

# Patients, caregivers get more resources

## Online portal with materials on dementia, app to help with early detection launched

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A new online resource portal for those with dementia and their caregivers as well as a new app that helps with the early detection of pre-dementia symptoms were launched yesterday.

This is in conjunction with World Alzheimer's Day yesterday. The launch kicks off a month-long calendar of events and activities dedicated to raising awareness of and challenging the stigma of dementia.

DementiaHub.SG ([www.dementiahub.sg](http://www.dementiahub.sg)), rolled out by social service agency Dementia Singapore and the Agency for Integrated Care, has resources for four groups – members of a community or corporation, people living with dementia, caregivers of a loved one with dementia and care professionals.

It has articles on the management of dementia symptoms, products and support services, self-care; as well as tool kits and videos on dementia care, exercises and dietary recommendations.

Dementia Singapore chief executive Jason Foo said that upon diagnosis, those with dementia and their caregivers often scramble to get more information. "But not all sources are reliable, verified or relevant in the Singapore context. We see a need for accurate and relevant information on dementia to be curated and shared on a common public platform," he said.

Agency for Integrated Care chief executive Tan Kwang Cheak said that in Singapore, one in 10 seniors aged 60 and above – or around 86,000 people – may have dementia, and the number is expected to soar to 130,000 or more by 2030.

Future development of the portal will include content made available in Chinese, Malay and Tamil. Also in the pipeline are more personalised content, expert-sourced materials, as well as training opportunities, said Dementia Singapore.

Separately, the National Neuroscience Institute (NNI) and SingHealth launched a new application to assist with early detection of pre-dementia, or mild cognitive impairment, and to help caregivers manage their stress.

The Memory Care app contains checklists to monitor possible signs of cognitive decline and caregiver stress, and provides users with rele-

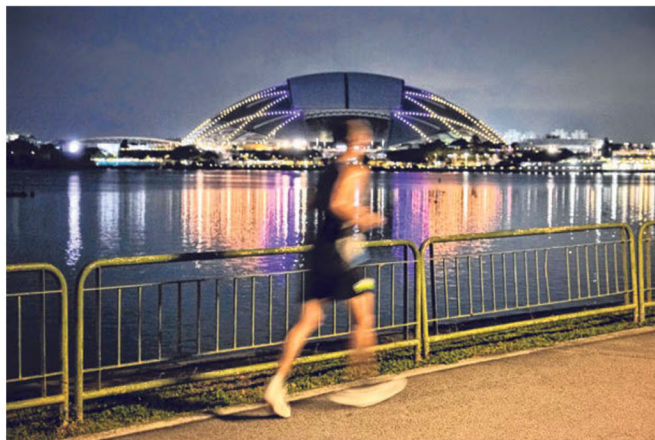
vant information and advice based on their results. The new app is found within SingHealth's existing Health Buddy mobile application.

Dr Adeline Ng, a senior consultant at NNI's department of neurology who was also the project lead, said: "Diagnosing people when they have pre-dementia is critical because early medical intervention at this stage can possibly delay the progression to dementia."

Yesterday, the National University Health System's Mind Science Centre also launched the Mind Art Experiential Lab, a mental wellness centre focusing on the Asian culture, lifestyle, phenotype and issues, at Alexandra Hospital.

The centre aims to discover creative and integrative interventions through art, mindfulness and transdisciplinary research, and help prevent dementia and build mental resilience across all age groups.

The launch was attended by Se-



The National Stadium illuminated in purple and yellow on World Alzheimer's Day yesterday. Purple is the colour universally associated with dementia; yellow represents positivity and contrasts against the dementia stigma. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

nior Minister of State for National Development and Foreign Affairs Sim Ann, who is also an MP for Holland-Bukit Timah GRC.

A showcase of multi-sensory interventional therapy programmes, titled Arts, Mindfulness And The Ageing Brain, targeted at elderly visitors, was also unveiled at the centre.

The exhibits show how early psychosocial intervention and creative arts can lead to interesting engagement and participation for people experiencing mental health challenges. They can also reduce the incidence of dementia and depression, improve quality of life and reduce the burden of disease in families and society.

Ms Sim said her ward in Bukit Timah will adopt the Mind Science Centre's Age Well Everyday programme early next year, joining eight other community clubs that have already done so. A depression and dementia risk prevention programme, it is designed to delay cognitive deterioration, reduce anxiety and increase socialisation.

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