



Media Release

New National Technology Initiatives Unveiled to Enable Greater Collaboration with Private Sector and Boost Innovation and Scaling to Enhance Population Health and Patient Care

17 July 2018, Singapore – Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health, announced the development of Singapore's first Robotics Middleware Framework and shared the need to boost innovation and scaling in Singapore healthcare at today's National Health IT Summit organised by Integrated Health Information Systems (IHIS), the HealthTech agency for Singapore.

The Summit also featured the National HealthTech Challenge proposals that seek to address public healthcare challenges. At the event, IHIS also unveiled plans to collaborate with chatbot players for experimentation and development of decision support tools to benefit patients. Aimed at improving population health and the delivery of patient care in the longer term, the initiatives will enable greater collaboration between public and private sectors to boost innovation and scaling in healthcare. The initiatives are in line with efforts by the Ministry of Health (MOH) to address the challenges of an ageing population, rise in chronic disease, and shrinking workforce, and are aligned with its strategies to shift beyond healthcare to health, beyond hospital to community and beyond quality to value.

On the announcements, Mr Bruce Liang, Chief Executive Officer of IHIS and Chief Information Officer at MOH, said: "Presently, about 75% of innovations in Singapore public healthcare are in the treatment space. While we are continuing to innovate in this area to deliver better care and health outcomes for our patients, we will develop more solutions in two other areas: in the preventive space to encourage citizens to adopt healthier habits, and in the post-treatment space to better support our patients and empower them to better manage their health in the community."

He added: "However, collaboration with the consumer technology industry is crucial to making this happen. We are talking about healthy living and disease management in homes, workplaces and other places outside of clinics and hospitals. A more effective way to engage patients out there would be through digital health technology and consumer products which patients use on a regular basis. This could be a popular voice or text messenger app, social media app or a wearable such as a smart watch. Partnerships between healthcare providers



and consumer technology companies will be crucial in enabling care in the community in a sustainable and effective manner.”

Themed “Smart Health: Innovate and Scale”, the Summit featured expert speakers from Babylon from the United Kingdom, Open Robotics from the United States of America, Bio-nexus from Israel, the Hong Kong Hospital Authority, as well as Farrer Park Company and IHiS in Singapore, covering topics on scaling innovations in the area of artificial intelligence, robotics, cybersecurity and more. Some 800 guests from public and private healthcare and technology sectors attended the event held at the Singapore Expo.

National HealthTech Challenge

The Summit also showcased innovative concepts by the top 20 finalists from the inaugural National HealthTech Challenge organised by IHiS. The showcase was visited by Mr Gan, who viewed proposed solutions in the area of artificial intelligence, multimedia, sensors & devices, and others (clinical/pharmaceutical solutions). 78 organisations, including five from overseas, participated in the Challenge aimed at bringing professionals from the healthcare, technology, research, and education sectors together to solve public healthcare challenges with tech-enabled innovations and reduce barriers to innovation and scaling. *(For more information on the Challenge, refer to Annex A).*

National Health IT Excellence Awards

Also held at the Summit was the presentation of the National Health IT Excellence Awards 2018, an annual accolade conferred by MOH to recognise and celebrate HealthTech innovations that have demonstrated healthcare excellence. Mr Gan presented the awards to 13 winners, comprising ten teams and three individuals, to recognise their efforts in leveraging technology for better health and patient outcomes. *(For more details on the award winners, visit www.ihis.com/nhitexa2018)*

Experimenting with Chatbot Technologies to Enhance Patient Experience

With the burgeoning of the chatbot scene worldwide, IHiS recognises the potential of chatbots in the healthcare space. Local and global startups and established companies were invited to participate in an accreditation exercise to make their platforms available for experimentation and development of decision support tools. The proposals are currently being evaluated. Possible future use cases include self-triaging with strict protocol and appointment-making for the purpose of right-siting patients, enabling them to seek help with the appropriate healthcare provider with the potential of saving patients time and money and reducing demand at public



hospitals. Public healthcare professionals can look forward to leverage the panel of chatbot companies for collaboration by the end of 2018. *(For more information on the Health Chatbot Accreditation Exercise, refer to Annex B.)*

Singapore's first Robotics Middleware Framework for Healthcare

Singapore's first Robotics Middleware Framework (RMF) for healthcare is a technology adoption and integration framework that will facilitate the development and wide-scale deployment of smart systems. One of the world's most comprehensive RMFs, it will enable many different and complex technology systems within and outside of healthcare to 'talk' and work with each other according to a standard framework, much like a network of information highways for robots and IoT (Internet of Things). When completed, the highly-interoperable RMF will reduce the complexities for the integration of the many equipment, devices and robots in healthcare, and encourage greater innovation and cross-sector collaboration to co-create solutions and applications, in building our Smart Nation. This three-year research and development collaboration is led by MOH Smart Systems Programme Office, supported by Centre for Healthcare Assistive and Robotics Technology (CHART) and IHIS, in partnership with Government Technology Agency (GovTech), and industry partners Open Robotics (Singapore) and HOPE Technik.

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About Integrated Health Information Systems (IHiS)

IHiS is a multi-award-winning healthcare IT leader that digitises, connects, and analyses Singapore's health ecosystem. Its ultimate aim is to improve the Singapore population's health and health administration by integrating intelligent, highly resilient, and cost effective technologies with process and people.

Transforming healthcare through smart technology, IHiS has garnered more than 80 awards for its innovations. It supports more than 50,000 healthcare users in Singapore's health ecosystem through the application of clinical informatics, computer science, data science, mechatronics, standards based IT that enables information exchange and cross boundary workflows, analysis, statistical and machine learning techniques to discover insights.

For more information, visit us at www.ihis.com.sg, connect with us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) to learn more about the latest healthcare IT news.

About the National Health IT Summit

The National Health IT Summit is an annual flagship forum that brings public healthcare policy makers and senior leaders from Singapore's public and private healthcare sector under one roof for a day of high-level discussions, insightful talks and networking. This year's Summit marks the 10th iteration of the event.

Organised by Integrated Health Information Systems (IHiS) and supported by the Ministry of Health, Singapore (MOH), the by-invitation-only event has grown in scale and significance over the years, and is now the premier platform for the exchange of ideas and strategies among leading thinkers and practitioners from healthcare institutions, corporations and government agencies.