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Singapore focuses on digital responses to COVID-19

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Minister for Health, Singapore, Gan Kim Yong and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information, Dr Janil Puthucheary attended a ministerial virtual roundtable hosted by UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP recently.

The roundtable was part of the CogX 2020 Global Leadership Summit and Festival of AI and Emerging Technologies, held from 8 to 10 June 2020. The summit was a gathering of leaders from industry, government and academia to address the question “How do we get the next 10 years right?”.

The roundtable focused on the sharing of national digital responses to COVID-19, the lessons learned and ideas on getting the next 10 years right. Attendees included Health Ministers and senior government officials from England, Estonia, Finland, Japan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Northern Ireland, Norway, Republic of Korea, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden and United States of America.

The attendees highlighted the role of technology in managing the pandemic and adjusting to a new normal. The discussion centred on the use of digital tools and solutions to support key areas such as telehealth, contact tracing, management of digital health records and public communications, as well as challenges such as data protection and privacy, and the need for tailored digital solutions.

Gan and Dr Janil shared how Singapore has leveraged technology to support contact tracing and ensure compliance of those under quarantine to prevent further spread of the disease.

Gan also emphasised the importance of providing timely and accurate information on COVID-19 and shared how Singapore uses digital platforms to engage and connect with the public.

Gan encouraged health leaders to continue to embrace technology, support its development and the exchange of innovative solutions. The attendees emphasised the need for unity and cooperation and the importance of learning from one another in

the global fight against COVID-19.