

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATIONAL HEART CENTRE SINGAPORE SETS NEW STANDARD OF CARE WITH HYBRID CARDIOVASCULAR PROCEDURES, THE FIRST IN SINGAPORE

- Patient-centric
- Both interventional procedure and cardiovascular surgery in one setting
- Improves patient safety
- Faster recoveries and shorter hospital stays

Singapore, 20 October 2009 - Heart patients can look forward to a new standard of care as the National Heart Centre Singapore (NHCS) introduces hybrid cardiovascular procedures with its hybrid operating theatre (OT). The first in Singapore, the new facility combines the capabilities of a full operating theatre with imaging abilities that allows both the interventional procedure and cardiovascular surgery to be performed in the same setting. This greatly enhances patient safety as the patient just needs to undergo the surgery once.

With the hybrid OT, doctors can easily convert an angioplasty to an open bypass surgery if the need arises. This could be life saving especially for the very sick patients as their condition may deteriorate while waiting for the surgery to be rescheduled. In addition, this patient-centric setup eliminates the hassle of moving the patients to multiple locations, putting them at greater ease and comfort.

Another key benefit of the hybrid OT is the ability to have clear, precise images of the heart anatomy which greatly helps in complex cases.

Citing the significance of the hybrid OT, Associate Professor Koh Tian Hai, Medical Director, NHCS said, "As a national and regional centre of excellence for cardiovascular disease, we have to constantly stay at the forefront of medical technology to offer our patients the optimal treatment possible in a timely and cost-effective manner. With the hybrid OT, it can help our patients save time and money with fewer operations, quicker recoveries and shorter hospital stays."

Dr Kenny Sin, Head and Senior Consultant at the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, NHCS added, “In patients who will likely require both modalities of treatment, the hybrid theatre combines the best of both worlds, dramatically increasing patient safety. In very high-risk patients where the non-availability of such a facility meant they could not be treated, we can now offer a viable option.”

59-year-old Ho Peng Fun was the first to benefit from this new setup. A retiree, Mr Ho had three blockages in his arteries, causing him to suffer a heart attack in April 2009. After a successful acute angioplasty done then, he was recommended a hybrid coronary revascularisation to clear his remaining two blockages. On 20 August 2009, Dr Lim Yeong Phang, Consultant, Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Dr Paul Chiam, Consultant, Department of Cardiology at the NHCS performed the first hybrid procedure in its new hybrid OT. After an 11-day stay in the hospital, Mr Ho was discharged and has recovered well. Since its inception, two successful hybrid procedures have been carried out, the other one being the percutaneous aortic valve replacement.

The hybrid OT is designed to handle both minimally invasive and open-heart procedures. The range of procedures that can be performed include minimally invasive cardiac surgical procedures, thoracic aneurysm stent grafts, diagnostic and therapeutic percutaneous vascular procedures, abdominal aneurysm stent grafts, combined open and endovascular procedures and percutaneous aortic valve replacements.

This year, NHCS crossed the 20,000 cardiac surgeries mark, a significant milestone as it reflects the maturity of the centre’s clinical expertise, reinforcing its status as a national and regional referral centre for cardiovascular disease.

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About the National Heart Centre Singapore

The National Heart Centre Singapore (新加坡国家心脏中心) is a 185-bed national and regional referral centre for cardiovascular diseases. A one-stop facility with the largest heart specialists group in Singapore, NHCS treats complex cases and sees the highest volume of heart patients locally.

Each year, the centre handles over 90,000 outpatient consultations, 6,000 interventional and surgical procedures and 9,000 inpatients. Its outcomes for heart attack treatment, balloon angioplasty with stenting and coronary bypass surgery have been shown to be equivalent to international standards.

NHCS is the first heart centre outside USA and in Asia to receive the prestigious Joint Commission International (JCI) since 2005, which is an assurance for safe and quality patient care for the patients.