooms, a research wing and training facilities. It will also house NHG's new headquarters.

(HEALTH CITY NOVENA)



Quotes

“Health City Novena intends to be an inviting and welcoming place to both the sick and the well. With the National Healthcare Group as the primary clinical training partner for Singapore’s newest medical school, the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Health City Novena’s goal to create a place where holistic care, cutting-edge research and innovative education integration is a given. We also hope to create a place where the community will feel an affinity with for generations to come.

By incorporating the four cornerstones of Care, Continuous Learning, Community and Connectivity, we will bring to life our vision of a patient-centred, community-based integrated healthcare development for Health City Novena. Ultimately, we will be *Adding Years of Healthy Life* to the people of Singapore.”

NHG GROUP CEO, PROFESSOR CHEE YAM CHENG



“This vision of an integrated care approach is shared by many like-minded organisations in Novena. Together, we have developed a healthcare master plan where buildings that perform complementary functions are sited together to optimise care and interlinked via sky bridges, pedestrian-friendly streets, leafy parks and underground car parks for safe, convenient and good access to care.

This is just a first step towards total holistic care for the community. We look forward to more exciting developments as we nurture a community of care in Health City Novena where *Healthy Life is Central*.”

NHG CHAIRMAN, MADAM KAY KUOK

THEN AND NOW

Some notable stakeholders share their memories of Novena’s medical past, and talk about what they hope to see in its future.

CLINICAL PROFESSOR LOW CHENG HOCK

EMERITUS CONSULTANT,
DEPT OF GENERAL SURGERY, TTSH

→ I started working here in 1983. I remember how we used to have some pavilion wards, and our rounds used to start from there and continue all the way up to the main building. It was quite a long distance and every morning was a good exercise — those were great times. And in those early days, what impressed me most was the *kampung* spirit of this hospital.

DR PREMAN RAJALINGAM

SENIOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
HEAD OF EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT & TBL
FACILITATION, LKCMEDICINE

→ Even more interesting, even before the buildings are built, is that they have already set the expectation that the ‘software’ needs to be put together. So right now, people are already collaborating, speaking to one another, building competencies — all of this is perhaps more important than the buildings themselves.

ADJ PROF CHEW CHIN HIN

EMERITUS CONSULTANT, TTSH

→ I came here in 1957 as a medical officer and came back in 1961. My family and I stayed in the doctor’s quarters at Akyab Road until 1992. My children grew up here, and my wife was a registrar at the Tuberculosis Control Unit. TTSH is my second home. I was glad when NTU decided to form a medical school with Imperial College and NHG. LKCMedicine’s Novena Campus used to be the Mandalay Road Hostel where students and nurses used to stay.



COMING TOGETHER

Health City Novena was officially launched on 30 August 2013, and Guest-of-Honour at the launch event held at TTSH was Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong.

The next day, a carnival to celebrate the inaugural Health City Day and the new Foot Care and Limb Design Centre was held in the open field along Jalan Tan Tock Seng. About 1,000 NHG staff, their friends and families, as well as residents, came to learn about the big development to their neighbourhood.

Celebrations got underway with a 1.4km Health City Walkathon on a trail that took walkers through the area's historical sites. Games and live performances set a festive mood, while free eye screenings and medication reviews were on hand.

Also present was Guest-of-Honour Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Transport, A/Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, who opened the new Foot Care and Limb Design Centre.

An exhibition showcasing Health City Novena was also on display, and visitors took pictures of themselves in an interactive photo booth.

And, to give residents the chance to be part of Health City Novena's development, engagement sessions were also held in September and October. Additional suggestions and feedback are also welcome via email at contact@healthcitynovena.sg.



“**HEALTH CITY NOVENA WILL ANCHOR THE REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM FOR THE CENTRAL REGION, AND IS A KEY COMPONENT UNDER MOH'S CAPACITY-BUILDING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP MEDICAL EXCELLENCE AND PROVIDE MORE ACCESSIBLE AND QUALITY CARE TO SINGAPOREANS. IT ALSO AIMS TO ENHANCE THE COLLABORATION AMONG HEALTHCARE PARTNERS FURTHER.**”

Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong, at the Health City Novena launch.

