

Global experts on ageing and health discuss 'longevity dividend' at signature Singapore conference

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Leading thinkers and practitioners in the field of population ageing from around the world converged at the conference.



With people living longer, the 'longevity dividend' is the subject of a global conference in Singapore organised by Duke-NUS Medical School's Centre for Ageing Research and Education (CARE) and the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU). Leading thinkers and practitioners in the field of population ageing from around the world converged at the conference to share insights surrounding four key areas i.e. Healthy Ageing, Interventions to Support Elderly at Risk, Employment and Employability as well as Ageing, Technology and the Environment.

Titled 'Ageing, Longevity and Health – New Frontiers and Perspectives,' the 2018 IARU Ageing, Longevity and Health (ALH) Scientific and Graduate Student Conference was hosted by CARE at Duke-NUS Medical School, and fielded speakers on various aspects of the science, practice and experience of ALH, exploring related issues around labour, housing, technology, urban planning, social participation and intergenerational relationships.

While people have become intensely aware of the need to age healthily, conference organisers remarked, there is also a need to raise the standards of later life for all segments of the older population, particularly those at risk.

"With the world's population ageing at an unprecedented rate and Singapore being one of the fastest ageing societies, we are honoured to host this timely and important conference," A/Prof. Angelique Chan, Executive Director of CARE and Associate Professor, Health Services & Systems Research Programme, Duke NUS. "International exchanges, research collaborations and the sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices in this field is critical in preparing societies to best harness the longevity dividend that comes with longer years of healthy, active and productive life."

A research brief published by CARE in August 2018 reported that the proportion of older Singaporeans, aged 60 and above in the labour force is rising – from 5.5 percent in 2006 to 12 percent in 2015 – and, as their overall lifespan increases, will also live longer in retirement. At the current minimum retirement age of 62, and with an average life expectancy of 84 years old, an older Singaporean could expect to spend 22 years in retirement. This changing trajectory, while rife with exciting possibilities, is also a cause for concern and calls for urgent innovations to enhance older adults' capacities and potentials.