

# A growing portfolio of health and wellness alternatives

By Ang Yi Ting, Beh Kai En,  
Jervis Seet and Audrey Lim  
Kain Sim

FROM a single alternative health-care clinic, A Wellness Holdings (AWHL) has expanded to comprise businesses ranging from slimming, facial and spa services to pain management and cosmetic procedures.

It all began in 2012 with the establishment of Natural Healings Chiropractic and PhysioCare clinic, since renamed Natrahea. Now a chain of clinics, Natrahea helps patients recover from medical conditions through alternative health-care such as chiropractic treatment, functional wellness treatment and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), instead of surgery or medication.

Said AWHL group chief executive officer Arich Tan: "When I was in the alternative healthcare segment, I noticed that people were suffering from aches and pains, and their only means of a cure was to undergo surgery." He thus wanted to help them recover through alternative healthcare instead.

Tan later set up AWHL with group deputy CEO Pauline Wee, as an investment holding company for businesses in health, wellness and beauty, including Natrahea.

Natrahea now has seven clinics specialising in headaches and body pains. Beyond Singapore, the plan is to grow its customer base by expanding in South-east Asia.

AWHL has also sought to expand beyond Natrahea itself, by acquiring and operating businesses in the holistic health, clinical aesthetic and beauty spa industries.

Though Natrahea has been successful, Tan did not want AWHL to become too reliant on a single



Arich Tan, group CEO of A Wellness Holdings, ventured into the beauty industry so that the group would not be too reliant on its original Natrahea brand. BT PHOTO: YEN MENG JIIN

brand. AWHL thus ventured into the beauty industry and began acquiring local heritage brands, many of which were family-owned businesses whose second-generation shareholders were not keen to continue.

In 2014, AWHL acquired Haach, a provider of face, skin, and body spa treatments that had five branches at the time. The following year, Dr Haach was founded as Haach's aesthetic wing, providing services such as Botox, fillers, laser and other aesthetic treatments at three locations.

AWHL has also acquired management rights over several other beauty and wellness clinics, including skin, body and spa chain FIL; slimming, facial and spa brand Body Contour; Passage New York spa; spinal care and pain manage-

ment clinic PhysioMed; hair and scalp treatment provider TrichoMed; and Covette Laser Aesthetics, which provides minimally invasive cosmetic procedures.

This growth strategy of mergers and acquisitions has allowed it to increase its consumer reach, market share and value. AWHL won its first Enterprise 50 Award in 2020, and has gone on to win again in 2021 and 2022.

Tan credits Natrahea's success in capturing market share to two factors. First, the brand provides a sense of security and trust, he said. Smaller stand-alone clinics may be manned by just one or two professionals with variable operating hours, which may inconvenience customers.

Customers may also think twice about purchasing healthcare pack-

ages from smaller clinics. In contrast, with a team of specialists across its chain of clinics, Natrahea can give customers the assurance that their needs will be met.

A second competitive advantage is Natrahea's concept of "East meets West", in which chiropractic, TCM and physiotherapy treatments are combined.

Because AWHL provides both holistic beauty and wellness programmes, many customers have stayed on for decades, switching between AWHL's brands for various needs as they age, said Tan.

## Innovating through the pandemic

As with many other businesses, AWHL was forced to rethink its strategy when the pandemic began. Singapore's beauty and well-

ness industry was badly hit as Covid-19 restrictions meant that many procedures were suspended.

Staff worried about retrenchments and pay cuts, but none of AWHL's 300 employees had to undergo these. Said Tan: "That's the period of time when we should stand shoulder to shoulder."

AWHL was able to get through the Covid-19 pandemic due to its willingness to constantly innovate and digitalise, he said. In fact, AWHL's revenue grew in the past two years.

In the past, AWHL's marketing efforts were mainly through offline methods such as endorsements, roadshows, shopping mall events, phone calls and corporate sharing sessions. But in 2018, AWHL started going digital to streamline its processes and engage with younger customers.

Riding the social media wave, AWHL established an online presence to promote its various brands. This meant it could continue reaching customers during the pandemic. E-commerce platforms allowed AWHL to stay afloat when shops were closed, with Natrahea and Dr Haach having over 15 and 20 products listed online respectively.

Besides digital marketing, AWHL has digitalised the consumer journey too. Using artificial intelligence (AI) and data mining, it analyses data to identify opportunities for cross-selling across its brands.

To stay competitive, AWHL plans to go even further in its digital journey. In its five-year strategy road map starting in 2022, it is eliminating most manual processes, such as data entry, payment and appointment bookings.

Instead, it plans to shift to cash-

less payments, digital sales, online booking systems, and a seamless integration of its brands and services onto a Web3 platform. To reduce the risk of "mis-selling", the company is also looking at using AI to recommend the right products for beauty treatments.

Besides technological innovation, AWHL is also going green, with plans for sustainable initiatives such as environmentally friendly packaging and replacing traditional sheet face masks with liquid ones.

This series is part of the Enterprise 50 Educational Project between the E50 partners and the NUS Business School. A Wellness Holdings was among the winners in 2021. The annual E50 ranking is co-organised by *The Business Times* and KPMG, sponsored by OCBC Bank, and supported by Enterprise Singapore, Singapore Exchange and Singapore Business Federation.

**ENTERPRISE**



*Celebrating Singapore's  
Enterprising Spirit 2022*

This series is part of the Enterprise 50 Educational Project between the E50 partners and the NUS Business School. Eastern Harvest was among the winners in 2021. The annual E50 ranking is co-organised by *The Business Times* and KPMG, sponsored by Enterprise Singapore, Singapore Exchange and Singapore Business Federation.