

## Singapore launches new centre to strengthen pandemic preparedness across ASEAN

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**The strategic location of the Centre in Singapore provides proximity to this global hotspot and will help address a specific need for timely access to genetic data of the pathogens that pose disease threats**



Leveraging the research, collaborations and commercialisation successes that have contributed to Singapore's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, Duke-NUS (National University of Singapore) has launched a new centre to further strengthen regional research capacity, cooperation and preparedness against future pandemics and public health threats.

Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies Heng Swee Keat joined some 100 guests at the launch of the Centre for Outbreak Preparedness or COP. The launch, held at the Fullerton Hotel, was followed by a panel discussion on enhancing regional capacity to predict, prepare and respond to future health threats.

Among the guests were Duke-NUS Governing Board Chairman Goh Yew Lin as well as members of the board, benefactors, partners and leaders from across the biomedical, healthcare and other sectors.

Introducing the new Centre, its director Professor Paul Pronyk highlighted that the Centre will leverage Duke-NUS' strong partnerships around the world, with particular focus on research institutes in South and Southeast Asia to increase the region's research capacity and capabilities.

In addition to its close ties with Duke-NUS' parent university, the National University of Singapore, the Centre will also work closely with Singapore government agencies and key partners such as Singapore's National Programme for Research in Epidemic Preparedness and Response (PREPARE), A\*STAR's Bioinformatics Institute (BII), the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).