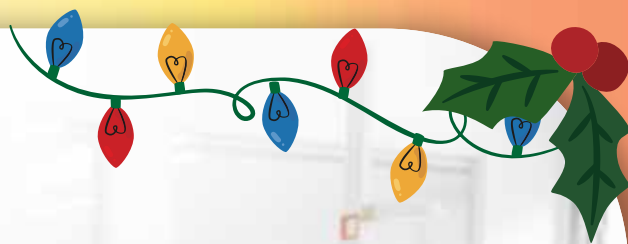


my Alvernia

Inspiring Healthy Living | Issue 48

Giving Hope

to Our Communities For a
Healthier New Year



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Servings of Love



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Connect with Us



As the year 2022 draws to a close, it is the perfect time for us to look back on it with much to be thankful for.

In the first half of the year, there was still a lot of uncertainty as we continued with the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking back at those months, I am thankful to my team and our supportive doctors who were instrumental in keeping our hospital safe from the pandemic as we dutifully cared for our patients and attended to our visitors. Our retail and food & beverages tenants have also displayed much resilience by pressing on with their businesses to provide their services to those who were in our hospital.

As life progressively returns to normalcy, I am happy to see the growing activities within our hospital. Patients are now more at ease coming to the hospital for treatment, visitors are at liberty to go for visitations while more of our staff are back to work. The sight of the increased social interactions is refreshing for a change.

There is much to look forward to as we watch with delight the swift construction of our new mother and children block – the St Anne Mother and Child Centre (SAMCC). The completion of SAMCC will present three floors of maternity wards with 68 single beds, two floors of paediatric wards with 42 single beds and two double beds, 15 delivery suites as well as a parent craft centre. The new Integrated Oncology Services Centre – ICON Cancer Centre is at its final touches before it opens its door end this year.

This centre will add PET-CT Scan and radiotherapy to our current cancer treatment modalities available, such as surgery and chemotherapy, which would provide convenience to our cancer patients.

Meanwhile, as the year comes to an end, I am sure many of you will be having your holiday travels and year-end parties. I would like to wish everyone safe travels, a blessed Christmas, and a smooth and healthy 2023 ahead for you and all your loved ones.

Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year, everyone!

*Blessed Christmas.
Everyone!*



Dr James Lam Kian Ming
CEO, Mount Alvernia Hospital





Up High in the Canopies

To get our staff off their desks and give their bodies a much-needed break, the Sports and Recreation Club (SRC) has been hard at work organising various activities for our staff to not just get together to destress but to also encourage bonding and make memories and experiences while getting ample time outdoors.

For the entire month of July, when COVID restrictions for social gatherings were gradually eased, the SRC took the opportunity to encourage staff from both Mount Alvernia Hospital and Assisi Hospice to participate in a hike up the forested trails of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. This is a 7km trek within Singapore's largest primary forest that stretches over 2,000 hectares. The hike would culminate at the Treetop Walk - a 250m-long freestanding suspension bridge joining two of the highest points of the Reserve. The bridge is 25m above the forest floor at its highest point.



Staff could then form themselves into hiking groups and select any day in July during the mornings or afternoons, to go for the hike.

In all, some 10 hiking groups were formed that were made up of employees from various departments such as Nursing, Technology and Strategy and Assisi Hospice. At the end, they were rewarded with a spectacular birds-eye view of the Reserve that is home to more than 1,000 species of flowering plants and over 500 species of animals.



“ The trek took my family and I more than two hours to complete! Some parts of the walk especially that of walking across the suspension bridge was challenging to me as I was fearful of heights... but it made the hike all the more memorable as I overcame the fear with my family who agreed that it was a fun experience and a great chance to bond, – Shirley, Director of Nursing. ”

Thank you SRC for organising this event so that we have the opportunity to explore and experience Singapore's native biodiversity – thus embodying the love for nature that St Francis of Assisi – our patron saint – was so celebrated for.

Physical Maternity Tours Are Back!

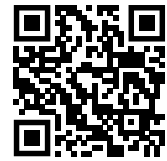
Physical maternity tours* have restarted much to the delight of expecting parents.

The tour, which takes about an hour to complete, takes place on Mondays to Fridays at 2pm and 4pm.

Each tour will lead visiting couples across various points of interests such as:

- An introduction to the hospital's history and services
- A video highlighting the checklist to prepare prior to admission, what to do when coming in for delivery and the room types available
- Explanation of the various maternity packages
- A tour of the facility including available rooms
- A Question and Answer segment

You can also register via our website at mtalvernia.sg/maternity-tours/ or through this QR code.



VIRTUAL TOURS

Alternatively, virtual maternity tours are available from Tuesdays to Thursdays at 10am via Microsoft Teams. Feel free to write to patient.assist@mtalvernia.sg to book your timings.

You may also log on to mtalvernia.sg/virtual-tour/ for a 360° viewing of our maternity wards and delivery suites.

**Subject to MOH visitor policy to healthcare institutions.*

***All information is correct at the time of writing. For latest updates on our maternity tours, please log on to mtalvernia.sg/maternity-tours/*

A Slam dunk Finish



The Mount Alvernia Hospital (MAH) Basketball team came in third in the 2019/2022 Inter-Hospital Basketball Tournament that saw MAH coming up against eight other teams fielded by as many healthcare institutions such as Singapore General Hospital, National Kidney Foundation (NKF) and Allied Healthcare professionals.

What was supposed to be a tournament that started in 2019 took a couple of years to finish due to the sudden onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted the entire competition. The MAH team, which comprised of staff from various departments such as Housekeeping, Facilities Management and Rehabilitation, played a total of eight games in a tournament structure that featured single elimination rounds which the MAH team blitzed through.

Unfortunately, Mount Elizabeth Hospital ended MAH's winning streak in an extremely close semi-finals with a score of 68-69. However, the MAH team quickly rallied around to beat NKF 77-65 to clinch the 2nd runner-up position.

MAH scores at a glance

Elimination rounds

MAH – 82	vs	International care – 50
MAH – 70	vs	SGH – 26
MAH – 57	vs	Sengkang – 66
MAH – 80	vs	Mount Elizabeth – 78
MAH – 80	vs	Allied healthcare – 64
MAH – 81	vs	Heart attack team – 60
MAH – 115	vs	Farrer Park – 37
MAH – 51	vs	National Kidney Foundation – 48

Quarter-finals

MAH – 72	vs	Farrer park – 47
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Semi-finals

MAH – 68	vs	Mt Elizabeth – 69
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3rd place game

MAH – 77	vs	NKF – 65
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Mr Jhon Christopher Leones from Facilities Management who played on the team said, "Of all the games, the semi-finals match-up was the most contested game we faced that could have gone either way.

Coming back to the tournament after the two-year pause due to COVID-19 restrictions posed some challenges to the team as there were some change of players in the original line-up.

I have to say that it was very memorable for the team when our CEO, Dr James Lam, came on as part of the winning line-up against NKF for the 2nd runner-up trophy!"





New Facilities to Serve You Better

Our new St Anne Mother and Child Centre and Integrated Oncology Services Centre will be ready to serve your maternity and medical needs in the upcoming months.

Many who come through our doors appreciate the warm and welcoming atmosphere, and the comfort of receiving patient-centred medical services alongside clinical pastoral care. Even as we expanded from the initial 60 beds some sixty years ago to more than 300 beds now, the FMDM Sisters' tradition of providing personalised compassionate and holistic care to our patients lives on.

We have been continually upgrading our hospital to better serve the community. Two new facilities, alongside our strategic partnerships, will position Mount Alvernia Hospital to grow its capacity and capabilities, and to continue to serve generations in the years to come. Here is a closer look:



St Anne Mother and Child Centre

With the new 10-storey St Anne Mother and Child Centre, our legacy of caring for mothers and their children through all stages will continue. Patients can look forward to a 15-bed delivery suite, 8-bed First Stage section, 68-bed Maternity Ward, 44-bed Paediatric Ward, a 2-bed High Dependency Unit, a neonatal intensive care unit, allied health services, and auxiliary hospital services.

A Business Office, clinics, health screening and dietetic services will also be offered. Parking on Levels 3 and 4 will add convenience for patients and visitors. A link bridge on Level 4 connects the public to the main building while another at Level 5 offers staff access to Medical Centre A.

This much-anticipated facility is estimated to receive its Temporary Occupation Permit (TOP) in the 2nd quarter of 2023 and start operations in the 3rd quarter of 2023.



Integrated Oncology Services Centre

Together with the architect, CIAP and contractor, Shimizu Corporation, this new centre was designed to focus on patients' comfort with the use of environmentally-friendly products in the interior fit-out works.

The 2-storey building offers all aspects of quality cancer care, including chemotherapy and specialised therapies for all solid and haematological malignancies. It is helmed by a multi-disciplinary team of highly skilled specialists, focused on ensuring optimum patient safety and comfort throughout their treatment journey.

This centre, which operates exclusively within Medical Centre E, will deliver seamless care. This includes surgical oncology consultation, access to our tertiary hospital with a full range of diagnostics and laboratory services, and an experienced and respected team of surgical oncologists.

The Integrated Oncology Services Centre will start operations in the 4th quarter of 2022.

Moments of Reflection with Our FMDM Family

Some 200 staff from Mount Alvernia Hospital, Assisi Hospice, Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital, Penang and FMDM Sisters came together on Friday 16 September 2022, to mark the Feast of the Stigmata of St Francis of Assisi with sharing from Friar Derrick Yap OFM.

Friar Derrick's talk, titled, 'St Francis of Assisi on Mount Alvernia: Stigmata of Suffering', introduced the story of St Francis who sought solace on Mount Alvernia in Italy when he was troubled, and how we too, are invited to come away to seek comfort and get 'filled' again in the midst of our busyness.

He encouraged all to view events like these as a 'good time' to recollect on our dreams, desires and hopes for our work and ministry, and receive a 'new birth' – one of new insights and revelations that benefit and 'centre' us.



Connecting with Self and with Others

Friar Derrick shared that in our daily engagement with others, we are called to touch and encounter everyone in a holistic and integrated way, not just looking after the body but also the soul.

"You work in a privileged environment in healthcare where you encounter opportunities for compassion, where you can be there for others, touch and impact lives. Your hard work, discipline and sacrifice will draw out from within you the joy and fulfilment in caregiving and service." – Friar Derrick

Friar Derrick spoke of how St Francis, having shared in the sacred wounds of Christ, was able to empathise with the suffering of another. And he experienced this divine 'sweetness' of God's love and compassion when he hugged and kissed a leper and became for that leper someone who truly sees, values and loves him as a fellow human being.

It was a timely reminder for us, as companions on a journey, to constantly connect with each other through a relationship of listening and dialogue.

Thoughts from the Audience

“ Thanks to Friar Derrick for the sharing. It felt good, like we have been fed spiritually.
– Ruth Lim, Clinical Pastoral Care, Mount Alvernia Hospital and Assisi Hospice ”

“ Thanks for organising this talk. It challenged us to look deeply into ourselves and reflect. It makes me recall why I chose to join the hospital after being involved in a short-term project.
– Lim Hock Huat, Laboratory, Mount Alvernia Hospital ”

“ The questions led me to think of my two kids who are my greatest joy and the pleasure I have in nurturing them. – Sudhin Pillai, Operations, Assisi Hospice ”





Living a Fulfilling Life Despite Lymphoma

Lymphoma is one of the most common cancers in Singapore but here's the good news: Advances in treatment methods has made this a highly treatable disease. Medical Oncologist, Dr Hsieh Wen-Son answers some frequently asked questions on the condition.



Dr Hsieh Wen-Son
Medical Oncologist
Icon Cancer Centre
Medical Centre A #05-03/04

1 What is lymphoma? How can I tell if I have any symptoms?

Lymphoma is a type of cancer that grows in white blood cells, which are part of the immune system. It is usually categorised as aggressive or non-aggressive, with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma making up the majority of such cancer cases.

Aggressive lymphoma grows very quickly; non-aggressive or indolent lymphoma tends to progress slowly over the years. In Singapore, lymphoma is the fifth most common cancer, according to the Singapore Cancer Registry Annual Report commissioned by the Health Promotion Board. Although adults over 60 face higher risk of getting lymphoma, it can hit younger adults and children too.

The most common symptom that patients report is swollen lymph nodes. These can be in the neck; under the



arms; the groin area; in the chest which might cause a cough and shortness of breath; and the abdomen, which may lead to abdominal bloating or back pain.

In addition, patients may complain of fatigue, fevers, drenching sweats or unexplained weight loss. These symptoms are also common signs of infections. "However, the major difference is that infections will improve or go away with treatment such as antibiotics, whereas lymphomas will persist unless treated," clarifies Dr Hsieh.

2 What diagnostic tests will the doctor use to confirm if I have lymphoma?

A cell sample from a swollen lymph node will be taken, which will be examined under a microscope. Once the

doctor has confirmed the diagnosis of lymphoma, he or she will determine the stage of the lymphoma – which means how far it has spread – by conducting detailed scans using Computed Tomography (CT) or Positron Emission Tomography/ Computed Tomography (PET/CT).

3 What are my options for treatment if I have been diagnosed with lymphoma? What side effects should I take note of?

Lymphoma Treatment Options

Targeted Treatment:

Bruton tyrosine inhibitors (BTK) and antibody-drug conjugates to attack specifically lymphoma cells while reducing possible medical side effects.

Immunotherapy:

Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy which uses trained immune cells removed from the patient's own body or Bi-specific T-cell Engagers (BiTE) which equip T-cells in the body to activate the immune system to kill lymphoma cells.

Chemotherapy:

The key treatment for lymphoma is still chemotherapy. "Significant numbers of patients with aggressive lymphomas have been cured by chemotherapy, which has also been used to keep indolent lymphomas under control for many years," explains Dr Hsieh.

So, is it possible to live a quality life despite lymphoma? Yes, definitely, especially with the improved treatment methods available. In fact, look no further than our Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. He overcame lymphoma (and even a bout of prostate cancer), and continues to lead a dynamic life stewarding Singapore!

Prevention and early detection of health issues via health screening is often recommended by our health professionals. Do call our Health Screening Centre for an appointment at 6347 6215 or Whatsapp 9819 1303. Alternatively, you might want to book an appointment via this QR code:





When Your Thyroid is in Trouble

Sitting at the base of our neck and weighing about 15-20 grams, the thyroid gland is one of the largest glands in the body with an important job. It secretes hormones to regulate metabolism. However, when it goes out of whack, it can create much trouble. Senior Consultant Endocrinologist, Dr Tay Tunn Lin from Livingstone Endocrine, Diabetes & Thyroid Clinic, explains the causes of, and treatments for, thyroid disorder.



Dr Tay Tunn Lin
Senior Consultant Endocrinologist
Livingstone Endocrine, Diabetes & Thyroid Clinic
Medical Centre A #06-07

Who is at higher risk of getting thyroid disorder?

Ladies, unfortunately, are more likely to be affected than men. Thyroid disorders also tend to be hereditary.

Diagnosing thyroid disorder

Diagnosis starts with a physical examination of your neck, checking for hand tremors, sweaty palms and eye abnormalities. However, the most effective way to diagnose thyroid disorder is via a blood test for hormone levels.

To check for any thyroid nodule or an enlarged thyroid gland, the doctor may order an ultrasound of the thyroid. A biopsy may also be needed for large thyroid nodules, so as to check if they are cancerous.

Hyperthyroidism vs hypothyroidism

Hyperthyroidism means an excess of thyroid hormones. This affects those between the ages of 20 to 40 most frequently.

Hypothyroidism refers to insufficient production of thyroid hormones. It tends to affect those above 60. Some women also develop hypothyroidism after pregnancy.

However, both conditions can hit anyone in any age group. Another common condition is thyroid nodules or lumps, which can impact 20 to 60 percent of the population. However, the good news is the majority of these nodules are non-cancerous.

Signs and symptoms of thyroid disorder

To check for **hyperthyroidism**, look out for:

- Heart palpitations
- Tremors
- Diarrhoea
- Irregular periods
- Excessive sweating
- Increased appetite
- Weight loss
- Anxiety and irritability
- Insomnia

Take these symptoms seriously and seek medical advice. "If left untreated, it can lead to a serious condition called thyroid storm. This causes confusion, heart failure, kidney failure, liver failure, high fever and even death," warns Dr Tay.

For **hypothyroidism**, your metabolism will slow down. Symptoms include:

- Weight gain
- Constipation
- Feeling cold easily
- Lethargy
- Heavy periods
- Dry skin
- In severe cases, patients can even go into a coma and have heart failure

If you have small thyroid nodules, these usually do not cause symptoms. But do look out for larger nodules which can manifest as a swelling in the lower part of the neck where the thyroid is. Most such swellings are painless.

Treatment options for thyroid disorder

Medication:

Whether you have been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism or hypothyroidism, you will need medication to normalise your hormone levels.

Depending on your response to your medication, your doctor will adjust your dosage. Once your hormone level is stabilised, you will find your symptoms improving. "It is important to take your medications as prescribed and do not stop taking them unless advised by your doctor," reminds Dr Tay.

Radioactive iodine:

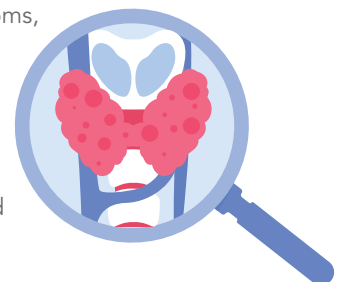
Your doctor may also recommend specialised treatment known as radioactive iodine for some hyperthyroid patients, if the first line of defence – medication – is not effective.

Surgery:

In more serious cases where patients with large thyroid nodules have trouble swallowing or breathing, your doctor may order surgery to remove the thyroid gland.

Can you avoid thyroid disorder?

Well, if it is a condition you have inherited from your parents, it may be hard to avoid getting it. But you can certainly prevent further complications by being vigilant about the symptoms, getting diagnosed early and seeking immediate treatment. When your thyroid disorder is well managed, you can enjoy a better quality of life and a healthier lifestyle.





Keeping Child Obesity in Check

Chubby babies may look cute but if their chubbiness persists as they grow older, childhood obesity can lead to dire consequences such as diabetes and fatty liver, warns our dietitian at Nutrition and Dietetics, Mount Alvernia Hospital.

Here are the sobering facts: The proportion of obese children in mainstream schools, aged six to 18, has been steadily increasing from 11 percent in 2013 to 13 percent in 2017 to 16 percent in 2021¹. The latest increase was mostly seen in the last two years, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced many to remain indoors and become less active.

A major risk factor for poor health and even early death, obesity is a public health concern worldwide that needs to be managed as early as possible, urges Sarah.

Parents, do take note of these four 'Do's and Don'ts about Obesity':

¹ <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/commentary/obesity-kids-overweight-health-risk-factor-covid-19-sedentary-2375601>

1 Do Look Beyond Looks When It Comes to Obesity

Some parents are surprised to learn that their child is obese, because they assume their child “looks regular”, “he is just tall” or “she has big bones like her dad”. The truth is children normally carry different amounts of body fat at various stages of their development. Thus, you might not be able to tell your child’s health from his or her appearance alone.

To determine obesity in children aged 6 to 18, a Body Mass Index (BMI)-for-age percentiles of more than 97th percentile is considered obese or severely overweight.

For children under the age of 6, it is often monitored via their growth charts and ensuring both weight and height percentiles are growing along the same percentile curves.

2 Don’t Downplay These Causes of Obesity

If your child often spends time at home sitting in front of the computer, being a couch potato, or indulging too often in a pack of chips, soft drinks or bubble tea – all these can add up. Some likely causes of childhood obesity include:

- Reduced physical activity and exercise
- Increased calorie intake
- Family influence, such as parents who do not exercise or have poor eating habits

3 Don’t Wait for Physical and Mental Health Complications to Set In

“If obese children do not manage their weight, they are at greater risk of chronic illnesses and health conditions at an earlier age. These medical issues include Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, fatty liver, obstructive sleep apnoea, irregular periods and knee and ankle problems,” warns Sarah.

Childhood obesity can persist into adulthood and increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and some types of cancer such as colon and breast cancer.

Besides these physical health woes, obese children may also experience low self-esteem, eating or mood disorders, bullying and depression.

4 Do Help Your Child Before It Is Too Late!

Do help your child manage obesity. “Be a role model and motivator to your child,” urges Sarah. Start by serving child-sized portions of healthy, balanced meals at home and limit high-calorie snacks. It is common for parents to offer their kids food as a reward but that can cause your child to unknowingly develop an unhealthy emotional relationship with food.

For example, if you offer sugary treats or salty snacks, this may lead to a poor diet with nutritional inadequacies.



“Instead, be positive and patient with them when trying to change habits. You can also encourage regular physical activity as a family,” suggests Sarah. For example, take the stairs together instead of the lift, and use public transport instead of the family car.

Do make exercise fun, not dreary! Opt for simple but energetic activities such as swimming, rope jumping and even throwing a frisbee around!

Mount Alvernia Hospital offers an inhouse weight management programme for parents who are looking to help their children maintain a healthy body weight. You may contact our Dietetics office at 6347 6702 or write to us via email at Nutrition@mtalvernia.sg to find out more.





Empowering the Visually and Aurally Impaired to Take Charge of Their Health

In our continued efforts to engage and serve the underserved community, the Mount Alvernia Community Outreach team offered complimentary health and dental screenings to the visually and aurally-impaired clients in September and October 2022 to kick-start their healthcare journeys.

Outreach Event 1: Health Screening at the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of many, even if one is not infected with the virus. One such group is our visually impaired friends. The Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH) shared that the safe management measures put in place had resulted in many of their clients neglecting their health, as they found it difficult to navigate around using Safe Entry apps and tokens and entering places via specific entrances.



In addition, SAVH had lost touch with several clients as the pandemic and long periods of isolation had caused some to withdraw from society. Thus, to encourage their clients to rekindle relationships, the idea of gathering the community through a health screening subsidised by Mount Alvernia Hospital was born. This also enables the Community Outreach team to keep track of the clients' health status and swiftly help those who require healthcare intervention.



The Saturday morning of 3 September 2022 was buzzing with activity at the SAVH headquarters in Toa Payoh, a familiar spot close to the hearts of our SAVH clients. The on-site health screening at SAVH served to introduce the Outreach clinic and its services to the clients and enabled the Community Outreach team to build rapport with them.

The team served about 40 SAVH clients aged 30 and above, who were not on any regular follow up for their chronic medical conditions, and had a family history of chronic medical conditions. Our volunteer doctor present during the health screening also addressed their health concerns on the spot. After the screenings, they were treated to light refreshments and a goodie bag prepared by our Outreach team.

SAVH's Social Worker, Claire Ong, was glad to see the positive response. "Some of our clients are not able to go or afford a simple health screening and this event definitely benefited them. They are very appreciative and grateful for the onsite health screening." One of her clients mentioned, "Health is therefore wealth. Prevention is better than cure. Go for a check-up."

Follow-up Medical Report Review Session at Enabling Village at Lengkok Bahru

Three follow-up sessions were also organised in September for the SAVH clients at the Enabling Village located at Lengkok Bahru where they received results of their health screenings and relevant health advice from our volunteer doctors.

Click on this QR code to watch our Outreach team help the SAVH clients arrive at the clinic safely from the nearby Redhill MRT station.





Event 2: Health Screening for The Singapore Association for the Deaf

In conjunction with International Week of Deaf People 2022 (19 to 25 September 2022), our Outreach team collaborated with The Singapore Association for the Deaf (SADeaf) to organise three campaigns during September and October 2022.



The team prepared posters and blurbs for SADeaf to publicise the campaigns via email and on their Facebook page. To accommodate the SADeaf clients, an online registration form was used to facilitate immediate sign-ups instead of phone appointments. A WhatsApp business account was created to confirm appointments, send reminders and notify them when their reports were ready for review.

These thoughtful gestures paid off. The free flu vaccination for 50 people were snapped up within four days of the launch. The 100 free dental scaling and polishing slots were filled by the second day. To allow as many of the hearing impaired to benefit from the health screening campaign, unlimited slots were offered from 12 September to 31 October. These slots included screening for obesity, high blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes.

The Outreach team also made extra efforts to communicate with the SADeaf clients during the sessions by writing, and using simple gestures and basic sign language learnt through online videos. Meanwhile, the clinic staff downloaded a live transcribing app on their mobile and practised their dictation to get a more accurate transcript.

Some SADeaf clients shared that they were not aware of the subsidised rates for medical and dental services (already available to the PWD community prior to these campaigns). After their first visit, they now felt encouraged to take charge of their health and could enjoy subsidised healthcare services beyond the campaign period.

Some Thoughts from the SADEAF Clients:

“ I’m glad that my wife signed me up for the flu vaccination and health screening because I discovered that I have high cholesterol. The doctor explained how I can control eating greasy food. I also had a good experience during my first scaling and polishing session in years. Medical and dental costs are the biggest challenges for Persons with Disabilities, especially those from low-income families. I believe that more will be encouraged to attend future health screenings if the costs are lower or sponsored throughout the year. ”

– Teck Ek

“ I felt a little nervous at first when a deaf nurse, Kar Yin, conducted my blood test but I was amazed by her professionalism. I usually have my dental anxiety and fears but this time, the dentist handled the scaling and polishing smoothly and made me feel calmer. At the Mount Alvernia clinic, the team communicated with me through sign language as well as writing messages, and I could also ‘ask’ questions. ”

– Hong Kiat

A Support Mate for Our Elderly

Our elderly visitors to Mount Alvernia Outreach Clinic located in the Enabling Village at Lengkok Bahru can now enjoy safer mobility and greater peace of mind, thanks to the donation of QaneMate walking stick holders.

Our clinic received a donation of 10 QaneMate Walking Stick holders (Classic Model) from QARES Ltd - the makers of Qanemate. The mobility aid attachment was the brainchild of two siblings, Seng Ian Hao and Seng Ing Le. They decided to do something for the vulnerable elderly after witnessing an old lady suffering a bad fall when she tried to retrieve her fallen cane.

The QaneMate is an add-on that can be attached to any mobility aid with its length-adjustable reflective elastic band. Equipped with an arthritis-friendly and stress-free grip design, it secures the walking stick in an upright position when not being used, keeping it within easy reach of the user at all times and less prone to dropping to the ground and getting dirty.



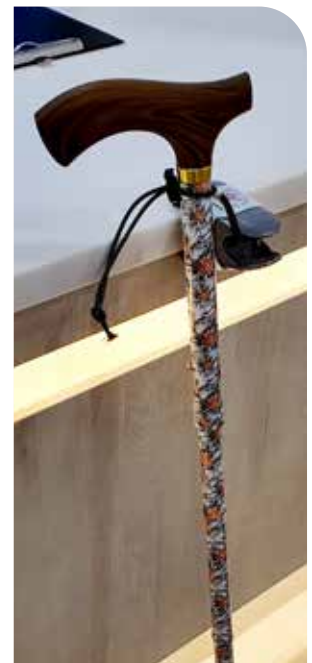
The product was a hit with both our staff and the elderly coming through the doors of our clinic! A special area was set up for our staff to conduct demonstrations of the Qanemate.

The demonstrations would educate the elderly on basic fall prevention tips such as checking the threads of the rubber caps at the base of their mobility aids to ensure good traction.

"I feel very happy and fulfilled when I see the elderly using Qanemate when they come back for their appointments," says Dental Surgery Assistant, Ms Nina Widjaja. "It showed that my demonstrations have been effective. Our elderly clients have also been unanimous in their opinions on the helpfulness of Qanemate."

Fun fact:

The two young inventors' father and late grandfather were doctors at Mount Alvernia Hospital. The will to heal and bless surely runs in the family!



Check out QaneMate's website

<https://www.qanemate.com/> for more info. You can also sponsor a QaneMate for a needy person at just \$15. All sponsored QaneMates will go to QARES, their non-profit arm that blesses the less fortunate.





Filling Bellies with Servings of Love

With his culinary passion, Chef de Partie, Gan Eng Chong has a hand in creating delicious meals to help patients on their routes to recovery.

Very often the top-of-the-mind figures that people think of when it comes to hospitals are the healthcare providers such as the doctors, nurses and therapists who journey with their patients back to health.

However, all their work will be for naught if not for the hands that prepare the nourishment and the foods. Nutritious meals that play an important role in helping patients' bodies fend off their ailments and pains while also lifting tired spirits through awakened palates.

Meet Chef de Partie, Gan Eng Chong, 42, one of the team of six chefs working tirelessly in our hospital kitchens weaving their gastronomical magic to debunk the misconception that hospital food are uninspiring and bland.

As Chef de Partie, Chef Gan not only has his eyes and hands on producing great inpatient meals but is also involved in the running of our Café 820.

Having just joined about a year ago while Singapore was still battling the COVID-19 pandemic, Chef Gan immediately found himself having to grapple with a reduced footfall due to dining restrictions.

“Even though the going was tough for the café, we made good use of the lull to deliver a training programme for our café staff to augment their service skillsets. It was truly a silver lining as our café staff are now able to value-add through meal ordering on behalf of patients and submit the orders electronically, thus alleviating some pressures for the wards,” recounted Chef Gan.

The chatty chef, who counts the experimentation process in creating new dishes as one of his favourite parts of his job, also shared a work goal that is close to his heart, “It is always my wish to be able to play a part in helping patients expand their palate and discover new food combinations that they might not have considered before.”

To see to this, Chef Gan would, as much as possible, be hard at work alongside the dietitians to create customised meal menus. These might include varied elements from gluten-free, ketogenic or paleo diets, to allow patients with specific dietary needs to still enjoy the benefits derived from a variety of diet plans.

Outside his working hours, Chef Gan would be found having fun cooking up a storm with Korean cuisine.

“Recently I fell in love with the concepts of Korean cuisine, with its vivid presentations and intense flavours. Where there are special occasions that I can share with my family or friends, I will try to whip up my own take on popular dishes like the Korean army stew, served with some homemade kimchi,” revealed Chef Gan.

“Being a chef has allowed me to indulge in my passion for food and the gamut of activities associated with it – from the selection of ingredients, preparation and to the actual cooking. I hope our patients find a measure of comfort through the dishes served to them during their stay with us.”

Spreading the Christmas cheer this year, one bite at a time

Every year, Mount Alvernia Hospital has made it a tradition to produce dishes to be served as part of the Christmas menu for our patients.

This year, we probed around the kitchen and was given a quick preview of the dishes to be served to patients on Christmas Day:

- Roast chicken breast with mushroom stuffing, bell pepper, roasted vegetables and porcini mushroom sauce



- Grilled seabass with pimento coulis, roasted pumpkin, vegetables and mashed potatoes



Planning for the menu had started in August when the chefs would get together to ideate on dishes that must not only taste excellent but are also cooked with the choicest ingredients while having a low salt, sugar and oil content.

“We hope to bring a healthier and more balanced diet to our patients through the Christmas menu while still enjoying a hearty holiday meal.” – Chef Gan.





Say Hello to Our New Specialist Doctors!

As Mount Alvernia Hospital sets its sights towards a greater sense of normalcy in 2023, we bid a warm welcome to our new specialist doctors who have joined us on our journey to 'Serve All With Love'.



**Dr Chan
Chung Yip**

Nexus Surgical
Associates

A general surgeon with a subspecialty interest in liver, bile duct and pancreas (Hepato-Pancreatico-Biliary/HPB) surgery, and liver transplant, Dr Chan is a gazetted liver transplant surgeon with the Ministry of Health, Singapore. Dr Chan is a pioneer of laparoscopic HPB surgery in Singapore, and is keenly involved in developing and promoting laparoscopic HPB surgery in Singapore and in regional countries.

"[Being a part of Mount Alvernia Hospital allows me to further my work in] minimally invasive surgery of the liver and pancreas [which] enhances visualisation of the surgical field, reduces blood loss, and facilitates conduct of the surgery. The approach allows patients to recover faster as the pain is significantly less. The cosmetic outcome is also far superior. The length of stay in hospital is shorter and return to work is faster. Potentially, this leads to cost savings and economic advantages." – Dr Chan



**Dr Huang
Xin Yong**

Ascent ENT Alvernia
Holdings Pte Ltd

Dr Huang is a practising ENT specialist with more than 20 years of experience. He manages all ENT conditions with special focus on head, neck and oral cavity growths and cancers. He is also a certified practitioner in robotic head and neck minimally invasive surgery and sialendoscopy, offering advanced and effective treatment of head and neck conditions.

"Ascent ENT has had a long and happy working relationship with Mount Alvernia Hospital, and it will continue to be so. I'd like to explore some areas for improvement with the hospital, such as in marketing or organising talks," – Dr Huang.



**Dr Leslie
Timothy Koh**

The ENT Specialist
Centre

Dr Koh is a fellowship-trained ENT specialist and has held the position of director, Rhinology Service in the Department of Otorhinolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery at CGH. He was also a clinical asst professor at Duke-NUS Medical School and served as a clinical tutor at Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

“Having been born in Mount Alvernia Hospital, returning to the hospital as an ENT specialist felt like a natural progression of my life and career. I hope to build up a practice that serves the needs of both adult and paediatric patients, as well as Mount Alvernia Hospital, whilst providing compassionate and holistic healthcare to all.” – Dr Koh



Dr Lai Juen Bin

MT A Dental Centre

Dr Lai received his Bachelor of Dental Surgery from NUS in 2000, during which he received numerous awards (Dean's List, Singapore Dental Association Bronze Medal, Gold Medal for Best in Clinical Dentistry). He completed a Master of Dental Surgery in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery degree and obtained Fellowships of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons and Academy of Medicine, Singapore.

“Mount Alvernia Hospital's mission to ‘Serve all with Love’ resonates with my personal values. As an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, I perform jaw surgeries and facial fractures and trauma repair. When a patient is warded in the hospital for facial trauma, it is a challenging experience. He or she is thrown into a state of chaos, anxiety and stress. I am greatly honoured to be part of Mount Alvernia Hospital's supportive family to provide help to patients and journey with them about the meaning of life, values we hold about life and God, amongst others. My wish for 2023 is that the world can be a peaceful place, with the current geopolitical issues and war in Ukraine resolved.” – Dr Lai



**Dr Lee
Wai Peng**

Solis Breast Care and
Surgery Centre

A senior consultant and breast surgeon, Dr Lee specialises in treating benign and malignant breast conditions. Prior to joining Solis, she was a senior consultant and an adjunct assistant professor at Changi General Hospital (CGH), after completing her advanced specialty training in general surgery. She strives to provide holistic and individualised care with a personal touch for ladies with breast conditions and is a strong advocate for encompassing cosmesis with surgical therapy.

“I chose to practise at Mount Alvernia Hospital because your tagline, ‘Serve all with Love’ appeals to me. It stemmed from my personal encounter with the doctors and healthcare workers who treated my late grandmother when she was warded for an acute stroke.

As a first-year medical student occasionally camping in the hospital, I witnessed how they treated her with the utmost respect and dignity, even though she was in a comatose state. That heartwarming experience inspired and shaped my professional conduct as a doctor.” – Dr Lee





**Dr Jennifer
Liauw**

Advanced Vascular
Centre

Dr Jennifer Liauw graduated from The University of Manchester, UK, in 1996, obtained her Membership from The Royal College of Surgeons of England (MRCS) in 1999, and completed her training at the Department of Surgery, NUH. In 2004, she was registered as a fully accredited specialist in general surgery by the Ministry of Health. She was a Fellow in General Surgery from The Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Fellow of The Academy of Medicine, Singapore, and a Fellow in Colorectal Surgery in the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, where she completed her subspecialty training in colorectal surgery in 2005.

"I chose to practise at Mount Alvernia Hospital because of its warm and caring staff and environment. I wish everyone good health and happiness for 2023!" – Dr Liauw



**Dr Lie
Kwok Ying**

Advanced Urology

Dr Lie is a senior consultant urologist who pioneered the use of HoLEP (Holmium Enucleation of Prostate) for benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) in Singapore. He has conducted over 200 sessions to date, for patients that include those on anticoagulants and the very elderly.

Previously at Ng Teng Fong General Hospital (NTFGH), he was pivotal in obtaining one of the first high power laser platform in Singapore to improve stone and BPH care for patients, and set up the use of CO2 laser for use in male circumcision and the Rezum steam therapy as a form of minimally invasive technique for BPH. This dedicated doctor has also won the 'Service with a Heart Award' in SGH.

"I totally appreciate the patient centredness and work culture in Mount Alvernia Hospital. I hope to build a HoLEP/ThuFLEP laser enucleation service to improve BPH care for men with prostate issues. To all the doctors and colleagues that I already know in Mount Alvernia, thank you for the support. Hoping to get to know everyone in the long run. Special thanks to Dr Djoni Huang, who has helped me so much." – Dr Lie



**Dr Lo Su
Chun Robert**

CAH Specialists
@ Mount Alvernia

Dr Lo is an accredited gastroenterology specialist in Singapore and the UK. He graduated from the National University of Ireland in 1998. He undertook postgraduate specialist training in internal medicine, gastroenterology and hepatology in the UK, which included a year at the renowned Birmingham Liver Unit where he honed his skill in managing complex liver diseases.

"I chose to practise at Mount Alvernia Hospital because we share the same mission that I am passionately committed to: to provide compassionate, excellent, and holistic healthcare to all. My hope for 2023 is that we will all stay healthy, by eating a good balanced diet, leading an active lifestyle, and attending age-appropriate health screenings as recommended by our doctors. I firmly believe that health is wealth. Being healthy not only benefits us but will also be a blessing to our loved ones." – Dr Lo



**Dr Loo
Wai Mun**
AliveoMedical

Dr Loo is a gastroenterologist with a wealth of clinical experience in the treatment of gastroenterology and hepatology conditions. She has subspecialty interests in non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) and liver-related disorders.

She was a consultant in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at NUH.

She was the clinical lead and was instrumental in establishing the Fatty Liver Subspecialty Clinic there.

“I feel honoured to join Mount Alvernia Hospital as I can see that it is a hospital that prioritises patient care on top of everything else and has a comforting environment to boot! This really goes a long way in helping our patients recover faster and more holistically,” – Dr Loo.



**Dr Desmond
Ooi**
Advanced Vascular
Centre

Dr Desmond Ooi is a vascular and general surgeon with more than 15 years of experience. He is specialised in vascular surgery with a keen interest in endovascular approaches. He has studied and worked in both the UK and Singapore.

Prior to private practice, Dr Ooi was a senior consultant vascular surgeon in Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (KTPH) where he played an instrumental role in the building and development of the vascular service. He led the development of the diabetic foot service in KTPH and continued to practise general surgery in the elective and emergency setting.

“My decision for choosing Mount Alvernia Hospital for my practice was driven by the reputation of the hospital, to provide outstanding value-driven care. I believe that patients should be at the centre of everything that we do. Patients’ experience and outcome are of the utmost importance. The development of the new medical block shows that Mount Alvernia Hospital is a forward-thinking establishment, which aims not just to maintain good standards but develop their services further. I look forward to being a part of that. I hope to provide a comprehensive vascular and general surgery service and become involved in community outreach activities, especially around diabetic foot care and limb salvage.” – Dr Ooi



**Dr Angela
Pang**
OncoCare Cancer
Centre

Dr Pang is a senior medical oncologist at the OncoCare Cancer Centre and a visiting consultant at the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS). She was previously a medical oncology consultant with NCIS, National University Hospital (NUH) and visiting consultant with Ng Teng Fong General Hospital (NTFGH).

Dr Pang had pioneered the multidisciplinary Geriatric Oncology service specialising in the care of older adult cancer patients in both NCIS and NTFGH.

“I have always felt that the environment in Mount Alvernia Hospital is very serene and calm, which is ideal for patient care. Not to mention, I was born in this hospital years ago, so naturally it has a special place in my heart. My hope for 2023 is for the pandemic to ease and let there be peace, no wars.” – Dr Pang





Dr Eileen Sim

The Anaesthetic
Clinic @ Alvernia

Dr Sim obtained her basic medical degree from NUS and completed a specialist anaesthesiology training at Singhealth. Before joining private practice, she was a consultant anaesthetist with Singapore General Hospital (SGH). Her special interest lies in the perioperative care of elderly frail patients going for surgery, high-risk obstetrics patients and regional anaesthesia techniques for orthopaedic surgery.

"I chose Mount Alvernia Hospital as my hospital of choice for my practice because it offers a cozy, family-like environment to work in! My greatest wish for 2023 is that COVID-19 will remain behind in 2022." – Dr Sim



**Dr James Tan
Chung Hui**

Quantum
Orthopaedics

Dr Tan specialises in treating sports injuries of the knee, shoulder and elbow joints, as well as cartilage and meniscus injuries. Previously the head of department for Orthopaedic Surgery at KTPH, he is well versed in minimally invasive tendon and ligament repair, joint replacement and muscle-tendon transfers. He is a member of the Asian Shoulder and Elbow Group and a founding member of the Singapore Shoulder and Elbow Surgery Society.

"I chose to practise at Mount Alvernia Hospital because I identify with its core values. I hope that in 2023, we can all return to a world free of viral infections and conflicts." – Dr Tan



**Dr Tang
Hak Chiaw**

Novena Heart
Centre

Dr Tang's cardiology training started in National Heart Centre Singapore in 2004.

A recognized expert in the field of cardiomyopathy, Dr Tang treats hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, dilated cardiomyopathy, restrictive cardiomyopathy and infiltrative cardiomyopathy (e.g. cardiac amyloidosis) and more. His clinical work also involves recognizing and differentiating exercise-induced cardiac remodeling (athlete heart) from the pathological cardiomyopathies.

"I firmly believe in a holistic approach to healthcare. Health care providers not only treat the physical sickness, we also need to understand and be cognizant of the mental and spiritual needs and wellbeing of our patients. The availability of clinical pastoral care in Mount Alvernia Hospital truly shows its holistic approach in the care of its patients. I hope in 2023, the world will have less conflict, more effort put into fighting climate change, and make this planet a better place to live in." – Dr Tang



**Dr Bryan
Wang Dehao**

Shoulder Elbow
Orthopaedic
Clinic (Alvernia)

As a fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon with an interest in Shoulder, Elbow and Sports Surgery (Knee), Dr Wang understands the importance of fitness and the innate desire to return to peak performance whilst minimising downtime.

With more than 15 years of experience, he is proficient in all aspects of Shoulder and Elbow surgery, including arthroscopic (minimally invasive) and open procedures. He offers advanced arthroscopic solutions like superior capsular reconstruction for massive rotator cuff tears that are not reparable.

“Mount Alvernia Hospital’s core values of compassion, humility, integrity, respect and peace really spoke to me as a healthcare professional. Despite the challenges of rising healthcare and overhead costs, it continues to maintain reasonable fees for patients to ensure that high-quality healthcare remains affordable for all patients. Also, it has a very collegial working environment where everyone is treated like family and an integral part of the hospital, regardless of our roles.” – Dr Wang



**Dr Yvonne
Wong**

FeM Surgery
@ Alvernia

Dr Yvonne Wong is a consultant anaesthesiologist who specialises in perioperative care of major surgeries for Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS), geriatric anaesthesia and onco-anaesthesia.

She believes that anaesthesiologists play a leading role in perioperative care and make significant contributions to patient safety and outcomes.

“Mount Alvernia Hospital gives patients and doctors a sense of family belonging. The compassionate and holistic healthcare eases patients’ anxieties and create an excellent environment for recovery. I am honoured to be part of the family. I hope in 2023, we can achieve higher patient satisfaction and continuous success in the various community outreach initiatives.” – Dr Wong



**Dr Matthew
Yeo**

FeM Surgery
@ Alvernia

Dr Yeo is an internationally-qualified plastic surgeon and is known for delivering exquisite and bespoke outcomes. He is experienced in a wide range of aesthetic procedures, including facial rejuvenation with minimally invasive and/or surgical techniques, breast and body contouring, and post-weight loss contouring. His reconstructive surgery strengths include reconstruction in the head and neck region, the breast, the chest wall and the extremities.

“Many patients identify with the mission statement of Mount Alvernia Hospital and have shared values with the hospital and the staff. They are able to find comfort in their time of illness, and the staff provide a dimension of care that is unique to the hospital. As a healthcare provider, ensuring that a patient’s emotional and spiritual needs are taken care of is very important, and I am pleased to be able to partner Mount Alvernia Hospital in delivering holistic care to patients. For 2023, I hope it is a year of many successful cases and happy patients!” – Dr Yeo



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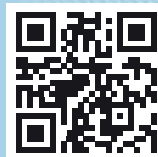


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