

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

Active Ager Showcase

In November 2019, Mr Seng turned 80. Two months later, COVID-19 hit Singapore and soon evolved into a pandemic.

Since older adults are highly susceptible to COVID-19 infections, he knew he was no exception. He did his part - diligently washing his hands, wearing a mask and practising safe distancing. As much as he could, he barely left home.

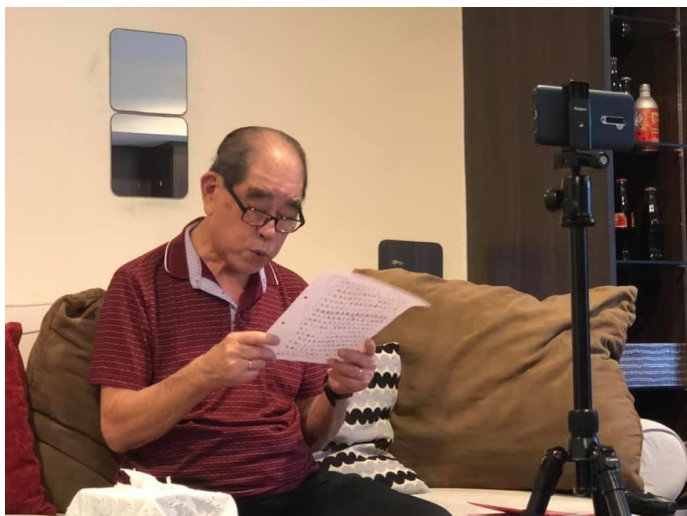
Within him however, there was a yearning for a deeper purpose, with the need to maintain his biopsychosocial well-being. Thankfully, he managed to find the right balance.

During the height of pandemic, his children started a movement to help the migrant workers in Singapore through providing essential supplies to their dormitories when most of them were under strict quarantine order.

Together with his wife, Mr Seng actively packed the supplies at home to play his part in supporting the less privileged.

Being part of the National Library Board's Chinese Reading Club that meets regularly, he was undeterred by the safety measures. He quickly initiated with other members a transformation of the reading club onto a virtual platform. Check out Mr Seng in action and be inspired by him!

- Seng Say Lee, 81-year old retiree, Friend of IGA



Geriatrics clinical research is pivotal to providing holistic care for older adults through multidisciplinary approach and integration of evidence-based knowledge, as aptly penned by Nicol et al., editors of the Journal of American Geriatrics Society (JAGS).

Embracing a growth mindset and spirit of not wasting this COVID-19 crisis, our Research Assistants led in writing the letter to editor. Even when most research activities were halted during circuit breaker, the encouragement to remain resilient in the face of adversity has inspired our 3Rs framework – **Refocus, Relationship and Relevance**. We channelled efforts to leverage technology as an enabler; remain socially connected to research participants in spite of physical distancing; and use research as a catalyst for COVID-19 geriatrics-specific issues.

Read on about the safe resumption of our research activities post-circuit breaker, after months of stakeholder engagements and preparation.



Scan to read the articles



ADL+ : A Digital Toolkit for Cognitive Assessment and Intervention

We resumed recruitment of participants from various senior activity centres for the ADL+ project, funded by the National Innovation Challenge (NIC) cognition grant. Collaborating with NTU-LILY Centre, the team developed a digital toolkit/app comprising individual- and centre-based activities designed to promote cognitive stimulation in community-dwelling older adults. The cherished partnership offered by the centres, coupled with the trust of our participants, place us in a good position to evaluate the efficacy and feasibility of the ADL+ toolkit.



SAIF: An end-to-end system for Assessment and Intervention of Frailty



We are heartened to collaborate with NTU-LILY Centre and Peace Connect Cluster Operator (PeCCO) for the SAIF project, funded by the NIC frailty grant. This unique tripartite partnership integrates NTU-LILY's technological expertise into geriatrics clinical research, extending the study of physical frailty into the realities of the community setting.

Developed to provide frailty assessment through the use of predictive analytics, SAIF aims to reduce the risk or delay the progression of physical frailty in the community.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, we have successfully completed our pilot study from Oct-Dec 2020 and are looking forward to the main study in early 2021!



GRM-IGA Research Day

Determined to continuously cultivate our research culture, we organised our annual Research Day via Zoom on 18 Nov 2020. After a brief sharing of research journeys, the session diverged into three breakout rooms – Cognition, Falls and Frailty, and Models of Care and Education. Comprising senior residents, resident physicians and research assistants, 17 presenters provided insightful research findings across various topics.

Our fruitful afternoon of learning concluded with encouraging comments from the senior doctors, many of whom being mentors having observed first-hand their mentees' progress. It was indeed an enriching session fuelled by our 3Rs!

Asian Conference for Frailty & Sarcopenia (ACFS)

Glass half-full or half-empty? The COVID-19 pandemic has brought windows of opportunities, one of which being an era of virtual conferences. IGA is privileged to be a big part of the Singapore speaker representation for the 6th Asian Conference for Frailty and Sarcopenia (ACFS), held on 30-31 Oct 2020.

Collaborating with many Geriatrics Societies in the Asia-Pacific region, the conference spanned a range of topics from basic science to muscle-bone crosstalk, nutrition to multimodal interventions, social impact of frailty and COVID-19 on older adults.

The presence of international-renowned frailty experts facilitated mutual sharing, allowing the rich exchange of ideas and co-learning with local and overseas experts beyond the shores of Singapore and Asia.





Education

Working around the suspension of physical events, IGA implemented various initiatives to disseminate relevant healthcare tips while remaining engaged with our stakeholders.



E-infographics on social media



Together with our multidisciplinary colleagues, we co-created several infographics containing relevant COVID-19 healthcare and caregiving tips for older adults and caregivers.

International Day of Older Persons

In this climate where older adults are disproportionately disadvantaged, all the more do we need to celebrate their abilities and qualities! We organised our virtual International Day of Older Persons (IDOP), aptly themed 'Celebrating Resilience, Embracing the Future'. The series of live virtual talks and online contests revolved around practical tips and real life stories of strength and resilience, overcoming adversities and exhibiting hopes for the future.

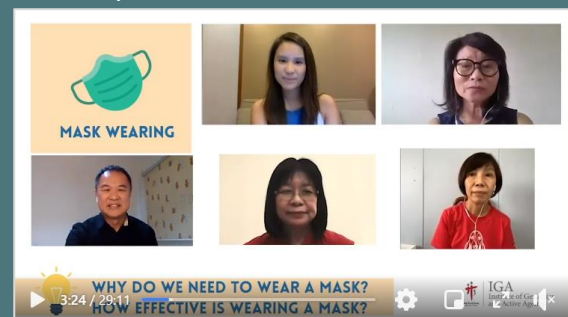
Our exciting journey in planning and executing the IDOP may have come to an end for 2020, but we are certain the inspirations and encouragements will linger as we emerge stronger!

Thank you to all for the participation and support throughout the month-long event. Do draw inspirations from the talks and contests and join us in welcoming and embracing 2021!

'Ask the Expert' Online Talk Series

Themed 'For Seniors, By Seniors', our Ask the Expert Series was specially curated by IGA, clinicians together with senior friends of IGA. This series shared practical tips with our older population on various ways to thrive through COVID-19 pandemic especially during the circuit breaker period where older adults were advised to stay home. Topics included hand hygiene, mask wearing, online shopping and maintain immunity.

It was truly inspiring and heartening to see our senior friends stepping up to learn technology and playing their part to encourage their peers. Do check out the videos from our Facebook page!



Virtual Choir

Our senior friends formed this virtual choir JOY (Just Older Youths) to perform this beautiful rendition of 'What a Wonderful World'. Dedicated to healthcare and frontline workers who have been working tirelessly during the pandemic, we salute them for keeping us safe! Check out this video from our Facebook page!



Helping caregivers during the COVID-19 pandemic



In the News

The Carers X Physios resource is undoubtedly timely, in helping caregivers support their loved ones better. Calling caregivers the “invisible workforce”, A/Prof Lim Wee Shiong, stressed the importance of their role in today’s society.

“They are the main ones who will be helping to look after our frail older adults with an ageing society... the rate of increase of frail older adults will outpace the ability of the healthcare system to provide... our caregivers are part of the invisible workforce that we have to care for the older adults.”

Kudos to our physiotherapists and team for developing this handy resource!



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