

# Specialised Care under One Roof

By Agency for Integrated Care

**COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES** (CHCs) were set up in 2010 to support GPs to better manage chronic diseases in the community. Ancillary services such as diabetic retinal photography (DRP), diabetic foot screening (DFS), nurse counselling and physiotherapy are offered at these CHCs, which complement the clinical care that GPs provide to patients with chronic conditions.

The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) spoke to Dr Theresa Yap of Yang & Yap Clinic & Surgery, and Dr Adidah Hassan of Adidah Family Clinic & Surgery, who both shared how the CHCs have supported them in providing excellent patient care while significantly improving patient welfare.

**AIC: Before the CHCs were established, where did you refer patients to for tests such as annual foot and eye screenings?**

**Dr Yap:** I used to arrange for a mobile DRP clinic to come to my practice once a year. It was quite a logistical nightmare, coordinating patients to all come down on one day, and I also missed out on treating other patients on that day.

**Dr Adidah:** My patients went to polyclinics for eye checks, but sometimes foot screenings weren't available so I had to send them to hospitals for those. I also referred patients to the Diabetic Society of Singapore.

**AIC: How have the CHCs helped in your work?**

**Dr Yap:** It's much easier to arrange for tests just by referring patients to the CHCs near their homes. The CHC staff will also provide education services and dietetic counselling, which reinforce what I tell my patients. They also remind patients of scheduled yearly check-ups, which saves me the trouble of making subsequent appointments for them.

**Dr Adidah:** I receive the test reports from the CHCs within one to two weeks, and they helpfully highlight anything that requires further investigation. For example, if they notice from the eye examination that the cup-to-disc ratio is high, they may recommend that the patient consult an eye surgeon in, say, four weeks.



## CHCs at a glance

- Located within neighbourhoods
- Staffed only by nurses and allied health professionals, with no doctors on-site
- Provide services that support the management of chronic diseases
- Offer subsidised rates to Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) beneficiaries
- Expedite test results so referring GPs can conduct reviews and patient follow-ups quickly

**AIC: What do your patients have to say regarding the CHCs?**

**Dr Yap:** The CHCs' mental health counselling services benefit my patients too. After attending a couple of sessions there, one of my patients with psychosomatic symptoms came back noticeably happier, telling me that she looked forward to her group therapy sessions.

**Dr Adidah:** The CHCs' centralised locations make them very accessible to many of my patients. In fact, they prefer to go to the CHCs now. With subsidies for CHAS beneficiaries at the CHCs, patients also tell me they find the rates very affordable.

**AIC: What do you like about the CHCs?**

**Dr Yap:** The teamwork and support they offer us. It's easier to make appointments now, and they help me keep track of my patients' regular screenings. I am assured that the CHC staff will do a proper job, especially since they have all the necessary equipment and training to conduct the tests. These regular screenings also occasionally detect other problems like cataracts and glaucoma, for which we refer to the specialist outpatient clinics. These timely interventions help save patients' precious eyesight.

**Dr Adidah:** These one-stop centres provide all these ancillary services that we GPs can use, for the convenience of our patients, and eventually patients come back to us for their treatment. They benefit both patients and us GPs. ■

## What's offered at different CHCs?

Services								
CHC locations	DRP*	DFS*	Nurse counselling*	Physiotherapy	Dietetic service	Health wellness programme	X-ray and ultrasound	Health parameter monitoring (body mass index, blood pressure, and blood glucose)
Eastern CHC (Bedok North)	Services offered in collaboration with Bedok North Family Medicine Centre (FMC)			✓			✓	
Eastern CHC (Bedok South)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Eastern CHC (Tampines)	✓	✓	✓	Offered in collaboration with Society for the Physically Disabled				
Jurong East CHC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Tiong Bahru CHC (opening in early July 2014)	✓	✓	✓		✓			

\*DRP, DFS and nurse counselling services are also available at all FMCs.

### Eastern CHC (Bedok North)

Blk 201A Bedok North Street 1  
#01-563 Singapore 461201  
Tel: 6446 7200  
Fax: 6446 7207

### Eastern CHC (Bedok South)

Siglap Community Centre  
300 Bedok South Ave 3  
Singapore 469299  
Tel: 6449 5419  
Fax: 6243 8916

### Eastern CHC (Tampines)

Blk 866 Tampines Street 83  
#01-231 Singapore 520866  
Tel: 6782 6885  
Fax: 6782 9591

### Jurong East CHC

Blk 229 Jurong East St 21  
#01-231 Singapore 600229  
Tel: 6244 6688  
Fax: 68961832

### Tiong Bahru CHC

(opening in early July 2014)

Blk 19 Jalan Membina  
#01-24 Singapore 163019  
Interim contact:  
Tel: 6377 7116 (Ms Wendy Sarah Foo)  
Fax: 6377 4103

**Note: a National Healthcare Group mobile CHC that provides DRP, DFS and nurse counselling services will be available in late 2014.**

For more information about CHCs, visit <https://www.primarycarepages.sg/chc.aspx> or email [gp@aic.sg](mailto:gp@aic.sg).