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CANCER SATELLITE CLINIC SET UP TO MAKE SERVICES MORE ACCESSIBLE TO HEARTLANDERS

- ❑ **Patients will benefit from lower treatment cost and shorter waiting time at KWSH-NCCS Oncology Clinic**
- ❑ **Clinic will be staffed by NCCS oncologists**

Singapore, 28th November 2007 – The National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS) in collaboration with the Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital (KWSH) will set up a specialist Oncology Clinic at the hospital in Serangoon Road. This is to cope with the anticipated needs of an ageing population where older people are likely to be afflicted with cancer as they grow older.

The Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan will officially declare the clinic open on Saturday, 1st December 2007, at 9.00am. The occasion will also mark the Hospital's 97th anniversary celebrations.

For NCCS, this is the first time that they are offering their services at a community hospital in order to be more accessible to those who live in the heartlands. Staffed by oncologists from NCCS, the clinic will attend to cancer patients who do not require intensive medical care. Dr Donald Poon, an NCCS medical oncologist, and a two-member nursing team, will provide the services at the KWSH-NCCS Oncology Clinic in the initial phase.

The clinic will see some patients who are currently attending the NCCS clinic at Outram medical campus. Operating hours are from Mondays to Fridays, 9.00am to 4.00pm. It will be closed on weekends and public holidays.

This NCCS satellite clinic will also help take some of the load off the cancer centre at Outram medical campus, where there is often a queue of patients waiting to see the specialists. NCCS sees the majority of cancer patients in the public sector in Singapore.

KWSH, which is designated as a community hospital by the Ministry of Health, has also set aside one ward for patients who may need to be warded. The Hospital's Chief Executive Officer, Ms Yim Sau Kit said: "This ward can accommodate 20 patients and there are options to expand the service to another block to take in another 30 patients."

Since February 2007, this cancer care ward has assisted patients with various needs, namely:

- 1) Inpatient care and transport for daily treatment;
- 2) Respite care of cancer patients;
- 3) Physical and occupational rehabilitation of cancer patients who are afflicted by other co-morbidity e.g. stroke.

"The collaboration is a value-add for Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital as it is able to offer patients expert medical services by tapping into the expertise of other medical groups, such as the NCCS," added Ms Yim. These services fill a niche and an unmet

need among members of the local community that have difficulty caring for loved ones with cancer.

NCCS Director, Prof Soo Khee Chee, said: “The benefits of this collaboration goes beyond just running a satellite clinic for cancer patients. For some cancer patients what it means is that while they will still enjoy the same level of service, they will also enjoy a savings in cost. Furthermore, the number of patients referred to this clinic will be lower than the volume at NCCS. This means they have a shorter waiting time to see the doctor.”

NCCS hopes to continue providing its services to patients at competitive prices by working with welfare groups like KWSH.

NCCS Head of Medical Oncology, Dr Koo Wen Hsin, said: “We are pleased to be partners with Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital because it opens a new avenue for us to help our patients. This clinic allows us to bring our services to those people. Cases referred to this clinic will be those patients who require simple examination, a repeat of their medication, or follow-up dressing.”

In fact, NCCS has since June this year seconded one of its doctors, Dr Darren Lim, a medical oncologist, in the run up to the opening of the satellite clinic.

About National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS)

The National Cancer Centre Singapore is a premier cancer research and treatment facility in Singapore and in the region. It was established in 1997 and sees about 68 per cent of the public sector medical oncology cases and 74 per cent of radiation

oncology cases. NCCS not only houses the most number of oncologists in Singapore but is also equipped with the largest number of equipment to provide the latest radiation oncology care in Singapore.

About Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital (KWSH)

Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital is a charitable organisation committed to providing quality healthcare to the sick and needy in Singapore. It occupies 14 blocks in a six-acre compound, and employs more than 200 staff. Facilities on-site include an In-patient Department, an Out-patient Department, a Day Rehabilitation Centre and a Traditional Chinese Medicine Centre.

The hospital is heavily dependent on the public's support and donations to meet their annual operating expenses of about S\$8.5 million.

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