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Singapore launches Prehospital Emergency and Research Centre

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The new centre will work with the Ministry of Health's Unit for Prehospital Emergency Care, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF)



Emergency care covers a range of services that span the care provided by laypersons at the scene, pre-hospital care by SCDF's Emergency Medical Services, to the medical care provided in a dedicated trauma facility – between these stages lie the transportation systems, health centres and first-level hospitals that respond to the emergency. Patients' survival depends on how well each component functions.

Singapore's first-of-its-kind Prehospital Emergency and Research Centre (PERC) was officially launched at Duke-NUS Medical School on Wednesday, 9 September 2020.

Established through a collaboration of the SingHealth Duke-NUS Academic Medical Centre, PERC marshals top experts in the field to elevate Singapore's prehospital emergency care system through the integration of pre-hospital, in-hospital, and community care with robust research techniques and real-world clinical data.

PERC will work with the Ministry of Health's Unit for Prehospital Emergency Care, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and SCDF to elevate the nation's prehospital emergency care system to ensure the best possible patient outcomes.

"Emergency care covers a range of services, from the care provided by laypersons at the scene to that provided in a dedicated emergency facility," said Professor Marcus Ong, Director of DukeNUS' Health Services and Systems Research Programme, which hosts the Centre. "Between these two stages lie what we call the 'chain of survival' – patient survival depends on how well each component functions."

With a multi-disciplinary perspective from various fields such as medicine, paramedicine, public health, statistics, epidemiology, computer science, artificial intelligence, health economics, social sciences, psychology, industrial engineering, and global health, PERC will also be a unique academic centre that serves as a national and regional resource on the field of prehospital emergency care and research.

The launch event convened experts from the University of Michigan, MHA, SCDF, and the National University Health System (NUHS), who presented their research and strategies on improving prehospital and emergency care in Singapore and beyond. The roster of speakers included Professor Robert Neumar, from the University of Michigan (presenting on “How to Develop a World-class Prehospital and Emergency Research Program”), Professor Scott Compton, Associate Dean, Duke-NUS, (presenting on “PERC: to Fulfil an Unmet Need in Singapore”), and Professor Marcus Ong, Director, Health Services and Systems Research Programme, Duke-NUS (presenting on “Future Plans for PERC”).

Professor Ong, who also serves as PERC’s Director said, “PERC will be focused on advancing research in Prehospital and Emergency fields, and improving Singapore’s prehospital emergency care system for the betterment of the professionals in this field and the patients they serve.”