



*Serve all with Love*

# **Year in Review 2020**





Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

**St Francis of Assisi, Canticle of the Sun**



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*Note:*

*Some of the photos used were taken before the implementation of safe management measures.*

## At a Glance 2020

Founded in  
**1961**

by the Sisters from the Franciscan Missionaries of The Divine Motherhood (FMDM). The first baby was delivered on 12 March 1961

Serving all  
with Love for

**59**  
years

Singapore's first  
private and only not-  
for-profit Catholic  
acute tertiary care  
hospital

We are the only hospital that provides  
**Clinical Pastoral Care**

**Mind**

**Body**

**Spirit**

A 6-bedded ward to cater to those who hope to seek private medical care at an affordable cost, is named after our patron saint

**St Francis  
of Assisi**

Delivered  
**4,638**  
babies

**Outreach  
clinics –**  
one dental and two  
medical, to reach out to  
the underserved

Total outreach  
**5,399**  
beneficiaries from  
various social service  
agencies

Total of  
**319**  
beds

**Specialist Doctors**  
**>200** **>1,200**  
on campus accredited



# Our Founding Story

In the summer of 1947, three FMDM Sisters left England for China. They had been commissioned to work with the Irish Friars Minor in their Franciscan Missionary outreach. However, with the advancement of the Communist troops in China, the Sisters had to abandon their mission and go to Hong Kong instead, where they stayed with the Maryknoll Sisters.

At that time, they heard that Bishop Olcomendy of Malacca was looking for Sisters to care for tuberculosis patients in Singapore. This disease was both life-threatening and contagious during World War II.





On 7 March 1949, Sister Angela McBrien arrived in Singapore from Hong Kong, followed by Sisters Mary Camillus Walsh and Mary Baptista Hennessy. They took over the tuberculosis wards at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, which eventually became known as Mandalay Road Hospital. They also served the "Lepers Camp", a community of lepers housed in Trafalgar Home at Woodbridge. Both centres were managed as self-contained units as isolation was deemed the best treatment at that time.



In 1952, the Sisters were given an opportunity to start a private hospital to bring nursing care and services to the population. Thus, the FMDM Sisters began canvassing for donations. In addition to pooling their savings and salaries, many generous individuals and companies responded to the call to donate.

On 4 March 1961, the hospital was officially opened with 60 beds. The Sisters who staffed the hospital were professionally

trained as nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, radiographers, laboratory technicians and other support services.

The hospital takes its name from La Verna, the mountain in Italy where St Francis of Assisi was believed to have received the Stigmata (an imprint of the five wounds of Christ). He led a life of radical simplicity and joy, sharing God's love for all people and all creation by loving and honouring every person he met, from lepers

to sultans and popes to the ordinary townspeople.

Mount Alvernia Hospital today reflects the wisdom and inspiration of our founding Sisters and those who contributed to our organisation. The hospital remains wholly owned by the FMDM congregation. The leadership team in the United Kingdom ensures that our hospital is compliant with governance guidelines and exercises responsible stewardship.





# Message from Sister Jane Bertelsen

Congregational Leader, FMDM

There are times when, in an organisation's story, the 'tagline' seems to be confined to domains of the corporate development and marketing departments. There are other times when it comes to life and so evidently permeates the lives of every member in the organisation. 2020 saw Mount Alvernia Hospital's tagline of **Serve All with Love** and their values of **Compassion, Humility, Integrity, Respect and Peace** come to life in so many new, stronger and vibrant ways.

As with any major crisis in our personal or organisation's lives, it brings out the best, reveals the cracks and vulnerabilities, and shows us who we really are and what we have become. I would like to think the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out the very best in our MAH community as well as revealed our vulnerabilities; but as Brené Brown wisely teaches us 'Vulnerability is the birthplace of creativity'. The learnings and transformations of this extraordinary time for our global community will emerge as the future unfolds. It is important

"As with any major crisis in our personal or organisation's lives, it brings out the best, reveals the cracks and vulnerabilities, and shows us who we really are and what we have become. I would like to think the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out the very best in our MAH community as well as revealed our vulnerabilities; but as Brené Brown wisely teaches us 'Vulnerability is the birthplace of creativity'."





to take the time to ponder and reflect on this time; make sure we have learned lessons that will enable us to grow in our capacity to be 'a community of healing, a community that leaves no one behind, a community that is inclusive and welcoming, especially to those most in need.'<sup>2</sup> It is also important to celebrate and record those numerous expressions of loving service which emerged during these long, hard and fearful months – the practical and personal support of our Malaysian co-workers who had to stay in Singapore, the ongoing outreach to those on the edge, marginalised and poor, the many 'extra miles' that were done by so many to enable Mount Alvernia Hospital to be the oasis of healing, peace, respect and compassion we are called to be. To use the well-known Christian parable of the Good Samaritan, the Mount Alvernia Hospital community has been both the Good Samaritan and the Inn where those in need know they will be cared for and supported.

The hospital community draws on the inspiration of our pioneer

FMDM Sisters, who would be proud of our missionary spirit, in all that has happened in the past year. This deep connectedness with our beginnings also finds expression in the way the Mount Alvernia Hospital community continues to be hugely supportive of our FMDM Sisters in Singapore as well as playing a part in supporting the global FMDM Mission in Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Much of the focus at this time is on the community members 'at the coal face' – nurses, doctors, housekeepers, facilities teams, etc. who have gone the extra mile, faced the numerous new challenges and found ways to address them - our hearts are full of gratitude to each and every one who have 'Served All with Love' in such a selfless way in the past eighteen months. However, I would like to thank in a special way the Board of the hospital and the Executive Team who have had to carry the enormous burden of

leading Mount Alvernia Hospital through this time. COVID-19 has made massive demands on their time, wisdom, discernment and called for calm, thoughtful decision making in a spirit of discernment and collaboration. They too have 'Served All with Love' with their strong, clear leadership and support for the whole team.

As we move confidently into the future, let us take to heart the words of Pope Francis:

***How important it is to dream together... By ourselves, we risk seeing mirages, things that are not there. Dreams, on the other hand, are built together. Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, and as brothers and sisters to all.***<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brené Brown TED talk 2010 *The Power of Vulnerability*.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis: *Message for the XXIX World Day of the Sick February 2021*

<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis *Fratelli Tutti* paragraph 7-8



## Message from Mr Ho Tian Yee

Chairman

"It is heartening to note that, the team had weathered well and with many notables. The Executive Team under the leadership of James demonstrated dedication, professionalism along with a get-it-done attitude and above all, a heart to 'Serve All with Love'."

2020 was a year set upon by the emergence of COVID-19, initially detected in other parts of Asia before its spread to Singapore. This outbreak soon became a global pandemic, stressing healthcare systems and disrupting economic activities. The effect was felt across every facet of our lives, at home, at work, in the community and for Mount Alvernia Hospital as a healthcare institution. The world as we know it, have been changed overnight, as we grappled with lockdowns, border closures, entry restrictions to buildings and work-from-home arrangements.

Inadvertently, Mount Alvernia Hospital became a brother-in-arm fighting alongside all medical frontline organisations in Singapore. We witnessed how the pandemic had caused a severe disruption to supply chain and the movement of people. This resulted in shortages of certain medical equipment and disruptions to movement of the nursing staff. Securing medical equipment to protect our staff was critical. Similarly, staffing to enable the continuation of hospital services to sustain was equally important.

In April 2020, with the escalation in the number of local COVID-19 infections, the Singapore government imposed an elevated set of Safe Distancing Measures and a Circuit Breaker to curb the spread, further dampening economic activities. These measures included the closure



of all workplaces except those running essential services, such as healthcare. While Mount Alvernia Hospital continued to operate as part of essential healthcare services, the number of colleagues permitted to work on-site was reduced to the minimum and on a need basis. Stricter visitor controls, staff's travel declarations and social distancing plan for doctors were implemented.

On the request of the Ministry of Health, non-essential medical appointments and elective surgeries were deferred. Healthcare workers' movements, including allowing doctors to practise at more than one site, were also restricted. Such measures caused disruption to some existing clinical practices. With the gradual lifting of the Circuit Breaker measures from June 2020 onwards, a Safe Distancing Office was set up to provide a safe and secure work environment for staff returning to work. To date, strict measures on infection control have ensured no community transmission within the hospital.

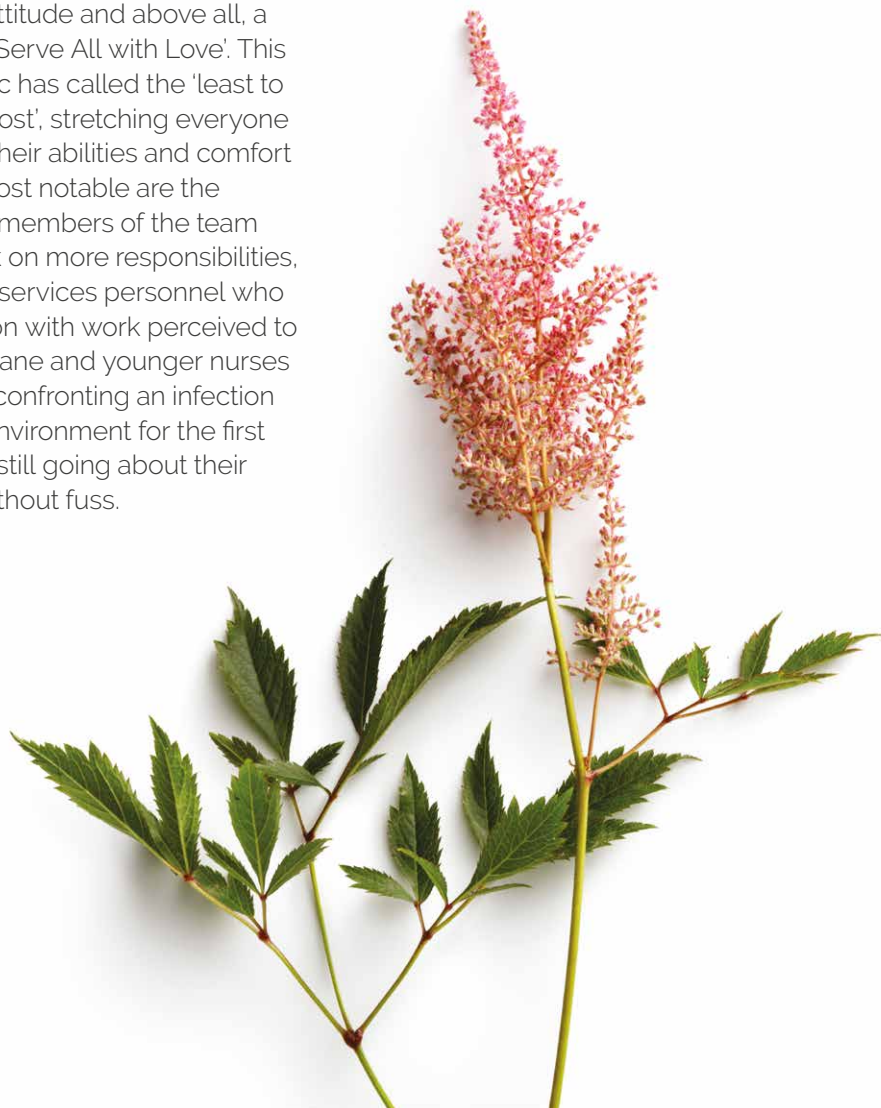
Not surprisingly, COVID-19 disrupted many of our community outreach activities. Our regular mobile clinics with TWC2 in Little India and at foreign workers' dormitories were suspended at the start of the pandemic. Likewise, the pandemic stopped our plans to conduct health screening activities for the foreign worker community, and for chronic

conditions. Our regular visits to homes for the disabled were put on hold, and our 'Smiles for Good' denture programme also had to be suspended during the Circuit Breaker. Still, driven by a strong social mission, we adapted and patiently worked around the obstacles. We now plan to open our second outreach dental clinic at the Enabling Village in 2021, to extend much-needed help to individuals who are disadvantaged and improve their access to dental care services.

It is heartening to note that, the team had weathered well and with many notables. The Executive Team under the leadership of James demonstrated dedication, professionalism along with a get-it-done attitude and above all, a heart to 'Serve All with Love'. This pandemic has called the 'least to be the most', stretching everyone beyond their abilities and comfort zones. Most notable are the younger members of the team who took on more responsibilities, cleaning services personnel who pushed on with work perceived to be mundane and younger nurses who are confronting an infection control environment for the first time but still going about their duties without fuss.

It has been a challenging 2020, and I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone at Mount Alvernia Hospital. For upholding the FMDM values to 'Serve All with Love' and yet delivering best-of-class clinical and patient services. You display unity and compassion towards our colleagues and patients. This has allowed us to keep our patients and the hospital safe.

Thank you.





## Message from Dr James Lam Kian Ming

CEO

**W**hat a year 2020 has been. Undoubtedly, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives in every way. It has affected how we live, socialise, work, as well as the way we deliver healthcare at Mount Alvernia Hospital. Of course, it has also greatly impacted the lives of nurses and other frontline healthcare workers.

Our nurses and patient-facing clinical colleagues have had to adjust to the new measures in their daily course of work. These include having to wear surgical or N95 masks throughout the course of the day, personal protective gear and to undergo COVID-19 rostered routine testing – which are now the norm.



“As we continue to stand in unity to battle the ongoing pandemic, I am extremely grateful to the hospital team and doctors who demonstrated their strong commitment towards our cause - working tirelessly at the forefront of this pandemic.”



COVID-19 also threw a curveball to our Malaysian staff who used to commute daily between Singapore and Johor Bahru. They found themselves stranded in Singapore, due to border restrictions in March 2020. Although they must miss their family very much, it was wonderful to see our colleagues from various departments acting swiftly and lovingly, to support our affected colleagues. From sourcing for temporary accommodation and providing basic necessities, to even offering gifts of fruits and cookies during the festive period, every kind act must have warmed our Malaysian colleagues' hearts indeed.

To better understand all staff's concerns during this stressful period, the Executive Team held proactive and regular dialogues. A special 'COVID-19 prayer' was prepared so that we could unite in prayer and seek God's protection and blessings. By overcoming all adversities as one Mount Alvernia family, this strengthened our bond as we faced this unprecedented pandemic together.

Aligned with the nation's plan for the phased reopening of the economy, a Safe Distancing Office was set up to bring staff back to the hospital. Strict safe management and infection control measures were established to ensure that everyone has a safe environment to work in.

For example, staff were segregated into teams, and were not allowed to interact physically with one another. Non-nursing and non-clinical staff worked from home. Colleagues who continued working at the hospital were mandated to wear masks at work, don the appropriate protective gear while performing

nursing or clinical tasks, record their temperature readings twice daily, maintain good personal hygiene and ensure regular cleaning of equipment, facilities and shared spaces.

Unfortunately, other than the obvious health crisis, the COVID-19 outbreak in migrant worker dormitories also disrupted the timeline of our two new construction projects in the hospital. Thus, the new integrated cancer centre and the 10-storey maternity and paediatrics facility will only open and receive patients in 2022.

As these two hospital developments continue to take shape, the construction has been carefully planned to minimise any inconvenience and disruption to the care delivered in the hospital. Both developments will transform Mount Alvernia Hospital not only in terms of its landscape but more importantly, in expanding our capacity and capabilities to serve more patients.

In 2020, we were very proud to have played our part and responded to the call of duty by caring for recovering COVID-19 patients, who were transferred to us from the public hospitals. These patients, including a small group of migrant workers, had mild symptoms and only required isolation and clinical monitoring.

I was very heartened to see our nursing team step up to the challenge so readily to look after these patients, despite knowing very little of the virus then. I was also appreciative of our hospital operations and clinical colleagues, who contributed in getting the ward and workflows ready within a short time. With everyone's collaboration

and, as always, guided by our mission to 'Serve All with Love', all COVID-19 patients recovered and were discharged within three months.

As we continue to stand in unity to battle the ongoing pandemic, I am extremely grateful to the hospital team and doctors who demonstrated their strong commitment towards our cause - working tirelessly at the forefront of this pandemic. Their dedication and resilience throughout this difficult period are commendable indeed.

Guided by our very supportive Chairman, Board Members, Executive Team and Heads of Departments, I am confident that we can overcome this pandemic together and continue to write this new chapter of Mount Alvernia's beautiful history. Let us, as one Mount Alvernia Hospital family, remain steadfast in our mission to 'Serve All with Love', and continue the FMDM Sisters' legacy of providing compassionate care to all patients!





# Board of Directors



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## 1. Mr Ho Tian Yee

*Chairman*

Member since 2015

Tian Yee is the Chairman of Fullerton Fund Management. His experience includes investments in global financial markets and in the last 20 years, had served on boards of companies in banking, stock exchange, food and beverages, and power distribution services.

Tian Yee started his career with Bankers Trust Company, where his last position was Managing Director and Regional Head of South East Asia. He was responsible for the management of the Singapore branch and Global Trading in Asia.

Currently, he serves as Chairman of Mount Alvernia Hospital and non-executive director of

DBS Group Holdings Ltd and DBS Bank Ltd. Tian Yee is also a director of Sevia Holdings and Pavilion Capital, a member of the investment committee of the Urban Redevelopment Authority. He has a BA (Hons) Econ from Portsmouth University and MBA from the University of Chicago.

## 2. Sister Elizabeth Lim

*Board Member*

Since 2014

Sr Elizabeth was assigned to the mission in England, Jordan and Zimbabwe. She also worked in the Apostolic Nunciature in Singapore.

## 3. Mr Eddie Chau

*Board Member*

Since 2014

Eddie is a serial entrepreneur and angel investor. He founded five companies and one seed investment fund since 2000.

Two of the five companies – e-Cop and Brandtology, were acquired in 2007 and 2014 respectively. He currently advises several higher learning institutes, start-ups as well as social enterprises. Eddie holds an MSc in Communication Engineering from Imperial College, London.

## 4. Dr Ho Kheng Thye

*Board Member*

Since 2014

Kheng Thye is a senior consultant cardiologist. He was previously the Head of Cardiology at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Chairman of the Chapter of Cardiologists, College of Physicians (Singapore), and sat on various advisory committees to the Ministry of Health, and the Singapore Armed Forces. Kheng Thye is also actively involved in researching on Cardiac Imaging, authoring professional research papers and book chapters, and speaking at international medical conferences.

## 5. Ms Tan Su May

*Board Member*

Since 2014

A partner with Allen & Gledhill, Su May has extensive experience in a wide range of corporate, and merger and acquisition transactions, including share and business acquisitions, direct investments, and local and regional joint ventures. She represents leading corporations and has worked on transactions of international significance in a variety of industries.



## 6. Ms Chan Chia Lin

### *Board Member*

Since 2017

Chia Lin is the Director of Holywell Pte Ltd, a private investment company. She is Vice President of the National Council of Social Services and chairs its investment committee. She also serves on the boards of several other non-profit organisations, including HealthServe which provides medical and other assistance to migrant workers. She was previously the Chief Investment Officer of Fullerton Fund Management Company.

## 7. Dr Kwa Chong Teck

### *Board Member*

Since 2017

Chong Teck began his career as a dental surgeon in the Singapore Armed Forces. He was trained in oral pathology and in oral & maxillofacial surgery in London. He is a Senior Consultant in Oral Pathology at the National Dental Centre Singapore where he was also its founding Executive Director from 1995 until 2014. He was the founding Executive Director of the SingHealth Foundation from 2004 to 2017 before its succession by the SingHealth Funds. Chong Teck is a member of the SingHealth Board of Advisers and holds advisory positions at the National Dental Centre Singapore, the SingHealth International Collaboration Office, the SingHealth Duke-NUS Disease Centres and the SingHealth Duke-NUS Pathology Academic Clinical Programme.

## 8. Mr Beh Jit Han, Paul

### *Board Member*

Since 2018

Paul is President, Asia Pacific, Reed Exhibitions and a member of the Worldwide Board. Reed Exhibitions is a division of RELX Group with a portfolio of over 500 events across 43 countries. Reed Asia

Pacific organises over 120 trade exhibitions in major Asian cities in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, South Korea, Australia and multiple cities across China. Before joining Reed, Paul was Managing Director and Partner of a regional publishing company. Prior to this, he spent several years with Singapore Airlines holding various marketing management positions. Paul holds a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) degree as well as Graduate Diplomas in Financial and Marketing Management. He also attended Executive Management programmes at Harvard and Oxford. He currently sits on the Singapore Management University Board of Trustees and is also a board member of a charity board, Caritas Singapore. Previously, he also served on the boards of various organisations which included MediaCorp, National Library Board, Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board, COMPASS, Ministry of Education and Montfort Care.

## 9. Dr Ong Eng Keow

### *Medical Advisory Board Chairman*

### *Board Member*

Since 2018

A neonatologist, paediatric intensivist and paediatrician, Eng Keow has been in private practice for more than 20 years. He is currently serving as Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board at Mount Alvernia Hospital. He held various clinical and non-clinical positions at Alexandra Hospital, TTSH, KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) and Singapore General Hospital during his tenure in restructured hospitals. He was trained in paediatric intensive care medicine at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia, after which he established the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at TTSH. He was in the pro-tem committee preparing the development of the present KKH before coming out

into private practice. His passion is in looking after children who are premature and also in journeying with parents in managing their children's health. He still helps out in teaching at KKH in the Paediatric Critical Care course.

## 10. Mr Tham Sai Choy

### *Board Member*

Since 2018

Sai Choy is a chartered accountant. He was for many years a member of KPMG's global board and its executive committee, and chaired its compensation and nominations committee and its Asia Pacific regional operations. As a practising accountant, he led work in financial audit, restructuring and forensic investigations, across a range of businesses and not-for-profit organisations. He is the audit committee chairman of the Housing and Development Board, Nanyang Polytechnic and Singapore International Arbitration Centre. He also serves on the boards of the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority and DBS Holdings Ltd. He is the Chairman of the Singapore Institute of Directors, and a Fellow of the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.



**Dr James Lam Kian Ming**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

With more than 20 years of experience in the healthcare industry, James brings with him strong leadership and expertise in the clinical and medical community. Before Mount Alvernia Hospital, he served as Chief Executive Officer of Thomson Medical Group where he was responsible for the Group's business in Singapore. James also led as Group Director of the Applied Sciences Group and Blood Services Group at the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) of Singapore. He also managed various departments in HSA including finance, operations, information management and emergency planning under corporate development, and the HSA Academy. Additionally, he held appointments in numerous pharmaceutical companies in

Asia Pacific in the areas of clinical research, medical and regulatory affairs. James obtained his Medical Degree from the National University of Singapore, and a Master in Business Administration (Marketing) from Leicester University in the United Kingdom.

**Ms Annie Lim**  
*Director, Finance*

Annie joined Mount Alvernia Hospital in 1993. A fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (UK) and Fellow Chartered Accountant Singapore, she was an auditor at Coopers & Lybrand, Singapore and had experience in accounting & finance and information systems in the travel and manufacturing sectors in Australia. Annie is responsible for the accounting and finances, and business office operations of the Hospital.



## Executive Management Team





**Mr Bruce Leong***Director, Technology and Strategy*

Bruce brings along with him 20 years of Information Technology experience in various industries and domains. He was with iHiS Pte Ltd supporting IT Infrastructure for Singapore's northern cluster of restructured hospitals. He led various teams in commissioning IT Infrastructure for new hospitals such as Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Yishun Community Hospital, as well as Admiralty Medical Centre. Bruce has experience in building data centres, network, storage, cybersecurity, virtualisation, IT operations and vendor management. He was also responsible for all IT Infrastructure Project implementation. Bruce is also the hospital's IT Security Information Officer, responsible for the hospital's cybersecurity protection.

**Dr Djoni Huang***Director, Clinical Services*

Djoni graduated from the University of Dundee with commendation in 1998 and subsequently obtained his postgraduate qualification in family medicine in 2007. He is currently a Member at the Royal College of General Practitioner in UK, MRCP (UK). He brings with him a wealth of experience from his previous employment at National Healthcare Group (NHG) Polyclinics, National University Health System (NUHS) Regional Health System, Yishun Community Hospital and National University Polyclinic (NUP).

**Mr Goh Hock Soon***Director, Corporate Development*

Hock Soon joined Mount Alvernia Hospital in 2012. He was previously with the civil service and held appointments in the Ministry of Health and People's Association. His experience includes marketing and business development; research and statistics, and partnership and membership. He oversees strategic planning, business analysis, strategic marketing, marketing communications, tenancy management, community outreach and patient liaison services. He holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Sociology from the National University of Singapore (NUS).

**Mr Gus Teoh***Director, Hospital Operations*

Gus has more than 20 years of local and overseas healthcare experience in the areas of operations, process improvement, service planning and business development in primary and tertiary healthcare institutions. He joined Mount Alvernia Hospital in 2019 and is currently overseeing hospital operations. Gus holds a Master of Business Administration from Murdoch University.

**Ms Karen Poon***Director, Mission*

Karen joined Mount Alvernia Hospital in 2014. A lay associate of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) congregation, she is responsible for the hospital's social mission and oversees the Clinical Pastoral Care department. Previously, she held appointments as Brand Director and Head of Strategic Marketing for financial institutions and not-for-profit organisations. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the NUS.

**Ms Shirley Tay***Director, Nursing*

Shirley oversees the nursing division focusing on infection control, raising competency and standards, patient safety and care delivery service experience. She was previously with Tan Tock Seng Hospital and has held appointments at Raffles Hospital. With more than 35 years of healthcare experience in both government and private institutions, she brings with her a wealth of experience in nursing leadership and quality. She holds a Bachelor in Nursing from Griffith University and attended the Managing Healthcare Delivery programme from Harvard Business School.

**Ms Cindy Ong***Director, Human Resources*

Cindy brings with her 18 years of Human Resource experience in both regional and local roles in the banking and healthcare sectors. Her strengths are in the areas of Human Resource Development and Organisational Development. Prior to joining Mount Alvernia Hospital, she was the Director of Human Resource in both Ang Mo Kio-Thye Hua Kwan Hospital and St Luke's Eldercare, spanning over a period of 11 years. During her years with the community healthcare sector, she garnered awards in her excellent and innovative human resource practices which resulted in her organisation being recognised as one of the 'Fast Growing' and 'Fair and Inclusive' organisations in the awards conferred by the Singapore Human Resource Institute. Her interest lies in developing staff with a focus on designing training roadmaps for different staff profiles. Cindy holds a Master in Business Administration with Anglia Ruskin University in the United Kingdom and is a Hogan Certified User.



# New Specialist Doctors

## Endocrinology



### Dr Tay Tunn Lin

*Livingstone Endocrine, Diabetes and Thyroid Clinic*

Dr Tay Tunn Lin is a Senior Consultant Endocrinologist with more than 15 years of clinical experience. She specialises in the management of all endocrine conditions, particularly diabetes and thyroid disorders. She graduated from the National University of Singapore in 2004 with a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBBS), obtained her postgraduate Internal Medicine degree, Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (United Kingdom) in 2008, and subsequently completed her specialist training in Endocrinology in 2012.

Upon completing her specialist training, Dr Tay worked as a consultant at Changi General Hospital (CGH) and was also the Director of the Diabetes Centre at CGH since 2015. She is still a Visiting Consultant at CGH today.

Dr Tay has special interest in managing early onset diabetes in young adults, including preconception diabetes management. She is well-published in her field, and received the Care Award (Silver) in 2012 and the Singapore Health Quality Service award (Gold) in 2019 and 2020 in recognition of her high standards in patient care.

## Gastroenterology



### Dr Shim Hang Hock

*gutCARE Digestive•Liver•Endoscopy Associates*

Dr Shim is a specialist in gastroenterology with subspecialty interest in Inflammatory Bowel Disease (i.e. ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease) and digestive cancer screening. He formally practised clinical gastroenterology and general hepatology in Singapore General Hospital where he served as the Director of Inflammatory Bowel Disease Centre; and currently continues to be a Visiting Consultant. An avid educator, Dr Shim was appointed as Adjunct Assistant Professor at Duke-NUS Medical School.

Dr Shim obtained his Bachelor of Medicine (BM) from University of Southampton, United Kingdom in 2007 and was accredited as specialist in gastroenterology in 2015. In 2016, he was awarded Healthcare Manpower Development Programme (HMDP) scholarship by Ministry of Health, Singapore to undergo Advanced Fellowship under the mentorship of Professors Remo Panaccione and Cynthia Seow at Calgary, Canada, one of the largest Inflammatory Bowel Disease units in the world.

## General Surgery



### Dr Ho Wai Thong Thomas

*Thomas Ho Surgery*

Dr Ho specialises in Head and Neck/Endocrine Surgery with a focus on minimally invasive techniques such as endoscopic and robotic thyroid surgery. He also specialises in treating advanced abdominal cancers particularly colorectal and ovarian cancers that have spread within the peritoneal lining (peritoneal surface malignancy). He is one of only a handful of surgeons who are fellowship-trained in this oncology treatment.

He is an experienced and fully accredited laparoscopic surgeon for colorectal, small bowel and adrenal tumours as well as hernias (inguinal, femoral and ventral).

Dr Ho founded the Head & Neck Surgical section and Surgical Oncology section at Tan Tock Seng Hospital. He is an experienced surgeon having spent 20 years at Tan Tock Seng Hospital and other public institutions. Prior to private practice, Dr Ho was the Chief of Surgery for Woodlands Health Campus.



## Neurology



**Dr Mohammed Tauqeer Ahmad**  
*Asia Brain Spine and Nerve Medical Centre*

Dr Ahmad graduated from Aligarh Muslim University in 1995. In 2006, he obtained his MRCP (Int medicine) from the Royal College of Physicians, London as well as his M Med (Int medicine) from the National University of Singapore.

Dr Ahmad also received his FRCP from RCP Edinburgh, UK, a Fellowship from the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (FAMS) in both Neurology and Internal Medicine and an MRCPS (Glasgow) and MD (General Medicine).

Dr Ahmad worked as a consultant in the Department of Neurology NNI (SGH Campus) till 2012, before joining Raffles Neuroscience Centre as a consultant. He headed the Department of Neuroscience at Raffles Hospital before joining Asia Brain Spine and Nerve Medical Centre.

Apart from general neurology, Dr Ahmad takes keen interest in stroke, epilepsy, movement disorder and neuroimmunology. He has vast experience in treating stroke patients with neuro-intervention, Parkinson's Disease with Deep Brain Stimulation.

## Ophthalmology



**Dr Lam Pin Min**  
*Eagle Eye Centre Pte Ltd (EEC)*

Dr Lam graduated from National University of Singapore in 1993 and obtained his postgraduate qualifications – FRCS (Edinburgh) and MMed (Ophthalmology) in 2000. He also trained as an Aviation Medicine Specialist and obtained his postgraduate Diploma in Aviation Medicine from the Royal College of Physicians (London) in 1997.

As a trained surgeon and specialist in paediatric ophthalmology, he worked at the KK Women's and Children's Hospital from 2005 to 2013, before going into private practice in 2014. He is currently a Visiting Senior Consultant at the Singapore National Eye Centre.

Dr Lam was also actively involved as the Singapore representative in the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office from 2014-2020 and was the Executive Board Member of the World Health Organisation from 2019-2020.



**Dr Stephanie Young**  
*Eagle Eye Centre Pte Ltd (EEC)*

Dr Stephanie Young is a Senior Consultant eye surgeon and Director of Ophthalmic Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery at Eagle Eye Centre. She has a special interest in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery of the eyelids, lacrimal system and orbit. She has a special interest in eyelid surgery for functional and cosmetic indications, and treats many patients with droopy eyelids, eyelid malpositions, double eye lid creation and more. She is also well-versed in General Ophthalmology.

Dr Young was previously an Assistant Professor with the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore and remains a Visiting Consultant at the Ophthalmology Department in National University Hospital. She is active in Oculoplastic-related research and has published many papers on the subject in peer-reviewed journals and several book chapters. She has also won awards including American Academy of Ophthalmology Achievement Award (2019), Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology Best Scientific Paper (2018, 2019), Wong Hock Boon Society Outstanding Mentor Award (2017) and Gold Medal and Book Prize in Ophthalmology.

# New Specialist Doctors

## Orthopaedic Surgery



**Dr Gowreeson Thevendran**

*Island Orthopaedics*

Dr Gowreeson was the former Chief of Foot & Ankle Surgery at Tan Tock Seng Hospital. This former Assistant Professor of Orthopaedics, who was the Lead for Orthopaedic Curriculum at Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (Nanyang Technological University), commenced his basic medical training at the University of Bristol, England on a full scholarship by the Public Services Department. After his basic surgical training at the Royal Free Hospital, London, he received specialty training in orthopaedic surgery in the London North West Thames rotation and subspecialty fellowship training at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada in foot and ankle surgery; the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, London in sports surgery and the Royal Liverpool University Hospital in complex trauma and deformity correction surgery.

Dr Gowreeson's international portfolios include being the Societe Internationale de Chirurgie Orthopedique et de Traumatologie (SICOT) National Delegate for Singapore; Foot and Ankle Chairman for SICOT, 2018-2021; Scientific Programme Chairman for SICOT, 2019-2021; Education Academy Chair for SICOT, 2021-2024 and Foot and Ankle Specialty Council Member, Asia Pacific Orthopaedic Association (APOA). He is also the Editorial Board Member and Reviewer of Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery (Asia Pacific), and International Orthopaedics.



**Dr Ong Kee Leong**

*Synergy Orthopaedic Group Pte Ltd*

Dr Ong is a fellowship trained orthopaedic surgeon with a subspecialty in shoulder and knee surgery. He has been registered with the Singapore Medical Council as a specialist in Orthopaedic Surgery since 2011.

He received the Health Manpower Development Plan (HMDP) Scholarship, Ministry of Health 2012-2013 to specialise in Sports Surgery and Arthroscopy in Germany (Hannover)

Dr Ong has over 15 years of experience in the treatment of general orthopaedic conditions, including musculoskeletal injuries and fractures of the upper and lower limbs. In addition, he subspecialises in the management of sports injuries and degenerative conditions of the shoulder and knee joints. Shoulder conditions include shoulder instability, rotator cuff conditions, frozen shoulders, acromioclavicular joint disruption and clavicle fractures. Knee conditions include ligament, meniscus injuries, patella instability and osteoarthritis. Knee joint preservation techniques such as cartilage regeneration or osteotomies are often employed to help the patient restore joint function as quickly as possible.

## Paediatric Medicine



**Dr Ooi Pei Ling**

*International Child & Adolescent Clinic*

Dr Ooi treats children with a wide range of paediatric conditions, including a special interest in Paediatric Rheumatology.

As part of rheumatology practice, she treats children with joint pains, arthritis, myositis, lupus, vasculitis, periodic fever syndromes and chronic pain syndromes. She completed a paediatric rheumatology fellowship at Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, and has extensive experience using immunomodulating therapy and joint injections in children.

Prior to private practice, Dr Ooi was deputy clinical director of Paediatrics in National University Hospital from 2014-2019 and led many improvement projects. She is also experienced in newborn screening, vaccination, acute paediatrics and allergic conditions in children.

Being a mother to four children allows her to have a deeper understanding of the challenges experienced by her patients and their parents to provide the support they need.



## Radiation Oncology



**Dr Francis Chin**

*Icon Cancer Centre Mount Alvernia*

Dr Francis Chin is a Radiation Oncologist with experience across both medical oncology and radiation oncology. He is an ASEAN and Chevening scholar, receiving scholarships from the Singapore and British Government and participated in an EU sponsored MSc in radiation biology with distinction. Dr Chin is the first student from Asia to attend this prestigious radiobiology course sponsored by the European Commission to produce experts in radiation biology and radiation oncology.

Dr Chin is a visiting consultant at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) and is on the steering committee of the Viva-KKH Paediatric Brain and Solid Tumour programme.

He was the president-elect of the South East Asian Radiation Oncology Group (SEAROG) from 2017 to 2018 and is deputy chair of IRB in Oncology/Hematology in SingHealth. Dr Chin accepts referrals for all cancer types with particular interest in gynaecological cancers, gastrointestinal cancers, paediatrics and soft tissue sarcomas.

## Radiology



**Dr Manish Taneja**

*Asia Brain Spine and Nerve Medical Centre*

Dr Manish is a dual certified full time neurointerventional and vascular/interventional radiology specialist. He has over two decades of experience in assessment and management of neurionterventional and vascular conditions. He did his residency and specialist training in the UK with Certification of Specialist Training. This was followed by fellowship in vascular and interventional radiology from University Hospital Network, Toronto, Canada. Dr Manish did his neurointerventional fellowship from University of Washington at the neurosurgical unit at Harborview Medical Centre, Seattle, USA. He joined Singapore General Hospital as a Consultant in 2006, and moved to private practice in 2012

He is an expert in endovascular and image guided neurointerventional procedures of brain and spine. He has special interest in treatment of brain aneurysms, stroke and vascular malformations

Dr Manish also has extensive experience in performing all vascular interventions, non-vascular interventions and interventional oncology procedures.

## Urology



**Dr Kuo Li Chuen Tricia**

*Urohealth Medical Clinic*

Dr Tricia Kuo is a Consultant Urologist at Urohealth Medical Clinic, and provides specialised care in Female & Functional Urology, Reconstructive Urology, Pelvic Floor Disorders and Adolescent Urology. She was previously Director of Female Urology, Urodynamics and Reconstructive Urology Service at Singapore General Hospital (SGH). She is a Visiting Consultant at SGH, Sengkang General Hospital and Khoo Teck Puat Hospital.

Dr Kuo was awarded the College of Surgeons Gold Medal award for Urology. She was awarded a fellowship at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield (UK) with Prof. CR Chapple, sub-specialising in Female Urology, Urodynamics and Reconstructive Urology.

She is trained in sub-specialised procedures such as tapes, slings, injectables and artificial urinary sphincter for the treatment of incontinence; Botox™ treatment for overactive bladder, sacral nerve stimulation (SNS), posterior tibial nerve stimulation (PTNS); and reconstructive urology e.g. male and female urethroplasty, vesico-vaginal fistula (VVF).

# Our Ethos

**M**ount Alvernia Hospital is a mission of faith, hope and courage to bring life and light into the lives of people and the community. The work by the FMDM Sisters in 1961 to care for lepers and tuberculosis patients is a call to love all, especially the marginalised and the poor.

At the heart of the Franciscan spirit is a joy that comes from an appreciation for life. This gives rise to a deep commitment to relationships with people and all creation – to be life-giving, all-inclusive and just.

The sacredness of life, the dignity of each individual and the community compel us to live out our values in our work – providing

holistic healthcare, raising the quality of care and support for people where needed.

We believe in proactive collaborations and mutual support, partnering with doctors and other healthcare organisations to bring about charity and social service that empower sustained growth in healthcare. This enables us to appropriately respond to the needs of an ageing population whilst continuing to deliver new life as a hospital reputed for maternity care.

We are a 319-bed general acute care health institution with tertiary medical capabilities and multidisciplinary specialist centres. The hospital is supported by over

1,200 accredited doctors with more than 200 specialists located on campus.

As a not-for-profit hospital, Mount Alvernia Hospital channels our surpluses to the communities we serve. Significant efforts are made towards providing outreach healthcare services to the underserved in the community.

The hospital is part of the FMDM global network spanning Singapore, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Australia, Nigeria and Southern Africa – reaching out to the sick, the poor and the marginalised through healthcare, pastoral care, counselling, education, as well as prison and parish ministries.

# Mission Outreach Around the World

Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood



## NIGERIA

(From left to right)

- Sr Nenlidang with Damiette Peace Initiative colleagues
- Sr Judith teaching in Yola
- Sr Philomina teaching sewing to the women in Tunkus
- Sr Mercy with internally displaced people

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

(From top to bottom)

- Sr Lucy with children in Kasanka Community School, Zambia
- Sr Ann in Mwembeshi prison
- Sr Biatar and Sr Lucy with Little Assisi children
- Sr Teclar with newborn child

## IRELAND

(From left to right)

- Sr Maura offers pastoral support in Aged Care Home, Killarney, Ireland
- Sr Angela and Maria at a charity walk for Galway Hospice

## SINGAPORE

(From top to bottom)

- The Sisters explored the site of the existing Mount Alvernia Hospital (From left to right) Srs Baptista, Camillus, Raphael, Angela and Philippa
- Baby blessing by Sr Anne at Mount Alvernia Hospital
- A service started in 1969 as part of Mount Alvernia Hospital to care for chronically ill patients. In 1992, the FMDM Sisters established palliative care and Assisi Hospice was set up
- Assisi Hospice - a place of specialist care, comfort for patients and support for loved ones

The dandelion in this mural captures the 'evolving' and 'rippling' sense of mission. Each 'stem' flowing from the centre (Jesus Christ) symbolises the flow of mission out to the many, ever-increasing circles of outreach locally and globally; all of which are equal but different. Each culminates in a circle of energy representing where we 'Serve All with Love'.





## Our Vision

Mount Alvernia Hospital seeks to continue and embody the healing ministry of Jesus Christ to serve all with love.

## Our Mission

Mount Alvernia Hospital shares in the worldwide mission of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, providing compassionate, excellent and holistic healthcare.

## Our Core Values

They guide the delivery of our mission, influence how we act and reflect our Franciscan roots founded by St Francis of Assisi.



### Compassion:

The capacity to enter into another's joy and sorrow



### Humility:

Recognising that we are all brothers and sisters in the one global, human family



### Integrity:

Seeking always to act, speak and make decisions that reflect our values in a spirit of honesty and authenticity



### Respect:

Treating each person we encounter with reverence



### Peace:

Being committed to building life-giving relationships with all

### LADYWELL, UK

The current Congregational Leadership Team:

(From left to right)

- Srs Helena, Jane, Monica and Helen

(Bottom)

- Srs Maureen and June both taught in Catholic Junior College, Singapore



### AUSTRALIA

(From left to right)

- Congregational Leadership Team member, Sr Monica, with the sisters in Melbourne, Victoria
- Sr Marie in NSW counsels and runs a house for women released from prison or overcoming addictions



### ENGLAND

(From left to right)

- Sr Marguerite serving meals at a refugee centre
- Srs Anne and Frances in Coventry

### ROME

The FMDM community in Rome



### MIDDLE EAST

Sr Bridget, Director of Caritas Jerusalem, with families in Gaza



### MALAYSIA

(From top to bottom)

- Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital Pioneer Sisters
- Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital Cancer Survivor Support & Pastoral Care Team

# Governance

**G**overnance and leadership structures are in place to guide us in providing quality services as well as exercising responsible stewardship, accountability and controls.

The Board members are appointed by the Trustees of the hospital, acting on behalf of the FMDM Congregation, for a term of three years. The appointment is renewable for up to two terms.

The Board provides oversight in the following areas:

- Approval of broad policies, strategies and objectives for the hospital
- Corporate & clinical governance
- Monitoring of management performance
- Approval of annual budgets
- Overseeing the processes for evaluating the adequacy of internal controls, financial reporting and compliance and clinical system design improvements

To assist in the execution of its responsibilities, the Board has established eight committees, namely:

- Audit & Risk Management Committee (ARMC)
- Clinical Informatics Committee (CIC)
- Ethics Committee (EC)
- Finance Committee (FC)
- Hospital Development Committee (HDC)
- Medical Advisory Board (MAB)
- Nomination & Remuneration Committee (NRC)
- Technology Strategy Committee (TSC)

The MAB is elected by medical specialists and appointed by the Board to provide oversight of clinical governance matters. The Chairman of the MAB is also a member of the Board.



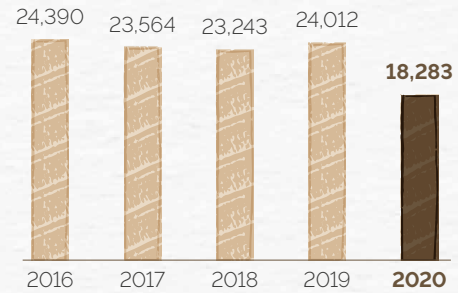


# Stewardship

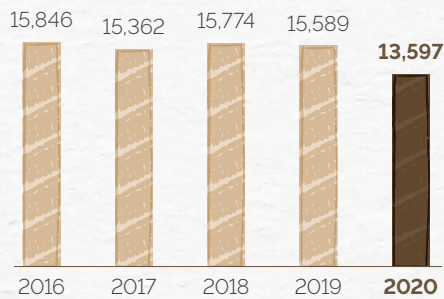
**T**he report provides an overview of what has been accomplished towards delivering value-based high quality patient care and healthcare standards.



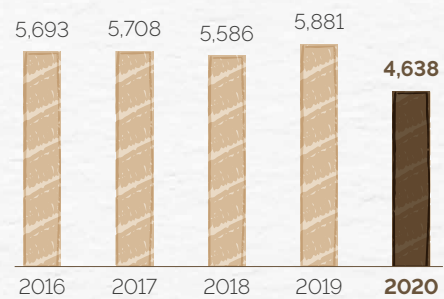
## Inpatient Admissions



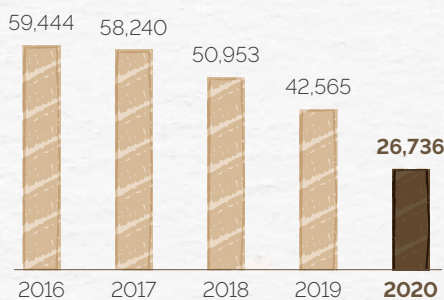
## Surgeries Performed



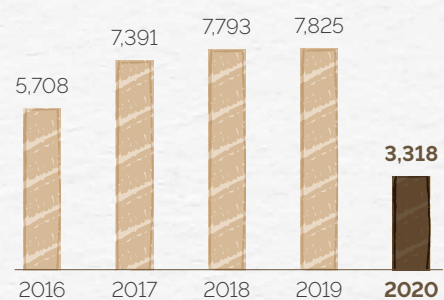
## Babies Delivered



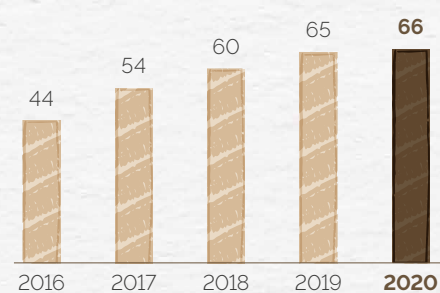
## Outpatient Visits



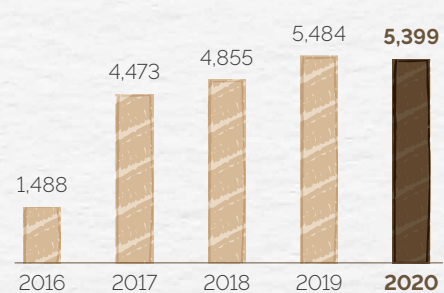
## Participants of Healthcare Outreach Activities



## Community Partners Engagement



## Mount Alvernia Outreach Beneficiaries



# Reflecting 59 Years of Care and Service to All



## 1961

On 4 March, Mount Alvernia Hospital started as a 60-bed hospital entirely staffed by the FMDM Sisters who were trained nurses. The first baby was delivered at the hospital on 12 March 1961.



## 1965-1971

- The late Mr Lee Kuan Yew officially opened a new five-storey wing, which brought the total number of hospital beds to 127.
- By 1971, three extensions of the building had been added and were officially opened by the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

## 1985

The Clinical Pastoral Care Department was established as part of holistic care to support patients and their relatives.



## 1996-1997

- Medical Centre A was opened, adding medical suites, operating theatres, delivery suites, an endoscopy centre and rehabilitation centre to the hospital.
- More medical suites were added with the completion of Medical Centre B.
- The total number of licensed beds was increased to 303.



## 2004

The Day Surgery Centre and the 24-hour Walk-in Clinic and Emergency Services were opened and ready to serve the public.

## 2009-2010

- A hospital-wide community outreach programme was officially launched to bring health screening services to the underprivileged and needy.
- Launched and opened Alvernia Parentcraft Centre, a dedicated one-stop centre for antenatal care, childbirth education and newborn care.

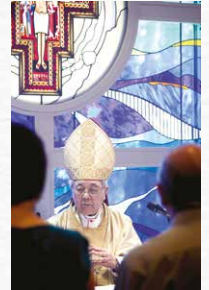


## 2011

- Launched the Mammography Screening Centre.
- Officially opened our first overseas office, Mount Alvernia Hospital Information Centre (MAHIC), in Jakarta on 6 May.

## 2013

- Emeritus Archbishop Nicholas Chia officially opened our newly-renovated Chapel.
- We became the first hospital in Singapore to expand our magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services for prostate, breast and magnetic resonance angiography (MRA) with the new 3 Tesla MRI digital scanner with Ambient Experience.



## 2014

Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health and Archbishop William Goh, officially opened Medical Centre D. The number of on-campus specialist clinics was increased to 89.



## 2015

- The opening of St Dominic medical and surgical ward and St Michael maternity ward provided additional bed capacity to reduce waiting time and increased inpatient admissions.
- We officially opened our first outreach medical clinic at the Enabling Village located at Redhill to provide healthcare services to persons with disability, the elderly and financially needy residents.



## 2016-2017

- The Laboratory Services were redeveloped and expanded to provide increased capabilities and procedures based on the most contemporary medical laboratory methodologies and systems.
- Our second outreach clinic comprising medical and dental services opened at Agape Village in Toa Payoh.
- Successful transition from ISO 2008 standards to ISO 2015 standards hospital-wide.



## 2018-2019

- Our Alvernia Endoscopy Centre was redesigned into a one-stop service facility with a minor operating theatre so that patients could undergo colonoscopy and follow-up with other minor surgeries, if needed within the same premises.
- Our electronic medical records system, christened HealthAngel went 'live'! HealthAngel would enhanced hospital operations and be integrated into the national healthcare network.



## 2019

- We were the first private hospital to partner Community Chest to raise awareness and rally support for the Rare Disease Fund.
- We announced our partnership with Icon Cancer Centre to build a new integrated cancer facility at the hospital premises, offering services like haematology and radiation oncology.
- Our partnership with Prudential allowed patients to enjoy the convenience of cashless medical service.

- A new wing was added to St Francis Ward with two sets of two-bedders and four-bedders, bringing our bed count to 319.
- We began construction of a new maternity and paediatrics centre. The centre would be ready in 2022/2023.

## 2020

- Together as one Mount Alvernia Hospital family, we battle the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 3 November 2020, we hosted the groundbreaking ceremony for the Integrated Oncology Services Centre (IOSC), a partnership between Icon Cancer Centre and Mount Alvernia Hospital, which is due to open in 2022.



# Together, we stand in solidarity against COVID-19

"The culture of care... calls for a common, supportive and inclusive commitment to protecting and promoting the dignity and good of all, a willingness to show care and compassion, to work for reconciliation and healing, and to advance mutual respect and acceptance. As such, it represents a privileged path to peace,"

- Pope Francis,  
54<sup>th</sup> World day of Peace Message





**E**ver since the first COVID-19 case was diagnosed in Singapore, Mount Alvernia Hospital has been fighting the pandemic on many fronts. A COVID-19 Core Group was established to provide leadership in managing the pandemic. The team swiftly put in place strict infection control measures, visitor restriction, screening procedures and safe management measures to ensure the safety of patients, doctors and staff. The Core Group also responded quickly to assist staff affected by border restrictions. Clinical pastoral care colleagues set up a dedicated 24/7 phone service to provide a listening ear or counselling to patients and staff who required help.

As the Mount Alvernia Hospital team stepped up our surveillance, the dedication and selfless sacrifices of colleagues enabled us to stand in solidarity to fight against the pandemic. A crisis like this tends to bring out the best in all of us, as one united Mount Alvernia Hospital family while we continue to walk the difficult journey together.







# Walking the Journey Together

## Care for Our Staff

When border restrictions in March 2020 rendered it impossible for our staff to commute daily to and from their homes, we responded swiftly in attending to their immediate basic needs and assisted the affected staff in sourcing for temporary lodgings, securing basic necessities, telecommunication services, medications and helping them with living expenses. Colleagues from various departments worked closely

with our community partners to help our affected colleagues. With their kind acts, they provided our affected colleagues a peace of mind and a stable living environment during the pandemic. Many people also blessed them with gifts of fruits and cookies during the festive period.

Proactive and regular dialogues with the staff enabled us to 'feel the pulse' on the ground and understand their concerns. It also deepened a sense of belonging and enhanced our solidarity with one another as we journeyed and bonded as a Mount Alvernia Hospital family.

Prayers are integral to the work we do. In addition to blessings of babies and wards, service areas and construction grounds, we prepared a 'COVID-19' prayer and shared it with our staff so that everyone can come together in one prayer and receive God's

blessing for healing, protection and resilience during the pandemic.

During the time when our inter-faith memorial service could not continue due to COVID-19 restrictions, we held a private service in memory of a colleague who had passed on suddenly. This was an extension of our pastoral care and support for her grieving family and our colleagues. Besides prayers, the exchange of comforting words and personal stories offered consolation and healing to those who were present at the memorial service.

In celebration of the life of St Francis and our Franciscan heritage, we engaged staff in a series of weekly reflections via WhatsApp beginning from the Feast of the Stigmata of St Francis on 17 September to St Francis' Feast Day celebrations on 2 October. Our reflections





featured a video by Friar Derrick Yap OFM who shared about the significance of Mount Alvernia in Italy to St Francis, and how the saint's invitation to see God in all things and in all creation enables us to 'Serve All With Love'. Contemplating on St Francis' peace prayer: 'For it is giving that we receive,' reminded us of the joy in serving and the fulfilment of purpose through our ministry of love and care.

Reflections also centred on the gift of life and to care for self as we care for others. In collaboration with Clarity Singapore, we introduced mindful eating as a form of self-care which refocuses our minds on the present, creating a "breathing space" to acknowledge our feelings, thoughts and physical senses.

In December 2020, Christmas was celebrated online with pre-recorded carols, greetings and prayers from around the hospital as well as a lucky draw for staff. The occasion fostered a sense of community and togetherness, and the Christmas joy enriched our giving and receiving.



## Care for Our Patients

The CPC 'On-Call' hotline was upgraded to a dedicated mobile line in February 2020 to enhance after-office hours support for our patients and colleagues on shifts. On a case-by-case basis, the hotline support may involve providing a listening ear to a patient in need, counselling and praying with them on the phone, responding to a crisis situation with an in-person visit and working in consultation with ward staff.

As part of our care for COVID-19 patients, a dedicated 24/7 phone service was opened so that these patients can tap on CPC support at any time. In seeking to understand their needs, best efforts were made to cater to different language-speaking nationals such as Chinese, Bangladeshi, Burmese, Indonesians, etc.

Spiritual Communion cards were offered to COVID-19 patients and high-risk patients who were in isolation. Accompanying prayers were also provided in a follow-up phone call to offer comfort and keep their spirits up. Upon

their discharge, patients were given a picture card printed with a Franciscan blessing.

Our CPC team also joined our clinical and operations teams in donning the full Personal Protect Equipment (PPE) and N95 masks as they attended to walk-in patients with acute respiratory infection symptoms at our 24-hour Clinic and Emergency Services.

From June 2020, CPC stepped up pastoral support for paediatric oncology patients in anticipation of the opening of the new Integrated Oncology Services Centre (IOSC). CPC staff are trained in Advanced Care Planning and Suicide Prevention and are able to support oncology as well as hospice patients.

## Care for Our Migrant Workers

Thanks to the contribution and support of generous community partners, we presented migrant workers (who were recovering from COVID-19) with care packs. These included food, toiletries, towels, clothes and other items to meet their essential needs. For those who needed to connect with family overseas, we helped them with topping up their mobile phone credits and getting second hand mobile devices. These were meaningful gestures to our migrant worker patients in isolation especially when they could not spend their birthdays and festive celebrations with their loved ones. This project aligned with our belief in holistic healing and through it, we witnessed the compassion and collective support of our community.

## Managing Safe Distancing

During the pandemic, Mount Alvernia Hospital continued our operations as a listed essential service. To enable the smooth operation of our hospital while ensuring the safety and well-being of our staff, safe management measures were put in place.

As required by the Multi-Ministry Task Force and Ministry of Health, the hospital set up the Safe Distancing Office with Safe Distancing Officers patrolling the hospital regularly to check that staff adhere to the various safe distancing measures.

Within the workplace, some of the safe distancing measures included:

- Split team arrangements;
- Staggered working and meal hours;
- No mingling of staff within the hospital premises;
- Ensuring that staff maintained physical distances of at least one metre when interactions were not avoidable and non-transient;
- Making use of technology tools such as Microsoft Teams for meetings and discussions;

- Ensuring that staff wore their masks at all times (except during meal times). When doing frontline duties, they must wear a surgical mask/ N95 mask or the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) gear as advised by the Infection Control team;
- Reallocating workspaces for offices with low partitions to ensure that staff who were in office were seated at least one metre apart;
- Ensuring that staff who were able to work from home (WFH) to continue to do so;
- Placing additional partitions in offices of operational personnel where WFH arrangements were not possible;
- Making arrangements for vulnerable colleagues (e.g. colleagues who are older, pregnant or have underlying medical conditions) to WFH;
- Ensuring that staff observed good hygiene standards at all times; and
- Requiring staff to measure and record their temperature readings daily.

To ensure compliance to the safe distancing measures, communication in the form of bi-weekly emails were sent out to all staff, posters were put up in departments and common areas within the hospital to remind staff of the various safe distancing measures, and weekly audits were conducted by the Safe Distancing Officers.





## Hospital Operations

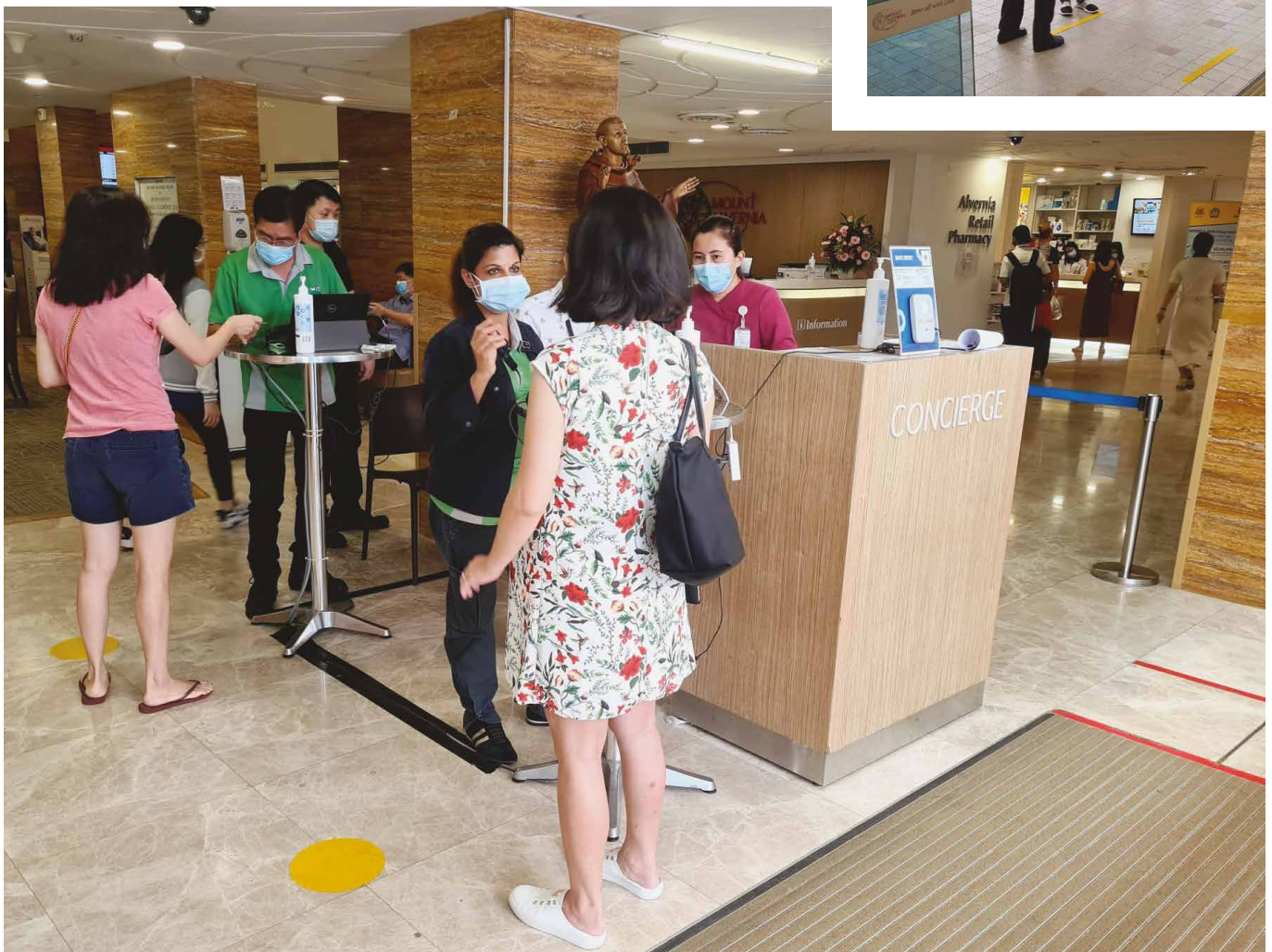
At the start of the pandemic, the Hospital Operations division sprang into action to set up temperature screening and SafeEntry check-in stations at the entrances of the hospital and medical centres. At these stations, patients and visitors accessing the hospital facilities were also requested to declare their travel history, health status and temperature. The team adjusted protocols along the way to align with updates in guidelines, as instructed by the Ministry of Health.

All visitors and patients had to state whether they arrived via shuttle buses or were dropped off at driveways by public or private transport. The Hospital Operations team made sure that

facilities and patient services are accessible and well-run to ensure a seamless patient journey during the pandemic.

The team also worked with the Corporate Development and Nursing teams to communicate up-to-date information about visitation policies. The Hospital Operations team also recruited staff volunteers from different divisions and departments to man the screening points.

Demarcation of safe distances, disinfection of common areas and stepping up on cleaning of service facilities were also taken care of by the industrious Hospital Operations team.



## 24-Hour Clinic and Emergency Services

The team at the 24-Hour Clinic and Emergency Services initiated first line of defence against the COVID-19 pandemic and swiftly established infection control and clinical protocols to support outpatient care.

The Head of Department, together with the Director of Clinical Services, formulated clinical workflows and set up isolation facility to segregate suspect or confirmed COVID-19 positive patients from other patients.

All staff donned full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) gear when managing potential suspect or confirmed COVID-19 positive patients.



Stringent screening of patients, including temperature and travel history screening was established during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department was also the 'bridge'

to direct COVID-19 positive patients to St Clare Ward, a designated ward for housing COVID-19 patients who were transferred from the restructured hospitals.

## Diagnostic Imaging

The team from the Diagnostic Imaging Department identified and designed a room to be utilised by suspect COVID-19 positive patients for their diagnostic services. This was to segregate 'clean' and 'dirty' zones within the department so as to avoid contamination of the whole department.

Staff were spilt into teams – a core team performed X-rays for patients with COVID-19 symptoms while the other teams continued to service other patients, ensuring that patients enjoyed a high level of service standards. This was done with stringent safe management measures and infection control protocols in place.

## Nutrition & Dietetics

Dietitian services were effectively delivered via tele-consult during the pandemic.

During the Circuit Breaker from April to June, all non-essential healthcare services such as dietetics services were deferred. Restricted movements to nursing homes resulted in disruptions of outpatient dietitian consults and services at the nursing homes. It was a concern as pregnant mums with gestational diabetes and elderly at risk of malnutrition were impacted.

Recognising the importance of continuing with the nutritional care of these vulnerable patient groups, the team in the Nutrition & Dietetics Department consulted with Technology & Strategy (T&S) colleagues to determine suitable tele-consult platforms and were recommended video-

conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams as possible solutions.

Tele-consultation trials with Nursing Homes were conducted successfully, with T&S colleagues on standby to troubleshoot. Many of the nursing homes serviced by Mount Alvernia Hospital were agreeable to do tele-consult as a replacement of physical visits by dietitians during the Circuit Breaker period.

As dietitians were unable to see patients in an outpatient setting physically, many patients readily accepted tele-consultation for their first and follow-up consultations.

An infrastructure was put in place for patients to send their blood sugar records via emails and make payments conveniently on their mobile phones.



## Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation team faced numerous challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to stringent safe management measures, the contact time between therapists and patients were kept minimal during therapy sessions so as to reduce unnecessary virus exposure.

In the condensed treatment session, the physiotherapists not only had to ensure patients were well looked after with good rehabilitation progress, patients' appointments also had to be staggered and adequate space had to be maintained within the rehabilitation area to prevent overcrowding and be in adherence with safe management measures. Speech therapists, who were wearing face masks, had to find novel ways to work on voice and articulation practices with patients.



File Photo

Treatment beds and gym equipment had to be sanitised regularly by the therapy assistants every day. The rehabilitation team also had to don full personal protective equipment (PPE) – N95 masks, gowns and goggles – during their therapy sessions with patients, which made therapy sessions even more challenging during the pandemic.

## Laboratory

Our laboratory team provided urgent and immediate medical testing for emergency and time-critical situations.

From the start of the pandemic, the laboratory team expeditiously set up and performed test evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19 testing.

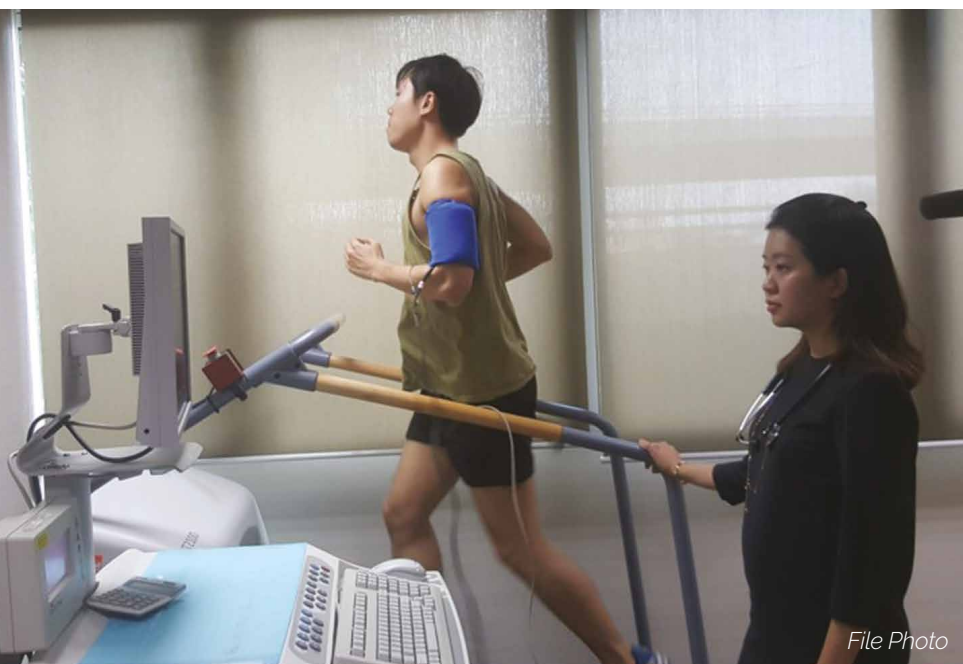
The lab team also worked very closely with the Infection Control team to manage the testing of patients who matched the suspect case definition of COVID-19 by providing prompt support to outsourced test results within a short turnaround time.

## Business Office

Our Business Office worked in close collaboration with our 24-hour Clinic and Emergency Services to minimise back-and-forth shuttling between departments by patients and their next-of-kin whenever an outpatient was admitted to our hospital.

By devising a form that captured all necessary information, from personal particulars and insurance details to signatures of patients and their next-of-kin for admission and deposit collection, the number of trips was reduced from two or three to just a single trip. Overall, the duration of the admission process was halved from approximately 30 minutes to just 15.

Essentially, this innovation resulted in greater convenience for patients and their families, and enhanced staff and patient safety, especially in view of the COVID-19 situation. The paperwork, the footwork and the risks of infection were all significantly reduced.



File Photo

# Our Outreach Efforts Continue...

**C** OVID-19 has certainly thrown a spanner in the works but it has not dampened Mount Alvernia Hospital's determination to continue our outreach efforts, albeit cautiously, with safety measures in place.

## Mount Alvernia Outreach Medical and Dental Clinics at Enabling Village and Agape Village

In these pandemic times, it is perhaps even more important to continue Mount Alvernia Hospital's outreach work. Being an essential service, our outreach clinics remained open to provide much-needed care to the community. However, patients aged 13 and above with Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI), were diverted to Swab and Send Home (SASH) clinics, complying with MOH directives. Our dental clinic continued to serve non-aerosol generating procedure cases, urgent cases, and patients who were in pain.

To ensure a safe environment for patients and staff alike, all necessary safe management measures were implemented in accordance to MOH guidelines. These include: donning of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by staff and regular temperature checks. In addition, using the SafeEntry check-in was mandatory. Everyone also had to make their travel declarations. The staff also stepped up on cleaning and disinfecting procedures to maintain the highest standards of hygiene.





## Mobile Paediatric Clinic with Child @ Street 11

Held once a month, the Mobile Paediatric Clinic with Child @ Street 11 began its first session on 23 September 2020. Dr Mythilli Pandi, a family physician and a volunteer, promoted health education by screening children for developmental or nutritional issues.

This is a collaborative effort between Mount Alvernia Hospital, Dr Mythili, and Child @ Street 11, a childcare and after-school care centre for children from low-income and dysfunctional families at the Kebun Bahru and Ang Mo Kio rental blocks. Child @ Street 11 provides a full-day programme

for the children through quality education, integral support, a safe and conducive environment, and nutritious meals.

The school will flag out students with health conditions such as skin issues, rashes, sinus, poor eyesight or malnutrition. Children with suspected learning challenges or unhealthy eating habits are also highlighted. The children with health conditions will then be treated, given medication or referral letters for further investigation. Those with learning challenges or unhealthy eating habits are attended to by the doctor over several sessions.

This allows the doctor to build rapport with the children so that they feel safe to share more about themselves. The doctor also takes the opportunity to look out for potential abuse or any other issues of concern. Subsequently, relevant feedback and assessment of the children are then shared with the school for their follow-up. Through this collaboration, Mount Alvernia Hospital hopes to be an available resource for the children to help build their confidence, improve their physical health as well as provide early detection and address any potential health ailments or learning challenges that the children might encounter.

## Annual Flu Vaccination at the Singapore Cheshire Home

With or without COVID-19, the regular influenza virus infects millions across the globe and in severe cases, causes death. Thus, vulnerable communities such as the elderly are encouraged to receive the influenza vaccination annually for protection against the virus.

After consultation with Cheshire Home, the Mount Alvernia team made careful plans for the annual vaccination exercise. Held on 17 November 2020, a team of six, including our doctor, donned personal protective equipment (PPE) and visited the home to administer the flu jabs. A total of 113 people – 75 residents and 38 staff – were successfully vaccinated. Beyond that, the team kept in touch with the home to

ensure that all attendees who took the jab remained well. A big thank you to the Mount Alvernia team for helping to keep our elderly safe and healthy!





## Visiting the Smiles for Good Recipients

A joint initiative with Caritas Singapore, Smiles for Good (SFG) is a Catholic dentures project aimed at providing free dentures for low-income individuals.

On 3 December 2020, committee members of SFG, Mr Paul Beh, Mr Loo Wei Choong and Ms Anthea Neo visited 10 SFG recipients staying in various locations in Singapore. The SFG recipients were presented with their very own portraits, which were snapped when they first received their new set of dentures at the clinic. These seniors also received a yummy cake, specially baked by a volunteer. The cosy catch-up sessions brought lots of joy to our elderly as they fondly remembered

our volunteer photographer, Wei, who had taken their photos previously.

Amidst a dreary pandemic that had strict restrictions on social interactions, it has been a rough time for our seniors. They were thus very happy to receive a visit from

the team. Some of the recipients shared that they had not seen a photo of themselves in years, and eagerly showed off their portraits to their families. Some even mentioned that they would like to have the beautifully shot picture accompany them on a dignified final journey when they pass on.





# Faces of Alvernia



## Nurses Merit Award 2020

Ms Audrey Lim Chwee Ling, Assistant Director of Nursing in St Francis ward, was among the 100 nurses to receive the year's prestigious Nurses Merit Award from the Ministry of Health.

Audrey joined Mount Alvernia Hospital in 1996. Constantly striving for self-improvement while remaining tirelessly committed to the care of her patients, she rose through the ranks to her current position of Assistant Director.

Patients and their families who have interacted with Audrey find her caring, helpful and professional. She often goes the extra mile for them especially in times of need.

Congratulations Audrey on receiving this prestigious award. Thank you for your dedication to 'Serve All with Love'.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Singapore Health Quality Service Awards

The Mount Alvernia Hospital healthcare team was honoured at the 10<sup>th</sup> Singapore Health Quality Service Awards (SHQSA). The SHQSA is a nationwide award to recognise and celebrate the exemplary efforts of healthcare professionals in improving patient experience.

In total, our colleagues received an impressive nine gold awards and 39 silver awards. They received their awards from Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Heng Swee Keat.

Thumbs up to our colleagues for their hard work and commitment in striving for excellence in all that they do.

Sr Elizabeth Moey, Infant Jesus Sister, Senior Pastoral Care Counsellor, was one of the healthcare professionals honoured at the 10<sup>th</sup> Singapore Health Quality Service Awards in January 2020.

The award recognises her outstanding contribution to patient care as well as the integral role that Clinical Pastoral Care plays in healthcare and the meaningful value it adds to holistic patient experience.



The annual Nurses Merit Award is awarded to nurses who have displayed noteworthy and exceptional performance, participated in professional development, and contributed to raising the standards of the nursing profession. Nurses are nominated for the award by their healthcare institutions and winners are selected by a panel set up by the Ministry of Health.

# New Hospital Developments

## Groundbreaking Ceremony of the Integrated Oncology Services Centre

On 3 November 2020, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new Integrated Oncology Services Centre (IOSC).

Set to open in 2022, the cancer centre will be built and managed by Icon Cancer Centre, in partnership with Mount Alvernia Hospital.

Located on the Mount Alvernia Hospital's campus, the cancer centre offers a full range of medical oncology, haematology and radiation oncology services. This allows both Icon Cancer Centre and Mount Alvernia



Hospital to better serve the needs of the community in need of cancer care, under one roof.

The centre will be equipped with the latest Varian TrueBeam Linear Accelerator which provides advanced precision and speed in radiation therapy. The centre will

also offer PET-CT, pathology and pharmacy services. With these combined services, the IOSC has the capacity to treat cancer patients who require concurrent chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

## New Maternity and Paediatric Building

The construction of the new maternity and paediatric building is ongoing and the building will be ready in 2022. The 10-storey facility will house our maternity and paediatric wards, delivery suites, neonatal intensive care unit,

allied health services and ancillary hospital services. This new building will transform the Mount Alvernia campus not only in terms of its landscape, but also in expanding our capacity and capabilities in the years to come.

Serving as a care facility for patients, the hospital planning team has integrated various green concepts in its design to ensure the comfort of our patients. These designs include a communal terrace with greenery that provides a healing environment, a well-designed ventilation system to improve air quality, and the use of environmentally-friendly products in the interior fit-out works. Our strong environmental consciousness also motivates us to take a deeper look at integrating energy and water saving features into the building design. To support green vehicles, we have designed special parking lots for electric or e-hybrid cars with charging infrastructure.







Most High glorious God, bring light to the  
darkness of my heart. Give me right faith, certain  
hope, and perfect charity, insight and wisdom,  
so I can always observe Thy holy and true  
command. Amen.

**The Prayer of St Francis before the Cross at San Damiano**



*Serve all with Love*

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