

# Primary Care and Family Medicine

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Welcome to our June/July newsletter! With the change of season and school holidays upon us, we are looking back at a busy few months at PCFM and planning some great events. In this newsletter you will read about current research opportunities, our recent visitors and our first ever patient and public involvement event. Check out the information on the new Primary Care Research series, our multimorbidity events and the re-launch of SPARK, our practice based research network. We'd love to see you at these events – please come and say hi! We also introduce you to Ms. Julia Zhu who shares her research journey which is shaping primary care.

*~Jo-Anne and Eng Sing*

## Introducing SPARK - our new practice-based research network



**Assistant Professor Lee Eng Sing**  
Chair, Singapore Primary Care Research and  
Knowledge (SPARK)

Caring for an ageing population with the use of health technology and team-based care will be the new norm in primary care. To meet these demands, primary care research will need to evolve and include new methods such as Big data analytics, Complex interventions and Implementation Science.

Assistant Professor Lee Eng Sing, chairperson of the re-invigorated Primary Care Research Network, convened the first meeting on 10 May to discuss our new mission with the new advisory committee that include Dr Amelia Ahmad Hatib, Dr Edwin Chng, Dr Leong Choon Kit, A/Prof Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, Dr Melvyn Wong, and Dr Theresa Yap.

The network has a new name – **SPARK! (Singapore Primary cAre Research and Knowledge network)**. We hope the new network can spark new relationships, spark new collaborations and spark new research ideas! More details on the objectives and promotional activities of SPARK will be shared in our subsequent newsletters.

## Invitation to Participate in Research



### Healthy living with Online SuPport & Education (HOPE) Project

Are you a practicing GP who sees patients at risk of  
cardiovascular disease (CVD)?

We are currently recruiting GPs to collaborate in our study that aims to evaluate strategies to reduce the risk of CVD through lifestyle changes. Our HOPE study is a cluster randomised controlled trial that aims to evaluate three interventions: communicate of lifestyle, health, and genetic risk of CVD, and a mobile app that aims to elicit lifestyle changes to reduce CVD risk.

Participating GPs will receive a token of appreciation. If you are interested in joining our study or want to find out more, contact the study team at [HOPE@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:HOPE@ntu.edu.sg).

### UTI Management Survey

If you are a general practitioner and treat patients with Urinary Tract Infection (UTI), you are invited to join our study describing the use of antibiotics in the treatment of UTI.

Complete a short questionnaire after each UTI consult and receive S\$5 token of appreciation for each completed response. No patient identifiers or patient consent is required.

If you are interested in taking part as a participant or research member, please scan QR code or contact Dr Tim Hart, [tim.hart@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:tim.hart@ntu.edu.sg)



## Invitation to Participate in Research (cont'd)

### What supports do GPs need to participate in research?

Are you a GP interested in research? We want to support you to be involved in research and need your help in understanding how to best make that happen. Contact [sam.xinhui@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:sam.xinhui@ntu.edu.sg) for further information and book a 30-minute interview.

We can conduct the interview either in your practice or via Zoom. Your input will help us to design research that can support your participation, support a medical student research project and we can offer a small token of appreciation for your time.

### Improving Cardiovascular Risk Conversations in Primary Care in Singapore

We are exploring cardiovascular risk conversations between primary care doctors and patients in Singapore with a view to identify challenges in communicating specific risks and enhancing patients' health literacy and understanding of risks relevant concepts.

We are recruiting private GPs who conduct regular cardiovascular risk assessments with their patients to participate in our study. If you are interested, please email Ms Liz, [lizi.leong@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:lizi.leong@ntu.edu.sg) for more information.

### PUMA: A validation of PUMA COPD screening tool for use in the Primary Care Setting

We are actively looking for family doctors in private practice to join this study.

#### Objectives:

- To determine the validity of the PUMA questionnaire for screening of COPD patients among current and ex-smokers aged 40yrs old and above in the primary care setting in Spore.
- To determine the prevalence of COPD among the sample of current and ex-smokers
- To evaluate the cost effectiveness of using mobile spirometry to screen and diagnose COPD in Singapore's primary care setting.

If you are interested to participate in this study, please email or Whatsapp your interest to the study team.

Dr Vicky Qin: [mengqi.qin@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:mengqi.qin@ntu.edu.sg), or Whatsapp to Dr Kenneth Tan (Co-Investigator) at 97659149, or Dr Lee Eng Sing at 96815623 if you would like to have a better understanding of the PUMA study.



### Laying the groundwork for more effective communication in palliative care

IRB Ref No.: IRB-2021-471

#### What is this about?

A study to assess the information landscape and address communication barriers in end-of-life care.

#### What you will do?

**30-minute survey**  
(Online, pen-and-paper, face-to-face)

**Compensation:** \$20 NTUC voucher for eligible and complete responses

#### Eligibility Criteria

**Healthcare Professionals** (nurse, allied health professional):

- At least 1 year experience working in departments that engages in end-of-life health services from different institutions in Singapore
- Aged 21 and above
- Singapore citizen or resident

#### Participate here

Through this link:  
<https://bit.ly/3N0a7Ud>

or use the QR code:



For more information you may contact our team via email at [yscayab@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:yscayab@ntu.edu.sg), [seraphinaleo@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:seraphinaleo@ntu.edu.sg) or SMS 9326 1986. Should you have questions on participants' rights in the study, please contact NTU-IRB at Email: [irb@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:irb@ntu.edu.sg)

## Highlights



### Primary Care OPEN hosts first Patient and Public Involvement Event

**27 April:** Primary Care and Family Medicine in collaboration with OPEN hosted 19 patients and carers to explore their experiences of chronic disease and cancer screening in primary care. This event is the first in a series of sessions that will aim to co-design pathways to optimise patient experience and increase screening rates in Singapore



## Highlights (cont'd)



### PCFM hosted Visiting Professor, Sir Aziz Sheikh

**9-16 May:** PCFM was delighted to host Prof Sir Aziz Sheikh, Professor of Primary Care Research and Development at Usher Institute in Edinburgh and incoming Nuffield Professor of Primary Care Health Sciences at University of Oxford. Prof Sheikh gave an inspiring lecture at LKCMedicine's inaugural EXCEL seminar, highlighting the power of collaboration in driving research with translational outcomes. He presented on the future of primary care research, contributed to a data workshop with LKC, NHG and NHGP participants and provided mentoring to our medical students and research staff. As one of the most successful primary care researchers internationally, Prof Sheikh's guidance will aid in the growing research primary care portfolio at LKC.



### Astrazeneca Delegates Visit LKCMedicine



**17 May:** LKCMed and NHGP hosted the management team of AstraZeneca Asia on 17 May. The team visited Kallang Polyclinic (hosted by Dr Valerie Teo) to understand the patient journey and how team-based care work in the polyclinic setting. The team were then reintroduced to the research work on National Precision Medicine and SG100K (Prof John Chambers), Hepatobiliary-Gut Dysfunction Research Programme (A/Prof Yusuf Ali), Primary Care Research Network (A/Prof Jo-Anne Manski Nankervis), Office of patient engagement (Ms Ai Ling Sim-Devadas) and current collaborations e.g., COPD prevalence and home spirometry study and multimorbidity education seminar.

## Save the Date - Upcoming Events

### Next Primary Care Multimorbidity Seminar Series

28 September 2024 Sat, 1pm - 5pm

@LKCMedicine, Novena Campus

*More information upcoming soon! \*CME pending*

Individuals with multiple chronic conditions (multimorbidity) are commonly seen in primary care. The management of the commonest multimorbidity combination (Diabetes, Hypertension and Hyperlipidaemia) was published in the care protocol during the launch of HealthierSG in 2023. LKC Primary care and Family Medicine will be organising four seminars to aid and support the primary care team in managing patients with multimorbidity with its inaugural seminar on 13 July 2024! The other three seminars are scheduled on 28 Sep 2024, 16 Nov 2024 and 22 Feb 2025. Save the Date, more details upcoming soon!



Primary Care Multimorbidity Seminar 13 July 2024 Sat  
LKCMedicine, Clinical Sciences Building

## Save the Date - Upcoming Events (cont'd)

### Next RAISE Primary Care Research Seminar Series

17 September 2024 Tues, 4.30pm - 5.30pm

Online @ Zoom

More information upcoming soon! \*CME pending



In collaboration with our university and polyclinics partners, Primary Care and Family Medicine at LKCMedicine was proud to launch the **Research Alliance in Singapore (RAISE) Primary Care Research Seminar Series**. The first seminar highlighted about primary care research in Singapore and internationally. It focused on the value of research networks in general practice and featured Professor Jon Emery from University of Melbourne, and Ms Sam Xin Hui and Assistant Professor Lee Eng Sing from LKCMedicine. The next seminar will happen on 17 Sept, host by SingHealth Duke-NUS Family Medicine Academic Clinical Programme/SingHealth Polyclinic. More details upcoming soon!



Division of Family Medicine  
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine



## My Research Journey ~ Ms Julia Zhu, Senior Nurse Clinician

### Advancing Patient Care Through Research: My Growth and Learning Journey



As a Nurse Clinician who is passionate about patient care, teaching and research, I strongly believe that promoting evidence-based practice is essential in improving patient care and health outcomes.

In 2015, I made my first research project presentation on exploring experience of patients with chronic leg ulcer at the 3rd CNMC(1) in London. I was subsequently offered opportunities to collaborate with researchers from NTU LKCMedicine for wound research projects. In 2018, I received my first research grant awarded by the NHG-LKC CPHCRI(2) to conduct a phenomenological study on diabetic lower limb amputation which had yielded 3 publications in the peer-reviewed journals. The study results affirmed my clinical decision to focus on patient-centered care model for chronic wound management.

Driven by my passion to improve care for patients, I was awarded the LKCMedicine Research Scholarship in 2021 for my research study, and began my pursuit of a PhD at LKCMedicine. The scholarship provided an exciting opportunity for me to hone my research skills and further strengthen evidence-based wound care services in primary healthcare.

My research journey in primary care is a transformative experience, shaping me into a scholar and critical thinker with a resilient mind. My academic curiosity sustained me through many hurdles and obstacles. My research supervisors also played a key role in helping me navigate numerous challenges. While it is challenging being a novice nurse researcher in clinical setting, partnering the LKCMed academic researchers provided me with great opportunities to learn from academic experts and helped build my research network. Conquering challenges and improving patient's outcomes give me a great sense of achievement.

After completing my PhD, I will continue to seek support and collaborations with LKCMed academic experts to hone my research skills and strive to be a key player in translational evidence, to bridge the gap between primary care research and clinical practice.

(1) Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference

(2) Centre for Primary Health Care Research and Innovation