



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 October 2024

CLUB HEAL HOSTS INAUGURAL HEALING AND RECOVERY CONFERENCE ON WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

1. Club HEAL, a non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering individuals with mental health conditions and supporting their reintegration back into the community, held its inaugural Healing and Recovery Conference 2024 on 10 October, in conjunction with World Mental Health Day. The one-day conference brought together mental health professionals, advocates, caregivers, students and individuals with lived experiences to promote open discussions and knowledge-sharing aimed at advancing the mental health landscape in Singapore.

2. The conference was graced by Mdm Halimah Yacob, Chancellor of the Singapore University of Social Sciences and Patron-in-Chief of Club HEAL.

Driving the Mental Health Sector Forward

3. The Healing and Recovery Conference 2024 served as a platform to facilitate the exchange of ideas, experiences and best practices in mental health care.

4. Distinguished keynote speakers— Professor Chua Hong Choon, CEO of Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and Yishun Health, and Ms Charlene Sunkel, Founder and CEO of Global Mental Health Peer Network— offered deep insights into the recovery movement and highlighted the transformative power of lived experiences in mental health.

5. The plenary sessions featured prominent speakers such as Dr Radiah Salim, Founder and Immediate Past President of Club HEAL; Prof Fatimah Abdul Lateef, Vice President of Silver Ribbon (Singapore); and Ms See Yen Theng, Chief of Caregiving and Community Mental Health Division at the Agency for Integrated Care. The presentations focused on person-centred



approaches, strengthening recovery and peer support programmes, and advancing the Community Mental Health Masterplan.

6. Reflecting on the importance of the conference, Dr Khairul Hazwan Suhairi, President of Club HEAL, said, “After 12 years of providing counselling, reintegration support, and community outreach, we recognised the need to create a space where mental health advocates, professionals and the wider community can come together. Our vision for this conference is to spark meaningful change by encouraging knowledge exchange and fostering a more inclusive, compassionate mental health ecosystem in Singapore.”

7. The conference also included break-out sessions led by 12 mental health organisations, addressing topics ranging from destigmatising mental health, exploring recovery pathways and implementing community-based care. These discussions aimed to create actionable solutions to better support individuals facing mental health challenges.

8. Mdm Halimah Yacob toured the exhibition booths fronted by eight social service agencies working in the mental health sector. These agencies showcased their services and approaches to supporting individuals in their recovery journeys.

9. Over 200 participants from diverse sectors, including healthcare, social services, education and community organisations attended the event.

Supporting Mental Health through Employment Opportunities

10. In line with its mission to foster an inclusive society, Club HEAL remains committed to offering employment opportunities to individuals navigating mental health challenges. These opportunities enable individuals to rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose, and contribute meaningfully to society.

11. Currently, close to a quarter of its staff comprises former clients who have successfully transitioned into roles where they now actively support others on their recovery journeys.

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About Club HEAL

Club HEAL was formed in 2012 by a group of like-minded individuals who have a strong passion in helping people with mental health conditions regain confidence in themselves and work towards community reintegration. Club HEAL also supports and enables their families to provide better care during their recovery journey. We promote healing and recovery by inspiring Hope, Empowering lives, fostering Acceptance and spreading Love. Our services include day recovery activities, counselling, home visits, public education, support groups and volunteer training. We are a member of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), and a part of the Community Intervention Team (COMIT) and Community Outreach Team (CREST) programmes under the Community Mental Health Masterplan developed by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), together with the Ministry of Health (MOH).



Annex A

Healing and Recovery Conference Programme
Thursday, 10 Oct 2024, 9am to 6pm
Lifelong Learning Institute
11 Eunos Road 8, Singapore 408601

8.00am	Registration begins
9.00am	Start of Conference
9.05am	Welcome Remarks Dr Khairul Hazwan Suhairi President of Club HEAL
9.10am	Speech by Guest-of-Honour Mdm Halimah Yacob Chancellor of Singapore University of Social Sciences and Patron-in-Chief of Club HEAL
9.20am	Keynote Speaker 1 Ms Charlene Sunkel Founder and CEO of Global Mental Health Peer Network
9.50am	Keynote Speaker 2 Professor Chua Hong Choon CEO of Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and Yishun Health
10.20am	Tea Break
11.15am	Plenary 1 Dr Radiah Salim Founder & Immediate Past President, Club HEAL
11.45am	Plenary 2 Prof Fatimah Abdul Lateef Vice President, Silver Ribbon (Singapore)
12.15pm	Plenary 3 Ms See Yen Theng



	Chief of Caregiving and Community Mental Health Division Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)
12.45pm	Lunch and Networking
2.00pm	Breakout Session 1 1A: Institute of Mental Health (IMH) 1B: Community of Peer Support Specialists (CPSS), Singapore 1C: WE CARE Community Services Limited
2.45pm	Breakout Session 2 2A: My Inspiring Journey (MIJ) Hub 2B: Nisa' HOPE Network 2C: Public Mental Health
3.30pm	Tea Break
4.00pm	Breakout Session 3 3A: Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) 3B: Singapore Anglican Community Services (SACS) 3C: Casa Raudha
4.45pm	Breakout Session 4 4A: The Tapestry Project Singapore 4B: Limitless 4C: Association of Hypnotherapy Professionals Singapore (AHPS)
5.30pm	Closing Remarks
6.00pm	End of conference



Annex B

Speakers and Presenting Organisations

1. Ms Charlene Sunkel (Founder and CEO), Global Mental Health Peer Network

Presentation Title: Unapologetically, Experts by Experience: Importance of integrating lived experience in recovery

Ms Charlene Sunkel will share her personal recovery journey, highlighting the profound impact of stigma, particularly how stripping away decision-making abilities can hinder an individual's potential. She will discuss the key factors that supported her own recovery and her dedication to promoting peer support and the lived experience movement. Through creative avenues such as theatre plays and publications, she has found innovative ways to help others heal. Ms Sunkel will also explain the development and structure of the Global Mental Health Peer Network, emphasising the invaluable contributions that experts by experience can make across various sectors.

2. Prof. Chua Hong Choon (CEO), Khoo Teck Phuat Hospital and Yishun Health

Presentation Title: From Surviving to Thriving: The Power of the Recovery Movement in Mental Health

Healing and recovery in mental health are multifaceted processes that emphasise personal growth, empowerment, and the reclamation of a meaningful life, despite the presence of mental health conditions. The recovery movement in mental health in Singapore is evolving, with increasing recognition of the importance of holistic, person-centred care. Through continued efforts in advocacy, education, and service development, Singapore aims to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals on their recovery journeys. Empowerment and peer support are crucial elements, fostering a sense of agency and community among individuals with shared experiences. Recovery-oriented practices promote respect and combat stigma, aiming to create an inclusive environment where individuals feel valued and understood.



3. Dr Radiah Salim (Founder and Immediate Past President), Club HEAL

Presentation Title: Healing & Recovery at Club HEAL

In 2012, Dr Radiah Salim embarked on a deeply personal journey to establish Club HEAL, driven by the loss of her loved ones and a commitment to addressing the pervasive grief and societal stigma surrounding mental health. She brought together a dedicated team of caregivers, healthcare professionals, and individuals with lived experience to create a supportive environment that promotes healing and recovery.

During her presentation, Dr Radiah will explore the comprehensive, person-centred approach that Club HEAL has developed, highlighting the organisation's collaborative efforts with community partners. These partnerships assist individuals in overcoming mental health challenges and reintegrating into society with dignity and resilience.

4. Ms See Yen Theng (Chief of Caregiving and Community Mental Health Division), Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)

Presentation Title: Weaving the Community Mental Health Masterplan: Our Journey so far as One Community

The Community Mental Health (CMH) sector has grown tremendously since the launch of the CMH Masterplan in 2012. Today, we have 20 partners with over 90 community-based teams, 450 GPs, 19 polyclinics and 13 teams in the hospitals supporting the community. The next phase of the CMH Masterplan will focus on better integrating support across settings, strengthening mental health capability of the sector and enhancing access to support. Let's #StandTogetherforMH and continue together stronger to build a more inclusive and supportive society.

5. Prof. Fatimah Binte Abdul Lateef (Vice President), Silver Ribbon Singapore

Presentation Title: Recovery and Transformation: A Journey of the Heart and Mind

Recovery is a topic not comprehensively covered, has limited literature search and is extremely challenging. It is impacted by ethics, cultural nuances, individual character and personality as well as their resolve to recover, and the support from family and the community. Often, when an individual affected by mental illness has reached a stable state and is in remission, he is left on his own to fend for his life and living, with some limited support from counsellors. This happens for a variety of reasons including lack of trained manpower, lost to follow up and others. Thus the best way to ensure these persons have the understanding of some elements of recovery and understand their resources, capabilities and avenues for help and assistance is to incorporate some of these in a systematic framework from the beginning- through the delivery of the Recovery Oriented



Mental Health Services (ROMHS). A model such as this can help strengthen the recovery i) related to mental health and ii) outside mental health (ie. linked to other aspects of living and life)

6. Ms Nawira Baig, Ms Wu Minyu, Mr Muhammad Arif Bin Talip (Peer Support Specialists from the Medical Social Work Department), Institute of Mental Health (IMH)

Presentation Title: Does Peer Support Work in an Acute Setting? Experience from the MSW-PSS Pilot Services in IMH Acute Wards

The Institute of Mental Health (IMH) initiated the MSW-PSS pilot project in 2022, a collaboration between the Medical Social Work department and Peer Support Specialists (PSS), aimed at supporting individuals in acute adult wards. This one-year pilot project sought to explore the effectiveness and impact of peer support in acute mental health settings.

Throughout the pilot, PSS were integrated into multidisciplinary teams (MDT) to offer personalised support to peers during the more acute phase of their recovery journey. The PSS leveraged on their lived experiences, strengths, and peer support values to inspire hope in their peers, despite challenges at work such as the triggering nature of acute ward conditions. The pilot results are promising, showing significant benefits for peers and showcased the crucial role played by PSS in facilitating peers' transitions back to their communities through their collaboration with their Medical Social Work counterparts.

7. Ms Deborah Seah, Mr Heng ZeChuan & Ms Tey Mei Yan (Certified Peer Support Specialists), Community of Peer Support Specialists (CPSS) and PSALT Care Ltd

Presentation Title: Hearing it from Peer Support Specialists on Recovery & Wellness

The certified Peer Support Specialists from Community of Peer Support Specialists (CPSS) will clarify a common misconception of mental health & mental illness and share how we can move towards the healthy spectrum to enjoy good mental wellness. The 7 dimensions of Wellness based on the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) framework will be covered to highlight the importance of how each dimension (namely Physical, Occupational, Financial, Environmental, Social, Intellectual & Spiritual) can impact our overall wellness. Yan Tey (Transformational Life Coach, Founder of Grow Stronger You) will facilitate a panel dialogue with Deborah Seah (Founder and Leader, CPSS) and Heng ZeChuan (Peer Support Specialist & Recovery Support Manager, PSALT Care Ltd) to share how they have intentionally worked on their personal recovery through actively taking practical actions. Join our breakout session to benefit from their authentic sharing to gain new insights on wellness recovery, employment sustainability and be inspired to thrive in life.



8. Ms Tham Yuen Hen (Executive Director), Mr Simon Ling (Communications and Peer Support Executive) & Ms Enid Chia (Peer Support Specialist), WE CARE Community Services Limited

Presentation Title: How persons with lived-experience make a positive impact in addiction recovery & advocacy

Staff with lived experience can at times be more effective in carrying out their roles than staff without a lived experience. At WE CARE, they can relate with recovering persons they work with. The recovering person can in turn also draw inspiration, strength and hope from those who have been through the journey.

At WE CARE, we train and empower our staff with lived experience to carry out their duties meaningfully. They are also encouraged to look after their own mental health - by attending support group meetings, participating in recovery programmes and reaching out to supervisors or counsellors when needed. We include recovering persons during outreach activities to share their own journey as a form of both advocacy and awareness.

9. Ms Faraliza Zainal (Chairman and Founder), My Inspiring Journey (MIJ) Hub

Presentation Title: The Unplanned Journey

The birth of a child with special needs, or the discovery that a child has a diagnosis, can have profound effects on the family. Ms. Faraliza Zainal will share insights that she has gained through her own experience of having a child with special needs and supporting the well-being of herself and the family when a member has special needs - from healing to acceptance to advocating.

10. Ustazah Laila Abu Hassan (Founder), Ms Zuraidah Binte Abdul (Secretary) & Ms Norfalisa Binte Mohamed Rohaizad (Secretary), Nisa' HOPE Network

Presentation Title: The power of a support group for desistors

We will share about the mission and objectives of Nisa' HOPE Network. We facilitate a support group for desistors to come together, mutually supporting and strengthening each other. We will share about our programmes, which includes spiritual elements. Additionally, we will share how the power of this support group extends beyond the group, for example, our recent humanitarian visit, visiting people in recovery in mental health centres in Indonesia.

11. Ms Aastha Goel (Founder) & Ms. Tan Kah Min, Carmen (Counsellor-in-training), Public Mental Health

Presentation Title: Promoting peer support and stories of recovery and resilience



As part of the project supported by the Health Promotion Board through Our Healthy Singapore Fund (OHSF) grant, we promote the stories of peers who either have themselves recovered, or are in recovery, as well as those who help others become more mentally fit. Through these stories, we aim to advocate and inspire recovery among persons with mental health conditions as well as common mental health issues such as stress-induced depression, anxiety, and/or psychosomatic complaints. These also aim to promote how peers find hope amidst various social challenges and stigmatising beliefs associated with mental health.

12. Mr Koh Chee Wai (Assistant Director, MST and Program & Professional Development), Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH)

Presentation Title: The untold story of the Abilympics – A recovery journey

The “Olympics of Ability”, as an international competition on vocational skills designed for people with disabilities is seldom known to many. Perhaps little was known that the Institute of Mental Health sent a team of seven individuals with psychiatric conditions to join Bizlink clients in the participation of this event in Year 2007. The speaker led and supported the team in this event on site in which two of them performed excellently and were awarded medals (Silver and Bronze) in this event. This session would share about the early life story of one of the awardees who self-taught photography prior to his participation in the Abilympics.

13. Ms Rebecca Moh (Senior Manager Rehab Services) & Ms Tan Kah Min (Senior Rehab Counsellor), Singapore Anglican Community Services (SACS)

Presentation Title: Acceptance and Discovery in Creative Expressive Programme

Creative Expressive Programme is a series of programmes designed for our members with mental health conditions. These programmes include Dance & Movement Therapy (DMT), Nagomi art, Watercolour floral painting, Paper quilling, Pressed flower and other art and crafts related workshops.

Creative Expressive Programme aims to provide different avenues for our members to experience and express their emotions. Besides experiencing a sense of calmness in these programmes, Creative Expressive Programme helps our members learn how to accept themselves and others, discover and develop their potential in art, build up positive relationships with others by working together in co-production and learn the importance of sharing and giving in the community.

14. Mdm Zaharah Ariff (Executive Director), Casa Raudha



Presentation Title: Supporting the Supporters: Awareness, Impact, and Strategies

Secondary traumatic stress (STS) affects professionals in high-stress roles such as healthcare, social work, and emergency response. Indirect exposure to trauma through their work can result in symptoms like emotional exhaustion, reduced empathy, and increased absenteeism, impacting both personal well-being and professional performance.

Supporting these professionals starts with raising awareness of STS. Recognising the signs and symptoms is crucial for early intervention and promoting a culture where seeking help is normalised. Education through training sessions and workshops equip individuals with the necessary tools to address STS.

Understanding the impact of STS is vital. If left unaddressed, it can lead to burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Organisations can implement strategies to support mental wellness, including promoting self-care practices, providing access to mental health resources, and fostering a supportive work environment.

15. Ms Nicole Kay (Executive Director), The Tapestry Project SG

Presentation Title: Storying our Wellness

We are all made of stories — past, present and future. The stories we tell ourselves have a profound impact on our mental wellbeing. In this session, The Tapestry Project will share how their own storying journey started, and how they serve to support other storytellers today in their recovery and wellbeing.

16. Mr Asher Low (Executive Director), Limitless

Presentation Title: Harnessing the black dog – mental health professionals with lived experience

Does it matter if my counsellor goes for counselling too? Some studies indicate that a substantial portion of mental health professionals have personal lived experience of mental illness or mental health challenges. And while they can often experience unique challenges at work, they also possess unique strengths that often carry over into their work with clients and patients. Join Asher Low, Executive Director of Limitless, a youth mental health agency that also happens to have employed mental health professionals with lived experience from day one; as he shares about his experience working with “wounded healers”, the challenges faced, the impact they can have with clients, lessons learnt, and what research says about the topic.

17. Ms Fauziah Shah (Founding President and Immediate Past President), Association of Hypnosis Professionals Singapore (AHPS)

Presentation Title: Hypnotherapy - A Solution to Chronic Pain



According to Smith & Torrance (2012), chronic pain prevalence is on average about 30% of the world's population. Wee et Al. (2016) found that pain prevalence in Singapore has increased from 8.7% of the population in 2009 to about 14.3% in 2016. The numbers have likely increased because of Singapore's aging population.

When patients suffer from chronic pain, they also have associated feelings of stress and anxiety, caused by their emotional state. Jensen, Jamieson et al (2017) found that this can easily be resolved through hypnotherapy. Fauziah has, through her personal experience, found that when she gets her clients to focus more on positive thoughts, feelings and emotions and become calmer and more relaxed, they are in a better frame of mind to deal with real or perceived pain.