



PRESS RELEASE

NHG AND TANOTO FOUNDATION COMBAT DIABETES WITH DIABETES REVERSAL PROGRAMME

For Immediate Release

Singapore, 5 August 2022 – In line with nationwide efforts to combat diabetes, the National Healthcare Group (NHG) and Tanoto Foundation are spearheading a Diabetes Reversal¹ Programme in Singapore. The Programme seeks to control blood sugar levels in diabetes patients through behavioural change without the need for medication or surgery. Co-funded by a S\$2.6 million contribution from Tanoto Foundation and S\$1 million from the NHG Fund, this initiative will boost diabetes research in primary care and the community.

Senior Minister of State for Health, Dr Janil Puthucheary visited Kallang Polyclinic today and graced the official launch of the Programme. During the event, Dr Janil observed how patients could be engaged, educated and empowered to prevent and delay the onset of diabetes, and the interventions that would be implemented during the key phases of the Programme.

Currently, obese individuals with early diabetes are prescribed glucose-lowering medications, or recommended to undergo bariatric surgery. While diabetes control can be achieved in this manner, achieving and maintaining weight loss for these individuals can be a window of opportunity for diabetes reversal.

The research team from NHG aims to study the barriers and facilitators which can help inculcate positive health behaviours. The team will also conduct a clinical trial for an intensive weight management regime in reversing early diabetes in obese patients. This involves close partnership between patients, doctors and dietitians to create special low-calorie meal plans for these patients, customised to the local palate.

Executive Advisor at Tanoto Foundation Mr Bey Soo Kiang, said, “As a philanthropic organisation, we add value by supporting ground-breaking research, which can be costly, and by contributing where it matters most. As some one million individuals in Singapore are projected to have Type 2 Diabetes by 2050, we hope our partnership with NHG can help bend the curve in the war against the disease. Most importantly, while research on diabetes reversal has been done in countries such as the United Kingdom, this collaborative Programme between NHG and Tanoto Foundation will be conducted in the local primary care setting, to better study and address how our diet, environment, and culture can affect health and disease patterns.”

Associate Professor Chong Phui-Nah, Chief Executive Officer of National Healthcare Group Polyclinics (NHGP) and Primary Care, said, “NHGP is committed to providing an effective multi-pronged approach to tackle diabetes. Apart from medical treatment, health education, patient engagement and empowerment of individuals are of paramount importance to help

¹ Definition of Diabetes Reversal: Maintaining blood sugar levels below the diabetes range without medication.

those at high-risk to modify their self-care behaviours and lifestyle, and to manage their diet and level of physical activity. Our aim is to better understand the challenges that patients face in their social environment and how we can better support them to take greater ownership of their health outcomes through research. The Diabetes Reversal Programme is one such study that proposes a new model of care to help patients reverse diabetes and manage their condition well.”

Professor Benjamin Seet, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer (Education and Research) of NHG, said, “At NHG, we do things differently by putting the patient first, and focusing on real world research that directly leads to better health outcomes and quality of life. A good example would be the programme we are launching today – this partnership, where a philanthropic organisation like the Tanoto Foundation works closely with primary care doctors, dieticians and patients, right within the community, can only bring about impactful change.”

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About National Healthcare Group

The National Healthcare Group (NHG) is a leader in public healthcare in Singapore, recognised at home and abroad for the quality of its medical expertise and facilities. Care is provided through an integrated network of seven primary care polyclinics, acute care and tertiary hospitals, national specialty centres and business divisions. Together they bring a rich legacy of medical expertise to our philosophy of integrated patient-centred care.

NHG’s vision is “Adding Years of Healthy Life”. This vision goes beyond merely healing the sick to the more difficult and infinitely more rewarding task of preventing illness and preserving health and quality of life. With some 22,000 staff, NHG aims to provide care that is patient-centric, accessible, seamless, comprehensive, appropriate and cost-effective.

As the Regional Health System (RHS) for Central-North Singapore, it is vital for NHG to partner and collaborate with stakeholders, community advisors, and voluntary welfare organisations. Together with our patients, their families and caregivers, we aim to deliver integrated healthcare services and programmes that help in Adding Years of Healthy Life to all concerned.

More information is available at www.nhg.com.sg.

About The Tanoto Foundation

Tanoto Foundation is an independent philanthropic organisation founded by Sukanto Tanoto and Tinah Bingei Tanoto based on the belief that every person should have the opportunity to realise his or her full potential. Tanoto Foundation programmes stem from the belief that quality education accelerates equal opportunity. We harness the transformative strength of education to realise people's full potential and improve lives. Tanoto Foundation focuses on making an impact in three main areas: improving learning environments, future leader's development, as well as medical research and sciences.

More information is available at www.tanotofoundation.org/en/.

CHINESE GLOSSARY

薛寒友教授 副集团首席执行官总裁(医学教育和研究) 国立健保集团	Professor Benjamin Seet Deputy Group CEO (Education and Research) National Healthcare Group
马士强 陈江和基金会执行顾问	Mr Bey Soo Khiang Executive Advisor Tanoto Foundation
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