



National Centre for
Infectious Diseases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

**NATIONAL CENTRE FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES
OFFICIALLY OPENS**

*NCID strengthens national capabilities, capacities and expertise to respond to
infectious disease outbreaks*

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1. The National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) was officially opened today by Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong. NCID houses clinical services, public health functions, outbreak training, public education and community engagement in outbreak readiness under one roof to enable a comprehensive and integrated approach to handling infectious disease threats.

INTEGRATING CLINICAL AND LABORATORY EXPERTISE

2. Located at HealthCity Novena, NCID is a 14-storey, 330-bed purpose-built facility set up by the Ministry of Health to enhance infectious disease outbreak management and public health preparedness for the nation.
3. Infectious disease outbreak management requires a high level of awareness, clinical knowledge, technological capabilities and the expertise to detect and confirm unknown or rare pathogens. This function is supported by the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL), which is located within NCID. Equipped with comprehensive diagnostic capabilities, NPHL works closely with the clinical team and is part of a network of specialised Electron Microscopy laboratories in the world trained to look at biological agents and infectious diseases that require special precautions as they cause serious human disease.

FOCUSING ON TRAINING & COLLABORATIONS

4. NCID places a strong emphasis on training its healthcare workers to ensure they are prepared to handle disease outbreaks. Besides equipping them with the domain skillset and knowhow, there are also regular drills and exercises to build better teamwork by (i) coordinating and understanding one another's roles

and responsibilities and (ii) familiarising themselves to work together in specialised facilities such as the High Level Isolation Unit.

5. The training equips NCID staff to be able to respond to various foreseeable Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) scenarios, such as small-scale outbreaks, a single case of High Level Isolation Pathogen, or community outbreaks.
6. NCID also fosters inter-cluster collaborations to ensure a more coordinated and effective outbreak response at the national level. For example, the Paediatrics Infectious Diseases Workgroup, which has representatives from NCID, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, KK Women's and Children's Hospital and National University Hospital oversees the overall planning and execution of outbreak responses for paediatric, neonatal and obstetric patients with highly infectious pathogens. The Workgroup co-develops training standards on care and trains together to provide holistic care for these groups of patients in the event of an outbreak.

TAPPING INTO HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY

7. To boost its capabilities, NCID is piloting the use of a Real-Time Location System (RTLS) which is expected to be rolled out at the end of this year to:
 - a) Enable the tracking of patients, visitors and staff in an outbreak, for rapid and reliable contact tracing so that necessary actions can be taken quickly to curb onward transmission;
 - b) Alert and monitor hand hygiene compliance of healthcare workers which is key to infection control in a healthcare setting; and
 - c) Facilitate asset tracking, making it easy to locate and recall key equipment like beds and wheelchairs in the event of a surge situation or an outbreak.
8. "The new and enhanced outbreak facilities, the continuous strive for excellence in care delivery, the expertise of our staff as well as the integration of clinical and public health functions of NCID to handle an infectious disease outbreak were put to the test in just a few short months since we moved to NCID. We will continue to strengthen our readiness to respond to an outbreak through the training of healthcare workers and to harness technologies in keeping the people of Singapore safe from infectious diseases," said Professor Leo Yee Sin, NCID's Executive Director.
9. The NCID Official Opening was attended by more than 150 guests from healthcare institutions and research institutes.

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About the National Centre for Infectious Diseases

The National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) is a purpose-built facility designed to strengthen Singapore's capabilities in infectious disease management and prevention. NCID houses clinical services, public health, research, training and education and community engagement functions under one overarching structure. In addition to the clinical treatment of infectious diseases and outbreak management, the expanded roles and functional units of NCID include the National Public Health and Epidemiology Unit, the National Public Health Laboratory, the Infectious Disease Research and Training Office, the Antimicrobial Resistance Coordinating Office, and the National Public Health programmes for HIV and Tuberculosis. Benchmarked to international standards and best practices for treatment and safety, NCID will better enhance Singapore's ability to respond effectively to infectious outbreaks.

Visit www.ncid.sg for more information.