

Singapore study signifies caregiving awareness to osteoporotic seniors

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A new study highlights the significance of caregivers as catalysts in falls prevention programs through holistic and preventative awareness; addresses caregivers mental, physical, and financial stress



Singapore's researchers are involved in a study highlighting the urgency to involve caregivers of older adults towards more action-orientated efforts. Sense-making Public Perceptions of Falls, Bone Health, and Caregiving was jointly launched by Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and Amgen Biotechnology Singapore.

The study leverages Artificial Intelligence (AI) and interviews to delve into societal perceptions around bone health, serious falls, and caregiving for osteoporotic patients. It also advocates for more societal conversations and stronger support for caregivers.

Despite global recognition for Singapore's efficient healthcare, the system will be strained by a rapidly ageing population. A recent NUS study projected that disability rates will increase five times in 40 years and that the number of older adults living alone will increase four times by 2060. Hip fracture admissions in Singapore have also increased to 2,729 fractures per year in 2017 from 1,487 cases in 2000.

Bone health messaging in Singapore is overly medicalized and needs a more holistic approach

Positive and holistic framing about good bone health is important to spur preventative actions. In spite of high awareness of falls prevention activities in 61% of older adults, significantly lower participation with only 9% participates in these important programs – which is only 1 in 10 older adults in Singapore. The highly medicalized framing around bone health may increase hesitancy in older adults to take action.

“The big gap between knowing about and attending falls prevention programs underscores the important role caregivers play in nudging older adults to participate. Unique and creative ways to educate caregivers on how to be the catalysts behind translating awareness into action are essential. It is important we increase societal conversations and develop more platforms to not only educate caregivers but also ensure they are adequately encouraged and appreciated for their efforts” said Dr. Reuben Ng from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and Principal Investigator of the study.

Addressing the need to better support and empower caregivers

This builds a case for subsequent up-to-date studies to go more in-depth into caregiving in Singapore. These insights will help to assist industry and policymakers with actionable insights. Areas identified to increase support include more online and offline spaces to discuss the daily grind of caregiving, as well as resources and toolkits to help alleviate mental, physical, and financial stress.

Eric Ng, Executive Director, General Manager South East Asia (SEA) and Country Head, Singapore and Malaysia, said, “As champions of bone health, Amgen recognizes the importance of strategic partnerships in driving greater change and impact. Innovative and unique research approaches such as this study with Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy are aligned closely with our predict and prevent approach. These

help us deepen our understanding of how patients and crucial groups such as caregivers perceive and manage conditions prevalent in ageing societies such as osteoporosis.”

The study is launched in conjunction with International Women’s Day, as a tribute to recognize their dedication towards caring for their loved ones. This is supported by the Osteoporosis Society (Singapore) (OSS) and is part of Amgen’s *Our Unbreakable Bond* campaign. OSS President and Senior Consultant, Division of Endocrinology, Department of Medicine, National University Hospital, Dr Chionh Siok Bee, and *Our Unbreakable Bond* Ambassador, Kit Chan, were present at the launch.

The full study can be accessed here: <https://doi.org/10.47523/LKYAMGNAI1>. Information about *Our Unbreakable Bond* campaign is available on Amgen’s *Fight the Fracture* Singapore [website](#), [YouTube Channel](#), and [Facebook Page](#).

Image Caption: Panelists discuss how caregivers to osteoporotic patients in Singapore can be more adequately supported. (L-R: Dr Chionh Siok Bee, President of the Osteoporosis Society (Singapore) and Senior Consultant, Division of Endocrinology, National University Hospital, Dr Reuben Ng, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and Principal Investigator of the study, and Kit Chan, Singer and Our Unbreakable Bond ambassador)