

Speech by Dr Jason Cheah at the WHC Groundbreaking Event (18 April 2017)

- Minister Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health
- Minister Khaw Boon Wan, Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure & Minister for Transport
- Mdm Halimah Yacob, Speaker of Parliament
- Dr Lam Pin Min, Minister of State, Ministry of Health
- Mr Amrin Amin Parliamentary Secretary for Home Affairs
- Advisors for Sembawang and Marsiling-Yew Tee GRCs
- Ms Jennie Chua, Chairman Alexandra Health System
- A/Prof Pang Weng Sun, Acting GCEO, Alexandra Health System
- Distinguished guests and friends

Introduction

1. A very good morning to everyone and thank you for taking the time to be here with us to celebrate this milestone in the development of the Woodlands Health Campus (WHC).

2. This greenfield land that we are on right now was for many years surrounded by vegetable farms and rubber plantations. With those gone, it has become a popular spot for kite-flying. As you can see, this is a really lovely place. Today's event is significant not only because we are breaking ground on site (physically), but we are also starting the journey of co-creating the care model of the future for our patients.

Vision for WHC

3. When Minister Khaw first announced the building of the Woodlands Health Campus in February 2014, he challenged me and my team to look 20 to 30 years ahead to plan for the future healthcare needs of Singaporeans and develop a hospital like none other.

4. He encouraged us to reinvent the way we deliver care; and also to make this Campus very open and welcoming, full of life, health promoting and fully connected to surrounding residents.

5. As we started work on this project, Minister Gan also challenged me and my team to “think out of the box”, push for innovation and productivity, and see the Campus as a Hub, connecting (tightly) with our partners in the community.
6. Singapore has truly great hospitals. Our hospitals provide excellent care and are amongst the most progressive in the world today. I am humbled and energised by the challenges which both Ministers have put to me and my team. We will build upon the experiences of our sister hospitals, innovate and develop a Campus of the future that Singaporeans can be proud of.
7. The Woodlands Health Campus (WHC) will be designed along the vision of “One-ness”. We will be built as a single integrated campus serving patients with care needs ranging from the urgent to recovery to end of life. This concept of “One-ness” will extend beyond the hospital into the community and even into the homes of our patients. And WHC will be built as an ‘Open Campus’ where

the community will be welcomed to participate in the care of our patients.

8. All this will require profound changes to the way we deliver care today. WHC will encompass three key areas: firstly, the development of a strong **ecosystem for collaborative care within and outside the Campus**; the introduction of **SMART** approaches to improve the way care is delivered to our patients; and finally, the creation of **extensive green spaces** to promote health and healing. During the tour of the display areas, I hope you will get an appreciation of our current thinking and initial ideas, which we will work hard on over the next 5 years to make these a reality by 2022. With care transformation evolving so rapidly, I'm sure there will be a lot more new innovations that the Woodlands Campus can implement in time to come.

9. I am pleased to have some of our industry collaborators here today to share with us a few of their innovations that could make the

SMART Campus a reality. I would like to invite everyone to tour the booths and please do provide your feedback to me and my team.

Park Integration

10. I need to say a few words on our special collaboration with NParks. I am happy to share with you that WHC will be the first healthcare facility designed with an adjacent Healing Forest Garden that will extend right into the heart of the Campus. A growing body of research has shown that the immediate physical environment plays a significant role in patient outcomes and recovery times. Our friends from NParks have started this journey with us to develop Singapore's first Healing Forest Garden, right next to this Campus.

11. The Healing Forest Garden that will be developed aims to create an array of experiences to facilitate mental, emotional and physical recovery of our patients just adjacent to the campus grounds.

Conclusion

12. As WHC begins to take shape over the next 5 years, we would like to assure our neighbours, including Christ Church Secondary School and the Yusof Ishak Mosque, that the construction of this Campus will be carefully planned to minimize any disruption and inconvenience to their daily activities and nearby traffic. My team and I will strive to meet our key stakeholders on a regular basis to obtain feedback so that next 5 years before WHC's opening will be as tolerable as possible.

13. In ending, I have many people to thank because a massive project like this requires a great number of talented and dedicated individuals. Firstly, I must thank our tireless project team including the architects (led by Mr Michael Leong), medical planners from Perkins and Will, engineers, project managers and partners for their tremendous work in helping us achieve this critical milestone.

14. We are also very grateful to our friends and experts from other industries who have played a key role in our formative months at the various design thinking and idea generation sessions;

not forgetting industry experts from IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and Philips who have generated many exciting ideas for our innovation showcase today.

15. I would also like to express my appreciation to Lam Soon Singapore and Connectus Group for their generous sponsorships to ensure that we are well hydrated and fed today.

16. My deepest thanks go to our many friends in the community. These include the pupils of Admiralty Primary and Secondary Schools, Kranji Secondary School, Republic Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic, Singapore Institute of Technology, our seniors from Wellness Kampung 115 (at Yishun, Chong Pang Estate) who have taught us how to remain young; and our closest neighbors from Christchurch Secondary School and Yusof Ishak Mosque who have come together to help support our groundbreaking ceremony.

17. I must also thank Ms Jennie Chua for her guidance, and ever inspiring words of encouragement to me and my team, the Board of AlexandraHealth for their un-stinting support and members of

our Woodlands Campus Board Development Committee, who have been like our guardian angels, and Council of Wise Gentlemen and Ladies. Me and my team have learnt a great deal from all of you.

18. Over the weekend, Minister for National Development announced at HDB's "Remaking of Heartlands" exhibition that Woodlands will be developed into the Star Destination of the North, with WHC billed as one of the 6 "star attractions". My team and I will strive to make this happen as we work hard over the next few years to transform today's empty field into tomorrow's "Health and Wellness Haven".

19. Last but not least, I'd like to express my sincere thanks to Minister Gan, Minister Khaw, and Members of Parliament from Sembawang and Marsiling-Yew Tee GRCs who are here today, and all of you for taking the time to join in marking this special occasion.

Thank you!

Dr Jason Cheah

Chairman, WHC Pro-Tem Committee