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TOMORROW'S EYE CARE, TODAY

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President's Challenge 2023

SNEC and SingHealth do their part for President's Challenge 2023

At The Forefront

Biomarker to detect high myopia in children

All About LASIK

Are you a suitable candidate for LASIK?



Empowering Lives

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OXYGEN STUDIO DESIGNS PTE LTD

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IYER LAXMI RAVI
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EDITOR'S NOTE

As we wrap up the year with a grateful heart, we would like to thank you, our readers and donors, for your support in 2023.

For the first time in 15 years, we have helmed the SingHealth President's Challenge (SHPC) 2023 and rallied the SingHealth cluster to raise over S\$1.3 million for our adopted beneficiaries. It was particularly heartening to see staff from across SingHealth racing together to raise funds through the 12 Peaks Challenge, a signature event of the SHPC.

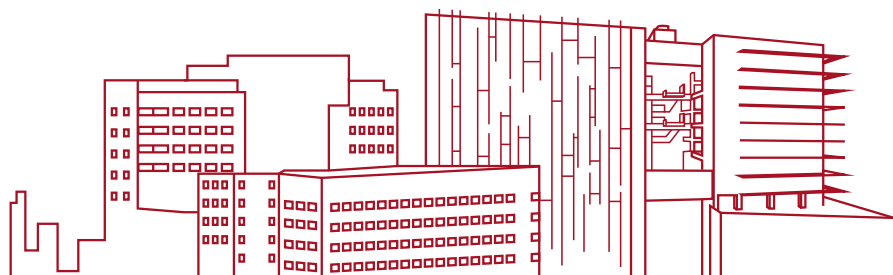
Our annual fundraising gala dinner, the EYE BALL, continues to be a success. In 2023, we raised a total of S\$2.22 million for VisionSave, a joint SNEC and SERI initiative to raise funds for eyecare research and development, and provided financial aid for the needy.

It also gives us immense pride to share that the Elsevier-Stanford study ranked our SNEC-SERI researchers in the top 2% of the most-cited scientists worldwide for the second time.

We continue to search for innovative ways to treat eye conditions. Scientists at SERI are developing a novel imaging tool that acts as a biomarker to determine a child's risk for developing high myopia. We are honoured that Singapore Management University (SMU) recognised the teaching value of our artificial intelligence (AI) eye screening system SELINA+ (Singapore Eye LESioN Analyser Plus), which will be distributed as a case study globally by renowned management teaching portals, Harvard Business Publishing and The Case Centre.

Lastly, don't miss out on the tips shared by our specialist, Dr Khor Wei Boon, on the LASIK procedure if you are keen to go for refractive surgery to correct your vision.

Enjoy reading and have a blessed 2024!



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RISING TO THE CHALLENGE!

Led by SNEC, the SingHealth cluster raised S\$1.3 million for President's Challenge 2023.



S\$ 1,300,000



SNEC proudly helmed the SingHealth President's Challenge (SHPC) 2023 with all hands on deck, rallying the SingHealth cluster together for a good cause. Themed "Caring Hands, Compassionate Hearts", more than 32,000 staff across the cluster participated in fundraising events and voluntary outreach activities, raising over S\$1.3 million for adopted beneficiaries. The amount was presented to President Tharman Shanmugaratnam at the SHPC finale on 21 October 2023, which marked the successful conclusion to SNEC's first time leading the SHPC in 15 years.

"It was a huge team effort, and my core team did a great job," Professor Jodhbir Mehta, Chairman of the SHPC 2023 Steering Committee, and Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Research), SNEC, reflected on the event. He added, "We are honoured to have this opportunity to make a difference in our community, and I am encouraged by all our colleagues who have been nothing short of supportive and generous throughout our campaign."

Professor Mehta praised the enthusiastic response from the rest of the SingHealth cluster, which was heartening to the organising committee.



“

All the institutions were very supportive, from the senior leadership to everyone doing the fundraising. I really felt the team spirit. We also are grateful to our corporate partners who readily stepped up to contribute to the campaign. Everyone involved has really embodied the spirit of compassion and care for this cause that is close to our hearts.”

Professor Jodhbir Mehta
Chairman for the SHPC 2023 Steering Committee and Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Research), SNEC



SNEC organised three cluster-wide events to serve as the main fundraising routes in SHPC 2023. Two of these events, the Spirit of SingHealth Challenge, a virtual run/cycle/calorie tracking event, and the 12 Peaks Challenge, a team-based relay race, were new and unique to the SHPC 2023. A pledge card donation drive ran from June to September and served as the third cluster-level fundraising stream.

Each of the twelve SingHealth institutions also organised fundraising initiatives like physical and virtual bazaars, dance and fitness classes, and craft workshops, supplementing the total collections with an additional sum of nearly S\$100,000. Other donations from individual and corporate sponsors rounded out contributions to the final proceeds.

“It is our privilege to support the SingHealth President’s Challenge again this year. I’m heartened to see all our staff coming together as one family to pool their energy and time together for a greater cause — caring for those in need in our community. Through their collective

efforts, we managed to raise S\$1.3 million. I hope these funds will support our adopted benefitting agencies in improving the lives of their clients,” said Professor Ivy Ng, Group Chief Executive Officer, SingHealth.

A National Neuroscience Institute (NNI) spokesperson shared, “Thanks to the support from SingHealth institutions and its volunteers, NNI Fund beneficiaries had essential grocery items delivered right to their doorstep as part of the Supermarket Wish-list initiative. The recipients were very thankful for the items, especially the heavy and bulky ones which would have been challenging for them to get from the supermarket.”

The President’s Challenge is the President’s call to the nation to build a more caring and inclusive society by raising funds to help the less fortunate. SingHealth has participated in this movement since 2005, with each institution taking the lead on an annually rotating basis.



The Spirit of SingHealth Challenge

Over 900 participants took part in the Spirit of SingHealth Challenge from 12 June to 13 August 2023, raising more than S\$122,000. This Challenge, a run/cycle/calorie tracking event, was not only in support of a charitable cause, but also promoted staff wellness and bonding.

Participants registered on a virtual platform for a fee, with a run/cycle distance or calorie target set at registration. The platform recorded the participants’ progress towards their target and featured a live leaderboard, creating a bright atmosphere of friendly competition.

Participants also had the option of participating in the Challenge as a team of up to five members. More athletic staff became Fundraising Champions by pledging a higher distance or calorie target and gathering donations in support of their commitment.

Professor Aung Tin, CEO of SNEC, was one of the Fundraising Champions for the Spirit of SingHealth Challenge. He shared, “This initiative aimed to increase everyone’s exercise potential or calorie count for a good cause. We can get fit and help to raise money at the same time, and at our own convenience.”

The top five winners in the male and female categories of the Run, Cycle and Calories event were awarded sports gear and health supplement hampers, sponsored by Mandarin Opto-Medic and LAC respectively. In the Best Route Map and Best Selfie categories, the top five winners received a two-day, one-night staycation at Copthorne King’s Hotel, as well as LAC health supplements.

The Spirit of SingHealth Challenge follows the same format as SNEC’s signature annual virtual fundraiser, the Eye Run/Cycle, which was inaugurated in 2021.





Conquering the Amazing SingHealth 12 Peaks

On 16 September 2023, staff from across SingHealth came together to take part in the 12 Peaks Challenge, a signature event of the SHPC 2023 that was organised by SNEC.

Inspired by the Netflix show “14 Peaks”, our healthcare warriors took on the mighty challenge to race up the stairs to the top of the 12 SingHealth institutions in the shortest time. This epic journey took them from Outram to Novena, Changi, Sengkang, Eunos and Tampines in various sequences, and finally back to SNEC. The highest “peak” conquered was 24 storeys high at the National Cancer Centre.

Participants showcased their determination, problem-solving skills, and teamwork throughout the challenge. They gave their all in navigating unfamiliar terrain to find the fastest route to each institution, racing up each flight of stairs, and completing each game and activity at each of the 12 institutions. The teams were enthusiastic and determined, solving puzzles, answering quizzes, and, most importantly, having fun with their peers.

After a day filled with exciting challenges and heart-pounding moments, each group was given a sash decorated with an array of colourful ribbons that represented each of the 12 institutions.

Marlina Tay, Senior Manager of SERI shared, “I really enjoyed the 12 Peaks Challenge. With all the running and sweating, I am grateful for a great SNEC/ SERI team! Helen Keller wrote, ‘Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much’. This resonated with us when we participated in this activity. We cheered each other on along the way as we raced to complete each peak.”

The colourful sashes, adorned with symbols of unity and achievement, were presented to each team, marking not only their accomplishment in the 12 Peaks Challenge but also the bonds forged and the collaborative spirit that defined the event. A big round of applause for all 16 teams who participated with such vigour and vitality, and congratulations to the winning team — Singapore General Hospital (SGH) Team 3! All these efforts were for a greater cause: raising funds for the President’s Challenge.



A More Caring and Inclusive Society

All proceeds from the SHPC 2023 went to selected non-profit charitable organisations. Five benefitting agencies were adopted by SingHealth last year, in line with the Istana’s chosen initiative of supporting caregivers: Caregivers Alliance Limited, Club HEAL, HCA Hospice, SingHealth Fund (National Neuroscience Institute Fund), and the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH).

SNEC coordinated outreach activities for these adopted beneficiaries as part of the SHPC 2023. Each SingHealth institution partnered with an adopted agency to provide volunteer support for the agency’s clients. This included enrichment sessions for clients in the form of museum outings, arts and crafts workshops, purchase and home delivery of groceries, and assistance for the visually impaired.

Commenting on the impact of the SHPC 2023, a SAVH spokesperson shared, “The SingHealth President’s Challenge 2023 has helped to raise awareness of the needs of persons with visual impairment, and reconnected clients from SAVH with specialist eye care services provided by SNEC. We look forward to partnering with national agencies like SingHealth and SNEC to better serve the needs of our clients.”

Mdm Manisah Arshad was one of the beneficiaries of the eye screening provided by SNEC. As a caregiver who faced much stress while caring for her loved ones, she was unable to make time to book appointments for eye check-ups. She was grateful that she was able to attend the free eye screening with her Club HEAL friends. The screening detected a cataract in one of her eyes, and referrals for further treatment and care were made for her that day.



SNEC Director of Nursing Honoured with 2023 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

for Nurses

The highest accolade in Singapore's nursing profession recognises outstanding contributions and dedication to healthcare.

In 2020, when Dr Loh Huey Peng, SNEC's Director of Nursing was deployed to manage a COVID-19 facility at the Singapore Expo, she had to work with a new and diverse group of nurses where processes were changing on a daily basis. One of the things she did was to hold huddles with the nurses to understand their concerns, even if their needs did not reflect those of the majority.

During this period, she built bonds with her nurses as she worked alongside them to set up operations at the SingHealth Community Care Facility@ Expo to care for over 3,000 COVID-19-positive patients. Her perseverance, humility and outstanding leadership earned her the respect of staff and leaders within the SingHealth community.

Known for her relentless dedication and unwavering leadership in the nursing profession, Dr Loh was one of the three recipients who was awarded the 2023 President's Award for Nurses on 28 July 2023. The Award is the highest accolade in Singapore's nursing profession. Since 2000, it has recognised 93 nurses for their sustained outstanding performance. This is the first time SNEC has received this prestigious award.

An astute leader, Dr Loh earned the respect of staff and leaders with her persevering and humble spirit. Over the years, she has overseen the transformation of the nursing culture within the organisation and boosted morale among nurses by encouraging them to collaborate on innovative projects and creating opportunities to nurture aspiring leaders.

Her advice to young nurses is: "Don't give up so easily. Always value what you've learned and add value to what you have learned." She hopes that nurses can reach their full potential and cultivate an agile nursing workforce. As a result, the profession would remain adaptable and resilient in delivering patient-centred care.

Dr Loh also coordinates training programmes and workshops, as well as plays a pivotal role in setting up SNEC's Staff Wellness Council, which is vital to the organisation's cultural transformation. She has also worked on several evidence-based and clinical quality improvement projects, enhancing surgical practices, patient safety and cost-effectiveness. She aspires to leverage innovation and technology to promote new methods of care delivery and elevate healthcare productivity.



Novel Tool to DETECT HIGH MYOPIA RISK

This imaging tool is easy to use and generates results immediately.

Scientists at SERI are developing an imaging tool that leverages optical coherence tomography (OCT) technology — a rapid, non-invasive method of eye imaging that can be safely performed on children. This tool captures changes of the scleral collagen structure at the back of eyes, which become thinner, weaker and enlarged in surface area as myopia develops. As such, this method enables ophthalmologists to evaluate myopia status, predict its progression and identify scleral weakening and potential risk of pathological changes.

The imaging tool also acts as a biomarker for high myopia and could be administered by optometrists or general practitioners in primary eye care settings. As the results can be generated immediately, primary eye care providers would be able to advise patients or provide specialist referrals, if necessary.

While refractive error can be corrected with spectacles, contact lenses or surgery, unmitigated progression to high myopia (above -5.00 dioptres) can lead to increased risk of developing sight-threatening complications. Recent studies report that as many as 10 to 30 percent of high myopia patients develop complications such as myopic maculopathy and optic neuropathy later in life, leading to irreversible visual impairment.

“High myopia is prevalent in Singapore, and is associated with severe visual complications, especially among the older population. There is an urgent need to address this issue because, while majority of highly myopic patients are still young now, it will become a major problem and cause of blindness in the future,” said Professor Leopold Schmetterer, Scientific Director and Head of Ocular Imaging at SERI.

Initial results of this study published in Nature Biomedical Engineering in June 2023 had an accuracy of about 85 to 90 percent. Going forward, the researchers will be embarking on longitudinal studies among two cohorts of children (six to eight years old, and eleven to thirteen years old) for two years to establish longer term results.

“In the longer term, this technology could enable ophthalmologists to better determine the optimal time for a child with myopia to receive treatment to mitigate progression, or identify individuals at risk of developing myopia-related pathology that can lead to visual impairment,” said Associate Professor Marcus Ang, Advisor, Myopia Centre, SNEC.





Our SELENA+ Innovation Journey Becomes Teaching Case Worldwide

SNEC-SERI's two-decade journey to develop and commercialise an AI eye screening system is now a valuable case study distributed by Harvard Business Publishing.

Thanks to Singapore Management University (SMU) recognising the immense teaching value of our artificial intelligence (AI) eye screening system SELENA+ (Singapore Eye LESion Analyser Plus), it is now a teaching case study distributed globally by renowned management teaching portals, Harvard Business Publishing and The Case Centre.

SELENA+ is the brainchild of clinicians and researchers at SNEC-SERI and National University of Singapore (NUS) School of Computing. The AI system — a sophisticated, image-based software — uses pattern recognition to accurately analyse retinal images. Its main aim is to detect diabetic retinopathy, a common diabetes-related eye disease. It can also identify other major conditions like glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration.

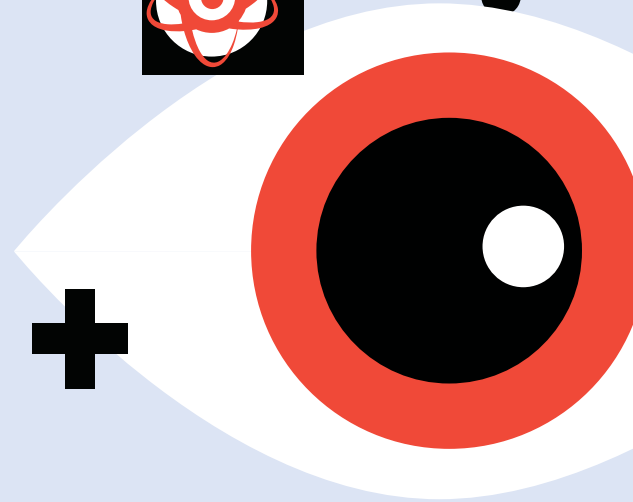
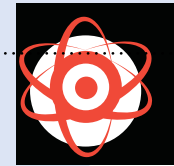
SELENA+'s journey began over 20 years ago when the surge in local diabetes cases highlighted the need for improved detection of diabetes-related eye diseases like diabetic retinopathy, which can cause permanent blindness if left untreated. Its success in achieving its objectives led to the creation of EyRIS, a startup which aimed to commercialise the AI system. The entire process, from initial development to commercialisation, was documented by a team from SMU led by Professor Emeritus of Information Systems, Steven Miller.

“It was a privilege to work with SMU and Professor Emeritus Steven Miller to create this

teaching case, and we are honoured that it is being distributed by Harvard Business Publishing and The Case Centre. The SELENA+ story has spanned so many years and is certainly one that is close to my heart. I hope that through this case study, students all around the world can explore and appreciate our journey in healthcare AI through an entrepreneurship lens,” said Professor Wong Tien Yin, Lead Principal Investigator of SELENA+ and Co-founder of EyRIS.

Professor Wong is also a Senior Advisor to SingHealth and SNEC, and Senior Principal Clinician Scientist (Adjunct) with SERI.

Professor Emeritus Miller shared how this success story developed. “It started with a small team of medical scientists and clinicians at SNEC and SERI working with a few computer scientists at NUS. Because of the Ministry of Health’s support for the Singapore Integrated Diabetic Retinopathy programme, the high-quality data needed to train the AI system materialised. This case study will be a great asset for anyone interested in combining research and development, clinical process innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialisation in the healthcare sector,” he said.



SERI Scientists Once Again Ranked Top 2% Globally

Our scientists secured a top 2% ranking in a recent Elsevier-Stanford study, underscoring the institute’s dedication to pioneering ophthalmology and optometry research.

Our SNEC-SERI scientists and researchers have once again achieved a remarkable feat. They have been ranked in the top 2% of the most-cited scientists worldwide.

The recent Elsevier-Stanford study curated by Stanford University recognised 23 of our scientists specialising in ophthalmology and optometry for their exceptional contributions. This follows our success in 2021, where 20 of our scientists were also ranked in the top 2% globally.

The study indexed over 100,000 scientists from 22 different fields. Our top 2% ranking stems from our scientists’ outstanding research accomplishments, measured through metrics such as the number of citations received for their research papers.

Among the researchers featured is SERI Clinician Scientist and Principal Investigator, Associate Professor Liu Yu-Chi. Her recent breakthrough work demonstrated that fenofibrate, a lipid-lowering drug, can stimulate the regeneration of corneal nerves in diabetic patients. Her team has successfully identified molecular and imaging biomarkers for neuropathic corneal pain.

Associate Professor Liu shared, “As a clinician, I encounter new

clinical challenges every day. My expertise and research focuses on corneal diseases, particularly corneal neuropathy, nerve regeneration and neuropathic pain. Through our research efforts, we aim to bridge the gaps in clinical care and deliver more effective medical treatments.”

Also mentioned in the study is Dr Jacqueline Chua, a Junior Principal Investigator in the Ocular Imaging Group at SERI. Her research found that patients with Alzheimer’s disease had significantly lower vessel density and thinner nerve structures in the eye, and OCT — a non-invasive eye imaging technology — can detect the early onset of the disease.

Expressing his pride, Professor Jodhbir Mehta, the Executive Director of SERI, stated, “It is a tremendous testament to the excellence of our faculty that they have once again been recognised on this prestigious list.”

He emphasised that research is a collaborative effort, and behind every scientist on the list is a team of dedicated and hardworking individuals. “Despite our country’s size, we are making a global impact, and it is especially satisfying to see our younger faculty gaining international recognition,” he added.

Our researchers who are among the world’s top 2%

- Prof Aung Tin
- Prof Jodhbir Singh Mehta
- Prof Wong Tien Yin
- CI Prof Donald Tan
- Prof Leopold Schmetterer
- Prof Ecosse Lamoureux
- Prof Saw Seang Mei
- Prof Cheng Ching-Yu
- Prof Gemmy Cheung
- Prof Louis Tong
- Prof Dan Milea
- A/Prof Audrey Chia
- A/Prof Daniel Ting
- A/Prof Michaël Girard
- A/Prof Lakshminarayanan Rajamani
- A/Prof Charumathi Sabanayagam
- A/Prof Gavin Tan
- A/Prof Marcus Ang
- A/Prof Liu Yu-Chi
- A/Prof Danny Cheung
- Adj A/Prof Rupesh Agrawal
- Dr Jacqueline Chua
- Dr Tham Yih Chung



LASIK and its Alternatives



Thinking about LASIK?

Dr Khor Wei Boon, Senior Consultant, Refractive Surgery Department at SNEC, shares what you need to know about the procedure.

LASIK is an acronym for Laser In-Situ Keratomileusis, a form of refractive surgery that is used to correct vision. This procedure is used to address myopia, astigmatism and hyperopia, thereby reducing or even eliminating a person's dependence on glasses or contact lenses.

LASIK is a two-step procedure conducted entirely with lasers. The initial step involves the use of a precise laser to create a corneal flap. This flap is lifted away from the cornea to prepare for the second stage. A second laser is then used to reshape the cornea to rectify the eye's refractive error. Once the cornea is reshaped, the flap is placed back into position, concluding the surgery.

Each stage of the procedure takes about 10 minutes while the total duration of the surgery is about 20 minutes. Patients can often return to work within two to three days after surgery.

In his interview, Dr Khor highlighted that LASIK is commonly perceived to be a minor procedure. In reality, it is still a form of eye surgery, albeit a very safe one. He also shared that LASIK is not the only solution for correcting refractive errors. There are alternative methods such as Advanced Surface Ablation (ASA), Lenticule Extraction and Implantable Collamer Lenses, offering patients a variety of options in the realm of refractive surgery.

Considering the potential risks and the availability of alternative procedures, a thorough discussion with your eye doctor remains imperative before undergoing any refractive surgery. As technology and research continue to advance, the future of refractive surgery promises even more breakthroughs and options to provide a clearer vision for all.



Scan the QR code to watch the video interview with Dr Khor Wei Boon

Are you a suitable candidate for LASIK?

How old are you?

If you are under 21

The LASIK surgeon will ask you to wait until you are older and your vision has stabilised.

If you are in your early 40s

You need to be aware that you might still need reading glasses later in life.

If you are in your 60s

- You will need to be assessed for pre-existing cataracts.
- If you have them, cataract surgery may be more suitable for your vision problem, in addition to correcting any myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism or presbyopia that you might have.

How stable is your vision prior to LASIK?

No matter your age, it is important for your eyesight to have stabilised for at least a year prior to laser surgery.

What is your current eye prescription?

In terms of refraction (i.e. spectacle degree), the main limitation to LASIK is the patient's corneal thickness. This means that even patients with high myopia or astigmatism can undergo LASIK as long as their cornea is sufficiently thick.

However, it is generally accepted that the results for LASIK in patients with very high refractive error — myopia of more than 1,000 degrees, hyperopia of more than 400 degrees or astigmatism of more than 400 degrees — are less predictable and satisfactory.

Do you have any eye diseases?

There are quite a few eye conditions that need to be screened for before LASIK surgery. Your doctor will check if you suffer, among other things, from:

- Ocular herpes
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Retinal detachment
- Severe dry eye syndrome
- Keratoconus, or the progressive thinning of the cornea

Do you have any medical conditions?

Autoimmune diseases

Rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and multiple sclerosis are generally considered contraindications for LASIK as they may prompt an unexpected reaction to the laser surgery.

Conditions such as type 2 diabetes

- LASIK surgeons may still perform LASIK on patients with such conditions.
- However, these conditions must be well-controlled to ensure favourable healing after surgery.

Use of medication like Accutane (isotretinoin for acne) or steroids

- These drugs may compromise your post-operative recovery.
- Tell your doctor about any and all medications that you are taking.

Are you pregnant or breastfeeding?

Pregnancy and breastfeeding results in hormonal changes in the body.

- These changes can result in fluctuations in vision and refractive error.
- Wait at least three months after pregnancy or cessation of breastfeeding before considering surgery.



A BLOOMING SUCCESS

Thanks to the generosity and ardent support from friends and donors of SNEC and SERI, the EYE BALL, in its 11th year, continues to be a success.



It was a blooming night during the EYE BALL on 30 September 2023. Held at The Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore, the annual signature fundraising gala dinner saw 530 guests who turned up in colourful outfits to raise funds for VisionSave, a SNEC-SERI initiative to raise funds for eyecare research and development, and to provide financial aid for the needy.

Themed “Blooming Vision”, the EYE BALL 2023 demonstrated SNEC-SERI’s collective strength and resilience in the face of challenges experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also reinforced the many possibilities of transforming eye care and improving lives.

Aside from the visually stunning theme, guests witnessed an elegant variety of culinary creations and beverage selections. An array of exquisite items and experiences were also generously donated by sponsors and put up for auction, raising a total of S\$2.22 million.

Highlights of the night included the thundering Taiko Drums by The Japanese Association, Singapore, lovely song performances by Dr Howard Cajucom-Uy Yu and the event’s emcee Ms Nikki Muller, the Best Dressed Award, and the exciting live auction with an array of exquisite items and experiences generously donated by sponsors.

Since 2011, the EYE BALL has played a significant role in turning initiatives into realised projects, enabling improved eye care and advancing patient care in SNEC.





If you wish to make a donation to save another's sight, please visit



<https://www.giving.sg/shf-shec-fund>

“ The beauty of flowers is symbolic of the amazing possibilities of transforming eye care and improving lives. I am glad that we have come together and celebrated with renewed hope and optimism for the future. My sincere thanks to all our incredible donors and sponsors, without whom none of this would have been possible.”



SNEC CEO Professor Aung Tin shared, “According to recent surveys, blindness ranks among the top three fears in people’s lives, right alongside the fear of cancer and Alzheimer’s disease. As ophthalmologists and scientists, we are privileged to witness the transformative effect of restoring and improving vision each day. And for patients whose cases we do not yet have a treatment for, we endeavour through our research to find new pathways, medications, or advancements to address their unmet needs.”

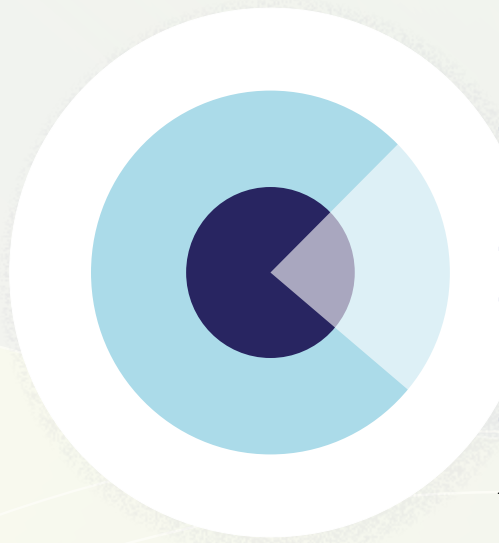


Clinical Associate Professor Ho Ching Lin
Organising Chair for the EYE BALL 2023



Scan the QR code to view the Eye Ball 2023 video montage





Helping Our Community to Combat Preventable Blindness

Accessibility and affordability are some key concerns SNEC is trying to address.



Seniors sometimes struggle to access eye care due to physical limitations and logistical challenges. At SNEC, we are committed to making quality eye care accessible to them through community screenings.

During the SingHealth President's Challenge Finale 2023, we organised eye screenings for 100 beneficiaries from five adopted benefitting agencies — Caregivers Alliance Limited, Club HEAL, HCA Hospice Limited, SingHealth Fund (National Neuroscience Institute Fund) and the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped.

In 2023, SNEC also partnered LifeHouse SG and celebrated World Sight Day with Lions SaveSight Centre by providing free eye screenings to 520 residents in Bukit Merah and Sengkang.



The free eye screenings were targeted at those aged 45 and above. Our team of doctors focused on detecting age-related eye conditions like cataract, glaucoma, signs of diabetic retinopathy and retinal detachment. If any issues were found, they were guided on how to see a specialist for further care.

Dr Allan Fong, Senior Consultant and former Head of the Cataract and Comprehensive Ophthalmology Department, SNEC, shared, "Saving vision and blindness prevention should be a top priority for an ageing population in Singapore to help ensure people maintain good eye health into their retirement age. We strive to make preventive eye care and treatment accessible for the people by providing regular eye checks, enabling early detection of common eye diseases and timely treatment for them."



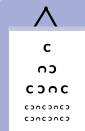
In Bukit Merah, 80 residents were identified with abnormalities and were promptly given appointments at SNEC. One person was seen within two days due to the urgency of their condition and three had their appointments moved up.

Stephanie Magnus from LifeHouse SG expressed her gratitude for the collaboration and positive impact it has on the community. She shared, "We're thrilled to bring much-needed eye care to the community and serve the residents of the rental blocks in Bukit Merah. Many residents face mobility challenges and are not living in a family nucleus, and having healthcare brought into the community makes a big difference to ensure that our ageing population ages gracefully and healthily in place."



This marks our 23rd year providing eye screenings to the community. Over 41,000 people have benefitted from our programmes so far.

We are honoured to have had President Tharman Shanmugaratnam grace the President's Challenge eye screening event, as well as Dr Lam Pin Min, adviser to Sengkang West GROs, join us at the Sengkang Community Club eye screening event. Lastly, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated nurses and medical social work staff for their unwavering support during the weekend screenings.



A Vital First Step Towards Protecting Our Children's Eyesight

We share some tips to prevent or slow myopia progression.



Over the past few months, our Myopia Centre has been actively engaging schoolchildren from Bedok Green Primary School and Yu Neng Primary School through our roving interactive myopia exhibition. This unique exhibition features displays like a giant 3D eye anatomy structure, interactive installations and fun facts from Amanda the Panda.

Held during September and October, students from both schools explored the exhibits to learn about myopia and its myths and facts.

To make the learning experience even more enjoyable, the Myopia Centre collaborated with school teachers to provide students with engaging worksheets on myopia. Lower primary students enjoyed word search games while upper primary students tackled crossword puzzles. These worksheets were crafted to suit different learning needs. As a reward, students who completed the worksheets received a special goodie bag.

These events were not just about having fun. We also taught students valuable habits to keep myopia at bay. By practicing good eye care habits and spending plenty of time outdoors, they can prevent their eyesight from deteriorating.

In 2023, we educated children from seven preschools and primary schools on myopia prevention. It is crucial that we take these active first steps to protect our children's eye health and combat the high rates of myopia in Singapore.

EYE CARE TIPS

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Avoid spending all of your time indoors. Studies have shown that playing outdoors can prevent the onset of or slow down myopia progression.



TAKE FREQUENT EYE BREAKS

Let your eyes relax for 3 to 5 minutes after every half an hour of close-range activities such as doing homework, reading and using electronic devices.



LIGHT UP ADEQUATELY

Increase the illumination of your work space with a table lamp to reduce eye strain.



READ FROM A DISTANCE

Keep your reading materials at a distance of at least 35cm away from your eyes. This distance should be increased to 50-60cm for computers and 2m or further for televisions.



SNEC BRANCHES *and* AFFILIATED CLINICS

Central

- 1 **Singapore National Eye Centre**
11 Third Hospital Avenue
Singapore 168751
Tel: 6227 7255
- 2 **SNEC Eye Clinic @ NHCS
National Heart Centre Singapore**
5 Hospital Drive, Level 4, 4C
Singapore 169609
Tel: 6227 7255
- 3 **SNEC Retina Centre
Diabetes & Metabolism
Centre (DMC), Singapore
General Hospital**
17 Third Hospital Avenue
#02-00 Singapore 168752
Tel: 6227 7255
- 4 **KK Eye Centre KK Women's
and Children's Hospital**
100 Bukit Timah Road
Level 1, Children's Tower
Singapore 229899
Tel: 6394 1930 / 6394 1931
- 5 **SNEC Community Eye Clinic
@ HPB Building**
3 Second Hospital Avenue
#03-04, Health Promotion
Board Building
Singapore 168937
Tel: 6227 7255

North East

- 6 **SNEC Eye Clinic @ SKH
Sengkang General Hospital**
Medical Centre, Level 8
110 Sengkang East Way
Singapore 544886
Tel: 6227 7255
- 7 **SNEC Community Eye Clinic
@ Punggol Polyclinic**
Blk 681 Punggol Drive
Oasis Terraces, #04-12
Singapore 820681
Tel: 6227 7255

East

- 8 **SNEC Eye Clinic @ Bedok**
Blk 212 Bedok North Street 1
#03-147 Singapore 460212
Tel: 6227 7255
- 9 **Myopia Centre**
Blk 212 Bedok North Street 1
#03-147 Singapore 460212
(Located at SNEC Eye Clinic
@ Bedok)
Tel: 6227 7255
- 10 **SNEC Eye Clinic @ CGH
Changi General Hospital**
2 Simei Street 3,
Medical Centre, Level 1
Singapore 529889
Tel: 6850 3333



Follow us on



Consultation by appointment: 6227 7266

GP Hotline: 6322 9399

✉ appointments@sneec.com.sg

📍 www.sneec.com.sg