



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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New S\$25 million Healthy Longevity Institute and international collaboration on brain health to advance healthy and successful ageing

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), NHG Health and the Geriatric Education and Research Institute (GERI) launched the **Healthy Longevity Institute (HELI)** today at a ceremony officiated by Mr Heng Swee Keat, Chairman of the National Research Foundation (NRF).

Set up with an initial S\$25 million investment, HELI will be an integrated platform bringing together clinical medicine, translational science, engineering and computational systems development, and the social sciences to extend the healthy, active years of Singapore's ageing population.

It is set up to contribute to Singapore's broader efforts in healthy longevity, alongside the Grand Challenge on Maximising Healthy and Successful Longevity, one of the national priorities under the Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) 2030 plan coordinated by NRF.

HELI will focus on three interconnected pillars: cognitive and mental health; physical health; and clinical and policy research. HELI will combine NTU's research and technology strengths; NHG Health's clinical expertise, population cohorts, and care network; and GERI's national role in clinical and translational research on ageing. Together, they will work to translate scientific discoveries into improvements in our healthcare system, in support of RIE 2030 (*See Annex A for more details*).

Professor Christian Wolfrum, NTU Deputy President and Provost, said: "Ageing is not a collection of independent diseases. It is a systemic loss of resilience shaped by biology, behaviour, and the environment interacting over decades. HELI was founded on the recognition that no single discipline can unravel that complexity by itself. By combining NTU's engineering and data science capabilities with NHG Health's clinical networks and GERI's expertise in translating research into practice and policy, we can move from targeting individual conditions to intervening in the ageing process itself."

Professor Benjamin Seet, Group Chairman Medical Board (Research), NHG Health, said: “Healthy longevity requires both physical and mental health to be maintained as we age. This cannot be achieved in a clinic alone. Through HELI, our clinicians will be working alongside scientists, engineers and community partners to develop real-world solutions to help people in Singapore age healthier and better. With a super-ageing population, we have our tasks and priorities cut out for us.”

Associate Professor Ding Yew Yoong, Executive Director and Lead Scientist, GERI, said: “HELI reflects a shared commitment to ensuring that research makes a meaningful difference to the health of older adults. We need stronger integration between research and practice to ensure evidence can inform the design and implementation of interventions that are relevant, effective and responsive to the evolving needs of an ageing population. By addressing what enables or hinders implementation, we can turn promising science into scalable solutions that are ready for real-world adoption, helping people live healthier lives longer.”

Complementing HELI’s work on cognitive and mental health, NTU Singapore also announced a **new strategic global partnership with the International Alliance on Brain Health (IABH).**

Through NTU’s new partnership with IABH, the University will establish a Singapore Brain Health Programme, connecting local researchers with IABH members for joint international projects and access to global datasets. IABH, which is led by renowned neurologist Professor Claudio Bassetti, links over 20 national brain health initiatives across five continents (*See Annex B for more details*).

Professor Claudio Bassetti, President of the International Alliance on Brain Health (IABH), Rector of Università della Svizzera italiana (USI), member of the Board of Ente Ospedaliero Cantonale (EOC), and Vice-President of the European Brain Council (EBC) said: “This partnership represents a major opportunity to strengthen international collaboration in brain, mental health and longevity. I see particular potential in building a strong Swiss–Singaporean partnership, bringing together two highly innovative ecosystems with complementary strengths in neuroscience, medicine, technology, artificial intelligence, data science and healthcare implementation. There is also a unique opportunity to develop a strategic collaboration between NTU, the Swiss Brain Health Initiative and the USI–EOC ecosystem. Joint research based on dedicated cohorts, together with innovative work in Brain Economics, Brain Care at the Workplace, and the development of new AI-assisted brain health metrics, offers particularly promising opportunities for collaborative research, innovation, validation, and real-world implementation.”

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About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) is a premier technological university that develops leaders and creates societal impact through education, research, and service.

Ranked amongst the world's top universities, NTU has 40,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Business, Computing & Data Science, Engineering, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, Medicine, Science, and Graduate colleges.

NTU is also home to world-renowned autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education and S Rajaratnam School of International Studies – and various leading research centres such as the Earth Observatory of Singapore, Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute, Energy Research Institute at NTU, and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering.

The University aspires to shape an AI-enabled future. By bringing together global talent across disciplines and combining technology with human creativity, NTU nurtures AI-ready graduates, drives breakthrough discoveries, and forges partnerships that tackle the challenges of our time.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About NHG Health

NHG Health is a leading public healthcare provider in Singapore recognised for its quality clinical care and its commitment to enabling healthier lives through preventive health, innovative solutions and person-centred programmes tailored to every life stage. Our integrated health system, which spans primary care, hospitals and national specialty centres, includes Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Woodlands Hospital, Yishun Community Hospital, NHG Polyclinics, the Institute of Mental Health, National Skin Centre and the National Centre for Infectious Diseases.

As an Academic Health System, we work with academic and industry partners to advance medical education, research and healthcare innovation in Singapore, addressing areas that are critical to Singapore's population needs. As the Regional Health Manager for Central and North Singapore, NHG Health partners general practices and health and social care agencies to ensure the physical, mental and social well-being of residents in the community.

Together, we are committed to building healthier and resilient communities, and Adding Years of Healthy Life to the people we serve.

More information at www.nhghealth.com.sg.

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About the Geriatric Education & Research Institute, Singapore

The Geriatric Education & Research Institute (GERI) is a national research institute established in 2015 and funded by the Ministry of Health, Singapore. We conduct research on healthy ageing, with a focus on preventing functional decline and implementing integrated care for older adults. GERI's multi-institutional team specialises in implementation research, evidence review, programme evaluation and health policy research, working closely with stakeholders from across Singapore's healthcare clusters, policy bodies and community spaces. By translating evidence-based research outcomes into real-world use to reach decision-makers and practitioners, GERI contributes to health policy and practice to advance healthy ageing for our population.

For more information, visit www.geri.com.sg.

ANNEX A

About the Healthy Longevity Institute (HELI)

HELI's research explores why some people stay mentally, physically, and socially well into old age while others decline, and how to change that path early.

Rather than treating ageing as a collection of separate diseases, HELI sees it as a gradual loss of resilience shaped by biology, behaviour and a person's social and physical environment. By combining molecular, clinical, cognitive, physical, behavioural and social data, HELI aims to identify the turning points where timely interventions can preserve or restore function.

HELI will be organised along three major pillars:

- (a) **Cognitive and Mental Health**, which focuses on cognitive and neurological ageing, dementia prevention and mental wellbeing. This could include novel biomarkers for early detection and risk stratification of dementia, or personalised digital coaching to reduce cognitive decline.
- (b) **Physical Health**, which focuses on musculoskeletal ageing, sarcopenia, and frailty, to preserve strength, mobility and independence. Plans include establishing study populations to track physical ageing trajectories and developing wearables and robotic solutions to support fall prevention and rehabilitation.
- (c) **Clinical and Policy Research**, which determines how care systems, families, community factors and public policy shape health outcomes and enable effective interventions to be adopted and sustained. The aim is to create real-world testbeds across the acute healthcare, community healthcare and home settings to allow accurate evaluation of the impact of interventions.

To start, HELI will be established as a partnership between NTU Singapore, NHG Health, and GERI, with plans to include more partners from across the Singapore ecosystem. Through NHG Health, HELI researchers will be able to access longitudinal health cohorts, clinical trial infrastructure and community health networks for development and clinical validation of solutions. HELI will also partner GERI, a national institute set up by the Ministry of Health, Singapore, to conduct translational research on healthy ageing, to support the translation of scientific discoveries into Singapore's healthcare system.

HELI will support initiatives across three workstreams:

- (a) **Research:** HELI will develop a joint roadmap on healthy longevity research to help guide efforts on this front. Funding will be directed to support small seed projects that could lead to transformative discoveries, as well as larger multidisciplinary programmes to scale up promising results.
- (b) **Talent development:** HELI will leverage a unique training model where PhD students will be paired with and mentored by academic faculty and clinicians, giving them a deep understanding of both research and clinical needs.
- (c) **Translation:** HELI will provide funding to support prototyping, pilot deployment and regulatory readiness studies. This will be done in close collaboration with government and industry partners to support implementation.

HELI will be led by an executive team comprising:

- Prof Chen Xiaodong, Distinguished University Professor, NTU;
- Prof Lim Kah Leong, Associate Vice President – Biomedical and Life Sciences and President's Chair in Translational Neuroscience, NTU;
- Assoc Prof Lim Wee Shiong, Senior Consultant and Director, Institute of Geriatrics and Active Ageing, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH), NHG Health;
- Assoc Prof Ding Yew Yoong, Executive Director and Lead Scientist, GERI.

ANNEX B

About NTU's collaboration with IABH

The International Alliance on Brain Health (IABH) is a major global platform dedicated to advancing, protecting, and promoting integrated brain and mental health. The Alliance was established in Switzerland in June 2025 under the joint patronage of two prominent global organisations: The World Federation of Neurology (WFN) and The World Psychiatric Association (WPA). It focuses on bridging the gap between global frameworks and local implementation, and between the Global North and Global South, ensuring that diverse cultural, socio-economic, and healthcare contexts are integrated into global health strategies.

Through this collaboration, NTU will be able to contribute to IABH's research agenda over a multi-year commitment. NTU will also support the hosting of the next IABH meeting that will be held in Singapore in 2027, with over 1000 participants expected.

At the research collaboration level, NTU will work with IABH to develop a Singapore Brain Health Programme that connects Singapore researchers with IABH members. The programme includes:

- (a) Research: Catalyse joint research projects with IABH members.
- (b) Data: Co-develop and harmonise global data standards for brain health research and use international data to validate potential interventions and increase the generalisability of models created.
- (c) Translation: Support test-bedding and trials of new technologies developed by IABH members.