

# IGA NEWSLETTER

2023



## Active Ager Showcase



### Dorcas Lim, 80 years old

I used to think that active ageing means going to the gym regularly. However, after attending IGA's Ageing with Meaning: GRACE programme in 2019, **I learnt that active ageing actually constitutes much more than just physical activity.** In addition to exercise, it is also important to keep my mind active, consume a healthy diet, go for regular health checks, maintain my social circles, and contribute back to society through volunteerism.

I certainly want to **age with meaning**, stay active for as long as I can, and not be a burden to my loved ones. To achieve this, I have been faithfully following the Health Promotion Board (HPB) daily guidelines of 5k steps and 30 minutes of MVPA. I have also attended courses to build lower body strength and improve brain-body functions.

On top of that, I keep my mind active by playing games on my iPad and attending weekly Bible Study Fellowship and SACE (Singapore Association for Continuing Education) classes. At my age, I'm very blessed to still be actively connected in many social groups: relatives, church friends, neighbours (both previous and current), and ex-colleagues. I even have a group of friends whom I can travel with monthly to Johor Bahru via public transport!

As part of **giving back to society**, I try my best to support friends who are unwell by sending them care packs with yummy food or sending them for medical appointments if their family members are unavailable. In October 2023, I was also privileged to volunteer at IGA's International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) public outreach event and was able to share first-hand experience with fellow seniors on healthy eating!

I'm thankful that I can still do what I enjoy at this age and hope to continue this for as long as I can! 😊





## GerilABS-2 Appreciation Forum

In the blink of an eye, our landmark **GerilABS study on sarcopenia** has reached its **10-year** mark! It has been a fulfilling experience thus far and we are thankful to all our GerilABS participants for being part of this journey with us.

We organised an appreciation forum on 15 July 2023, which was graced by Ms Rahayu Mahzam, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of

Health (MOH), alongside 184 GerilABS participants and friends. The study's principal investigator, A/Prof Lim Wee Shiong kickstarted the event with a summary of GerilABS' key findings, scholarly achievements and future plans, allowing participants to understand and appreciate the impact of their participation in this study. This was followed by a line-up of informative talks on nutrition and physical activity guidelines to

educate participants on muscle health and prevention of sarcopenia. We ended off the day with a lively mass exercise session involving resistance band exercises led by our TTSH physiotherapist.

A heartfelt salute to all participants for joining us in this research journey. As a show of appreciation, certificates were presented to our 10-year participants – some of whom teared with joy as it was their first time receiving a certificate. In all, we are proud to share that we have 99 and 71 participants who have been in the study for 5 and 10 years respectively!

As we look back on this phenomenal 10-year journey, our team is now starting to strap in for the next leg of our GerilABS adventure in the realm of muscle health. A big thank you to the GerilABS team, collaborators, partners and our participants for making this journey a successful one!



# GRM-IGA Research Day and Anniversary Celebration



The annual GRM-IGA Research Day was held on 13 September 2023 at the Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI). This was the first in-person Research Day since the Covid-19 pandemic, and the energy and enthusiasm amongst all attendees was truly impressive!

After months of hard work and preparation, fourteen GRM junior doctors presented their research across three categories: (1) Frailty and Sarcopenia in the Community, (2) Frailty in the Hospital, and (3) Quality Improvement and Integrative Scholarship. Senior doctors and research mentors took time to listen in to the presentations, ask questions and provide valuable feedback. A friendly scientific competition also led to our top 3 presenters bagging home \$100 worth of Takashimaya vouchers each!

The Research Day experience helped our junior doctors refine their work in the lead-up to a dynamic showcase of both oral and poster presentations at this year's ACFS and SHBC conferences (PS: Read on to see who the conference award winners are!).

At the end of the event, we surprised everyone with a joint celebration of IGA's 10th anniversary and 35 years of Geriatric Medicine in Singapore. There was a sense of achievement and gratitude in the air as the audience was taken through a video montage highlighting the origins of Geriatric Medicine in Singapore and its growth and expansion over the years. We also indulged in a specially designed anniversary cake to commemorate the occasion.

As we take stock of our research and commence planning for future editions, here's to hoping for many more exciting Research Days and anniversary celebrations in the years ahead!



# 9th Asian Conference for Frailty and Sarcopenia (ACFS)



Singapore hosted the 9th Asian Conference for Frailty and Sarcopenia (ACFS) from October 26-28, 2023. The event welcomed leading experts and key opinion leaders to exchange findings and share insights to improve care delivery for older adults. This international conference was attended by over 400 local and international participants. Topics spanned across different domains from molecular sciences to physical exercises and to population health. IGA speakers were featured in the plenary and symposium talks. The event also showcased 3 silver agers from

Team Strong Silvers who debunked the myth that muscle loss is inevitable with ageing.

IGA is privileged to be invited as content experts, to conduct and facilitate the pre-conference workshops. Together with other local and international experts, IGA helmed three workshops on oral frailty, muscle health/sarcopenia and inter-disciplinary interventions respectively. There was a high level of engagement and active participation amongst the close to 200 international and local workshop attendees.

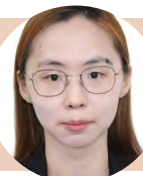
Besides that, a total of 12 scientific presentations were showcased by IGA, with three winning poster presentation awards. A heartfelt congratulations to all the winners!



## Poster Presentation - Bronze Award

Dr Xie Weilin

Comparison of three InBody-770 Bioelectrical Impedance Analysis Cut-offs for Sarcopenia Diagnosis amongst Community-Dwelling Older Adults in Singapore



## Poster Presentation - Bronze Award

Dr Lee Shi Teng

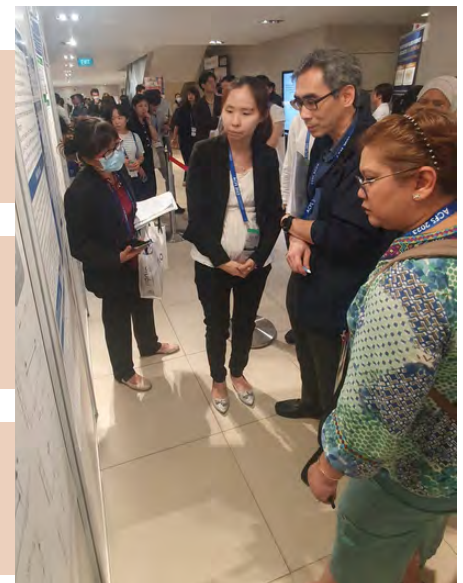
SARC-CalF modified version with mid-upper arm circumference: Muscle function and mass across different body compositions



## Poster Presentation - Silver Award

Ms Audrey Yeo

Osteosarcopenic Obesity and Overlap Syndromes: Comparison of body composition, blood biomarker and 2-year muscle strength in healthy older adults



This year's conference is memorable as the Geriatric Medicine fraternity also celebrates its 35 years in Singapore. In collaboration with Society for Geriatric Medicine Singapore (SGMS), IGA is honoured to create and showcase a video montage sharing the history, significant milestones, growth and journey of Geriatric Medicine in Singapore since its inception in 1998.

We have indeed come a long way to improve care for our older adults and we look forward to more good work together!



## Intensive Practical Course in Dementia Care

After a 3-year hiatus, the Intensive Practical Course in Dementia Care has finally resumed with a revamped curriculum! Comprising a mix of didactic and hands-on sessions, the 3-day intensive course is specially designed to equip healthcare professionals with in-depth knowledge and practical skills necessary to care for persons living with dementia.



We are grateful to have a multidisciplinary team of local experts exchanging knowledge and sharing personal anecdotes with 40 participants from various care settings. One memorable highlight for this year's participants involved them wearing a special suit to simulate sensory impairments when carrying out daily tasks (e.g. grocery shopping and toileting). Through this activity, participants experienced first-hand the challenges that older persons with sensory impairments faced, and gained a greater sense of understanding and empathy towards their patients.

It is always our greatest encouragement to hear our participants' desire to improve dementia care with the skills they have learnt from the course. We envision that our dementia care course will continue to bring meaningful impact to the healthcare landscape and enable knowledge to be translated into practice.

# International Day of Older Persons

Over the last few years, the International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) has been celebrated as a virtual event as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are glad that this year marks the return of in-person IDOP celebrations, with our public-facing event attracting a whopping 400 attendees at the National Library at Bugis. We are also heartened by the multigenerational turnout (ranging from 90 year old seniors to 2 year old toddlers!) as



friends and families came together to celebrate the achievements of older persons and learn more about active ageing.

It was indeed a time for celebration with IDOP held in conjunction with IGA's 10th anniversary and 35 years of Geriatric Medicine in TTSH and Singapore. We are also delighted to collaborate with the National Library Board (NLB) for the first time as part of their month-long 'Time of Your Life' celebration of seniors in October.



The event was graced by Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Second Minister for Health, and our TTSH senior management. Attendees participated in carnival games (e.g. Mega Mindsweeper, Spot-The-Difference) centered on the five domains of Intrinsic Capacity: Locomotion, Cognition, Sensory, Vitality, and Psychological. These concepts were further elaborated on in an engaging talk delivered by our very own geriatrician, Dr Justin Chew, who is also an expert with research interests in Intrinsic Capacity.



With highlights including a mass dance session led by TTSH physiotherapists and entertaining performances from both children and seniors, IDOP 2023 truly exemplified the theme of 'Inspiring Growth through the Ages and demonstrated how active ageing can be done in a fun manner with both the young and old alike!

# Seniors Masterclass

In collaboration with NLB's 'Time of Your Life' month-long celebration of seniors to encourage active ageing and lifelong learning, we are excited to host our four Seniors Masterclass sessions at the libraries for the very first time this year. Beginning with the first talk on Intrinsic Capacity at IDOP 2023, the Seniors Masterclass sessions were curated to equip seniors with tips on staying fit and healthy, and ageing with balance, meaning and resilience.



We are heartened to see so many enthusiastic older persons spending their afternoons with us, listening to the experts, and actively participating in the Question & Answer segment week after week. We hope that these sessions have enhanced their knowledge and provided them with practical tips to age actively and gracefully!

# Influence and Impact



- Workgroup of the Singapore Standard SS693 – Geragogy Guidelines on Training Senior Learners.
- Justin Chew. Speaker, Singapore HIV Congress 2023. The intersection of frailty, ageing and HIV.
- Lim Jun Pei. Speaker, Commissioned training in geriatric medicine organized by Hospital Authority in Hong Kong. Delirium prevention and management.
- Lim Wee Shiong. Plenary speaker, 14th Congress of the Korean Society of Sarcopenia 2023. Making Sarcopenia a part of routine care: From evidence to practice.
- Lim Wee Shiong. Speaker. Osteosarcopenic obesity: insights from the GeriLABS-2 study. 2023 International Conference for Healthy Aging and Biomarkers, Taipei.
- Lim Wee Shiong. Speaker. Re-thinking Geriatrics Education: Beauty and the Beast. Proceedings of Positive Aging Week, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland.
- Top 2% most cited researchers in 2023 (Web of Science): Ding Yew Yoong and Lim Wee Shiong



## News and Updates

It's our pleasure to have two new associates joining our IGA family! We look forward to the partnership together in coming years!

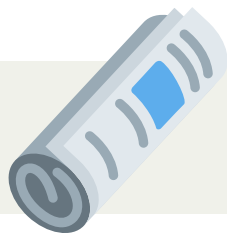


**Dr Chua Shiyun**  
Resident Physician, TTSH



**Dr Edward Chong**  
Consultant Geriatrician, Sunway Medical Centre, Bandar Sunway, Malaysia





## 预防肌少症 保住行动力

一般年长者对肌力健康存有误解，认为肌力变差是衰老的自然过程，只要吃得均衡就可以不必运动。尽管衰老相关的生物变化是导致肌少症的主要因素，但是慢性疾病，腹部肥胖，饮食不定，蛋白质摄取不足，缺乏运动，都会增加患肌少症的风险



### 预防肌少症 保住行动力

孙慧欣  
发布 / 2023年6月20日 05:00 AM



肌少症会导致肌肉和体力功能衰退，可能造成患者行动不便，跌倒几率也会提高。  
(iStock图片)

## 老了就会衰弱？医生教你抗衰老



年纪大了，身体机能衰退，人就会衰弱？其实不然，医生指出，衰弱是可以预防，甚至逆转的。

本地65岁及以上的年长者当中，约5%患有衰弱症 (frailty)。另外，还有30%的年长者处于衰弱前期 (pre-frail)。随着我国人口老化，到2030年每四人就有一人年过65岁，衰弱的年长者料将进一步增加。



## 逆转肌少症 营养运动不能少

随着年纪渐长，你是否发现经常面对这些问题：行走速度异常缓慢，爬阶梯有困难，容易发生反复跌倒，或是提同样重量的购物品时比以前更容易疲倦？

这些都是患肌少症的人可能发生的状况。若能趁早接受诊断并及时采取适当措施，年长者有可能逆转肌少症。



## Study flags loss of muscle and strength in people as they age



老年医学与研教学院研究助理导师林晓敏教授 (左) 研究肌少症多年，帮助梁瑞峰 (右) 等年长者更好地了解 and 预防病情。(特约记者永福)



The longitudinal study by Tan Tock Seng Hospital's (TTSH) Institute of Geriatrics and Active Ageing (IGA) found the prevalence of sarcopenia here ranged from 13 per cent to 25 per cent, compared with 5.5 per cent to 25.7 per cent for Asia as a whole.