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29th Singapore Pharmacy Congress aims advancing pharmacy practices

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With the tagline Ã¢â?¬Å?Educate, Engage & Empower for a Future Ready PharmacyÃ¢â?¬Â• the congress focused on transforming the Pharmacy profession to meet changing healthcare needs



The Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore (PSS) hosted the annual pharmacy congress, themed “Educate, Engage & Empower for a Future Ready Pharmacy”. It aims to advance pharmacy practise in Singapore through the sharing of innovative practices and promoting advances in patient care and work practices.

29th Singapore Pharmacy Congress held on 5th and 6th October 2019 at Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre, was graced by Guest-of-Honour, Mr Edwin Tong, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law & Ministry of Health.

Irene Quay, President of the PSS, says, “The theme chosen for this year’s Congress is timely as the profession strives towards transformational care models to meet future healthcare needs and challenges with our ageing population. We are very privileged to have with us Dr Catriona Bradley, Executive Director at The Irish Institute of Pharmacy and Lead for Lifelong Learning at Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, to deliver her keynote lecture on ‘Developing Leaders who Educate, Engage and Empower’. This is a very critical area of focus as we continue to develop a healthy pipeline of pharmacy leaders for the profession.”

Meeting new healthcare needs in Singapore’s changing landscape and Adopting technology to enhance the patient experience

Singapore’s changing healthcare landscape requires innovative solutions to tackle patients’ evolving needs, such as through the use of digital health technologies (e.g. apps, voice assistants and wearables). By streamlining the patient’s healthcare journey, healthcare providers can improve efficiency while reducing patient frustration and waiting time.

Improving elderly care procedures

The pharmacy profession is cognisant of the healthcare challenges of an ageing population. The PSS Intermediate and Long-Term Care (ILTC) Pharmacists Workgroup has developed a drug-related problem (DRP) classification tool to better meet the needs of elderly patients. The tool helps pharmacists to:

- Identify and propose solutions to DRPs e.g. reduce a patient's side effects, avoid drug interactions, recommend a more cost-effective alternative
- Capture the contribution of pharmacists in optimising medical therapy for nursing home residents

Engaging healthcare colleagues and partners to serve the community

Pharmacists deliver care best by working closely with colleagues across fields and specialities including acute and community settings, as well as clinical and regulatory roles. The community-based Pharmaceutical Care Services (PCS) programme was piloted by pharmacists from polyclinics and retail pharmacies jointly with the National Pharmacy Programme Management Office (NPPMO) and the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC). In this new care model, community pharmacists serve as touchpoints to help with medication-related issues at care facilities, thus empowering seniors and caregivers to support the shift of healthcare beyond the hospital to the community. Pharmacists who have pioneered the PCS programme will share their experiences in implementing this innovative service.

The ILTC Pharmacists Workgroup has also expanded beyond nursing homes and entered into a partnership with The National Kidney Foundation (NKF). The Workgroup works closely with the NKF team comprising nursing staff, logistics personnel and medical doctors to review their medication management processes and improve medication safety. This team-based approach improves mutual understanding, integrated operations and synergism between departments, to provide seamless patient care.