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Singapore develops chemotherapy and cancer treatment cost calculator

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Hoping to make the ChemoCalc available to all cancer and non-cancer patients in public and private healthcare institutions

The National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) has partnered with local artificial intelligence health technology startup Bot MD to launch a chemotherapy and cancer treatment cost calculator that will assist in the estimation of treatment costs and improve financial counselling for patients.

The NCIS Chemotherapy Cost Calculator (ChemoCalc) enables frontline healthcare professionals to instantly estimate the monthly out-of-pocket expenses for patients based on their prescribed cancer treatment, residency status, means-testing tier and eligibility for various government subsidy schemes.

Schemes loaded onto the calculator include the Ministry of Health's Cancer Drug List, drug subsidy schemes (the Medication Assistance Fund and the standard drugs list), Pioneer and Merdeka Generation schemes and subsidies for outpatient specialist services.

The calculator will be continually updated in tandem with national revisions and institutional price revisions to ensure that the estimated costs align with the actual costs patients can expect to pay. The calculator enables staff to instantly estimate out-of-pocket costs to patients based on inputs which are easily accessible from healthcare systems.

It was co-developed by frontline staff at NCIS, comprising a team of pharmacists, patient service associates, ground operations staff, medical social workers and doctors working with the Bot MD team. This ensured a user interface that is intuitive and simple.