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MEDIA RELEASE

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SINGAPORE'S ALLIED HEALTH WORKFORCE TO GET FIRST-EVER POSTGRADUATE WORKPLACE-BASED CERTIFICATIONS FOR PHYSIOTHERAPY

Modular and stackable programme accelerates upskilling of physiotherapists to manage increasing complex rehabilitation needs both in hospitals and the community

Rehability, a first-in-Singapore allied health post-graduate training ecosystem, developed jointly by NHG Health and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), with support from strategic partner Lien Foundation, will transform rehabilitation care and enhance its standards across acute and community care. It will bring advanced rehabilitation care within closer reach of patients.

A New Chapter for Allied Health Training

Singapore's rehabilitation landscape faces rising complexity with an ageing population, higher chronic disease burden, and a lean workforce. Rehability addresses these challenges through a tiered, structured and clinically integrated training framework. It seeks to achieve three key aims, starting with the physiotherapy group:

- 1) Continuity of care – by facilitating seamless transition between hospital-based and community-based rehabilitation;
- 2) Empowerment of Physiotherapists with Advanced Practice (AP) Privileges - by equipping senior physiotherapists to take on expanded and higher-level practice roles; and
- 3) Workforce retention – by providing physiotherapists (PTs) with clear progression and academic and practising pathways.

Rehability will offer a three-tiered training pathway.

Tier 1 builds on NHG Health's strengths in workforce training and transformation to upskill healthcare workers in the community. The community courses under this tier are co-developed with established community partners AWWA and SPD, and will train specific skills in key rehabilitation areas, introduce new topical modules, and engage community trainers as co-leads.

Tier 2 introduces a novel Residency Programme that offers modular and stackable rehab training that blends classroom training with workplace-based supervision, culminating in post-graduate qualifications at each milestone. The programme will be conducted by NTU Singapore's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine), and is open to PTs across organisations, with confirmed participation from NHG Health, AWWA and SPD. PTs would have to satisfy their institution's governance requirements to practise in expanded roles.

At the pinnacle, Tier 3, Rehability offers a first-of-its-kind Specialist Certificate in Advanced Practice Physiotherapy. This equips experienced physiotherapists with competencies to work in their job roles with expanded scope.

Through Rehability, physiotherapists will have a clearly defined pathway to attain a **Master of Science in Rehabilitation Health** conferred by NTU and they may progress further through the Advanced Practice traineeship to become physiotherapists with AP privileges. These post-graduate physiotherapists will be empowered to be first contact practitioners to manage and diagnose musculoskeletal injuries and may eventually order and interpret X-rays in consultation with medical doctors.

Lien Foundation has committed S\$4.08 million towards the establishment of Rehability. This funding covers programme development and delivery, the training of community PTs and protected time for Tier 2, scholarships for the Masters and APP programme at Tier 3, and a visiting expert programme.

Ms Doreen Yeo, Co-Director of the NHG Rehabilitation Health Academic Clinical Programme, said, "Rehability marks a pivotal moment for allied health in Singapore. We are forging a stronger and more comprehensive rehabilitation ecosystem. Through rigorous workplace-based training and advanced practice roles, we are equipping our physiotherapists to fully utilise their expertise and deliver care at the very top of their licence. This groundbreaking programme, which NHG Health will spearhead through its flagship hospital, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, represents a triple win: high-value care for our patients, a stronger national rehabilitation ecosystem and powerful meaningful career pathways for our physiotherapists."

A Practice-based Approach to Rehabilitation Education and Training

The flexi work-and-learn pathways specially curated and tailored with stackable modules and on-the-job mentorship of the Residency and APP programmes allow physiotherapists to gain new skills while staying in the workforce. Unlike traditional post-graduate options, this practical approach not only ensures their career competitiveness but also enables them to continue to contribute to Singapore's healthcare needs. Modules and content are also thoughtfully designed to be highly relevant to the local needs and context.

Associate Professor Faith Chia, Vice-Dean, Education, LKCMedicine, said, "LKCMedicine is excited to be the academic anchor for Rehability. We have designed a rigorous curriculum, framed around a stackable learning pathway from Graduate Certificate to a FlexiMasters, and finally to a full Master of Science degree in Rehabilitation Health. Such a unique Residency programme developed with NHG Health reflects the progress of our Academic Health System launched in 2024. We are confident it would accelerate the training of physiotherapists to manage more complex rehabilitation needs across the continuum from acute to community care."

Addressing a Critical Need for Advanced Rehabilitation Care

Hospitals as well as community care providers need to ready their allied health professionals to be equipped to manage more complex cases, increasingly seen among our ageing population. At the same time, under MOH's One-Rehab framework, patients with multi-dimensional needs will also progressively be supported in the community, post-discharge. In 2024, TTSH tertiary rehabilitation admissions included 365 severe strokes, 83 brain injury, and 82 spinal cord injury patients. Upon

discharge from acute hospitals, these patients with more complex care needs will need to be supported by highly skilled community-based physiotherapists.

Said Mr Lee Poh Wah, Chief Executive Officer, Lien Foundation, "The strength of any rehabilitation system is defined by the calibre and confidence of its therapists. As healthcare systems face mounting pressures, the future demands models of care where therapists are well equipped to manage complex chronic conditions. Rehability is a rigorous platform designed for ambitious therapists to master advanced skills, uphold the highest professional standards, and shape the trajectory of their field. With an aspiration to empower therapists for greater autonomy and a respected voice across all levels of healthcare, Rehability lays the foundation for a nationalised postgraduate programme which redefines excellence in allied health."

Integrating Advanced Rehabilitation Care from Acute into the Community

Rehability bridges current gaps by training and producing physiotherapists who can deliver right-placed expert treatment, ensuring early effective rehabilitation and seamless transitions in the continuum of care for patients from hospitals to community settings. This also reduces waiting times, minimise unnecessary hospital stays, and more importantly, patients can access rehabilitation care closer to home. Rehability gives physiotherapists from acute and community settings access to these training programmes, and in turn, be equipped to provide high levels of care to their patients.

Mr Alex Lin, Principal Physiotherapist, AWWA, said, "This partnership and our involvement in Rehability is an important milestone for us. By working alongside hospitals and community partners, we are not only strengthening community rehabilitation standards by upskilling physiotherapists in their clinical expertise to manage more complex clients but also building a more robust rehab ecosystem. What makes this especially meaningful is our role in co-developing community training courses, which uplift clinical practice across our sector. Enrolling our physiotherapists for the Residency Programme will strengthen the expertise within our Therapy Hub and among our community partners, collectively raising the standards of community rehabilitation. This will ultimately benefit all our clients through high-quality and timely care in their journey to greater independence."

Added Ms Pauline Koh, Principal Physiotherapist, SPD, "With our strong expertise in rehabilitation and community-based care, SPD is honoured to play a meaningful role in this physiotherapy Residency Programme. Together with our Rehability partners, we will co-create training to further develop the skills of healthcare professionals, drawing on our practical experience in supporting persons with disabilities and those at risk of disability. We aim to strengthen rehabilitation capability and capacity across the care continuum, enabling more holistic and accessible support for the community. We thank NHG Health and Tan Tock Seng Hospital for inviting us to be part of this important initiative."

By 2027, a growing proportion of ageing Singaporeans will benefit from the access to high quality, skilled rehabilitation from both acute and community settings to help them retain mobility, function and independence. Beyond physiotherapists, the largest group within the AHPs, Rehability has plans to expand its offerings to other professions such as occupational therapy and speech therapy in future.

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Glossary of Chinese Terms

Doreen Yeo Co-Director NHG Rehabilitation Health Academic Clinical Programme	杨赛清 国立健保集团康复健康学术临床计划 联合主任
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Associate Professor Faith Chia Vice-Dean, Education Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Nanyang Technological University	谢丽恩副教授教育副院 长 南洋理工大学李光前医学院
Lee Poh Wah Chief Executive Officer Lien Foundation	李宝华 连氏基 金 总裁
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Alex Lin Principal Physiotherapist AWWA	林烈聪 首席物理治疗师 AWWA
Pauline Koh Principal Physiotherapist SPD	许裴文 首席物理治疗师 SPD
Rehability	康复技能提升计划
Master of Science in Rehabilitation Health	康复医学理学硕士
Specialist Certificate Training in Advanced Practice Physiotherapy	高级物理治疗专科培训证书
Residency Programme in Physiotherapy	物理治疗临床培训项目

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About NHG Health

NHG Health is a leading public healthcare provider in Singapore recognised for its quality clinical care and its commitment in enabling healthier lives through preventive health, innovative solutions and person-centred programmes tailored to every life stage. Our integrated health system, which spans primary care, hospitals and national specialty centres, includes Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Woodlands Health,

Yishun Community Hospital, NHG Polyclinics, the Institute of Mental Health, National Skin Centre and the National Centre for Infectious Diseases.

Together with academic and industry partners, we advance medical education, research and healthcare innovation in Singapore, addressing areas that are critical to Singapore's population needs. As the Regional Health Manager for Central and North Singapore, NHG Health partners general practices and health and social care agencies to ensure the physical, mental and social well-being of residents in the community.

Together, we are committed to building healthier and resilient communities, and Adding Years of Healthy Life to the people we serve.

More information at www.nhghealth.com.sg. Follow us on [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [TikTok](#)

About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 35,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Business, Computing & Data Science, Engineering, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, Medicine, Science, and Graduate colleges.

NTU is also home to world-renowned autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Earth Observatory of Singapore, Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources. Ranked amongst the world's top universities, the University's main campus is also frequently listed among the world's most beautiful. Known for its sustainability, NTU has achieved 100% Green Mark Platinum certification for all its eligible building projects. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a medical campus in Novena, Singapore's healthcare district.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About Lien Foundation

The Lien Foundation is a Singapore philanthropic house noted for its model of radical philanthropy. It breaks new ground by investing in innovative models of care, convening strategic partnerships and catalysing action at the intersection of health and social care. The Foundation's focus areas include palliative care, rehabilitation care, aged care, and child & maternal health.

For more information, visit www.lienfoundation.org.