

BECOMING A JUNIOR DOCTOR IN SINGAPORE

*UMMSS International Internship Information Night
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Adapted from slides by Dr Sean Seow, Dr Chang Bing Jian

Disclaimer

- The author of this presentation has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information, however is not responsible for any inadvertent errors.
- In any doubt, check with official sources first-hand.
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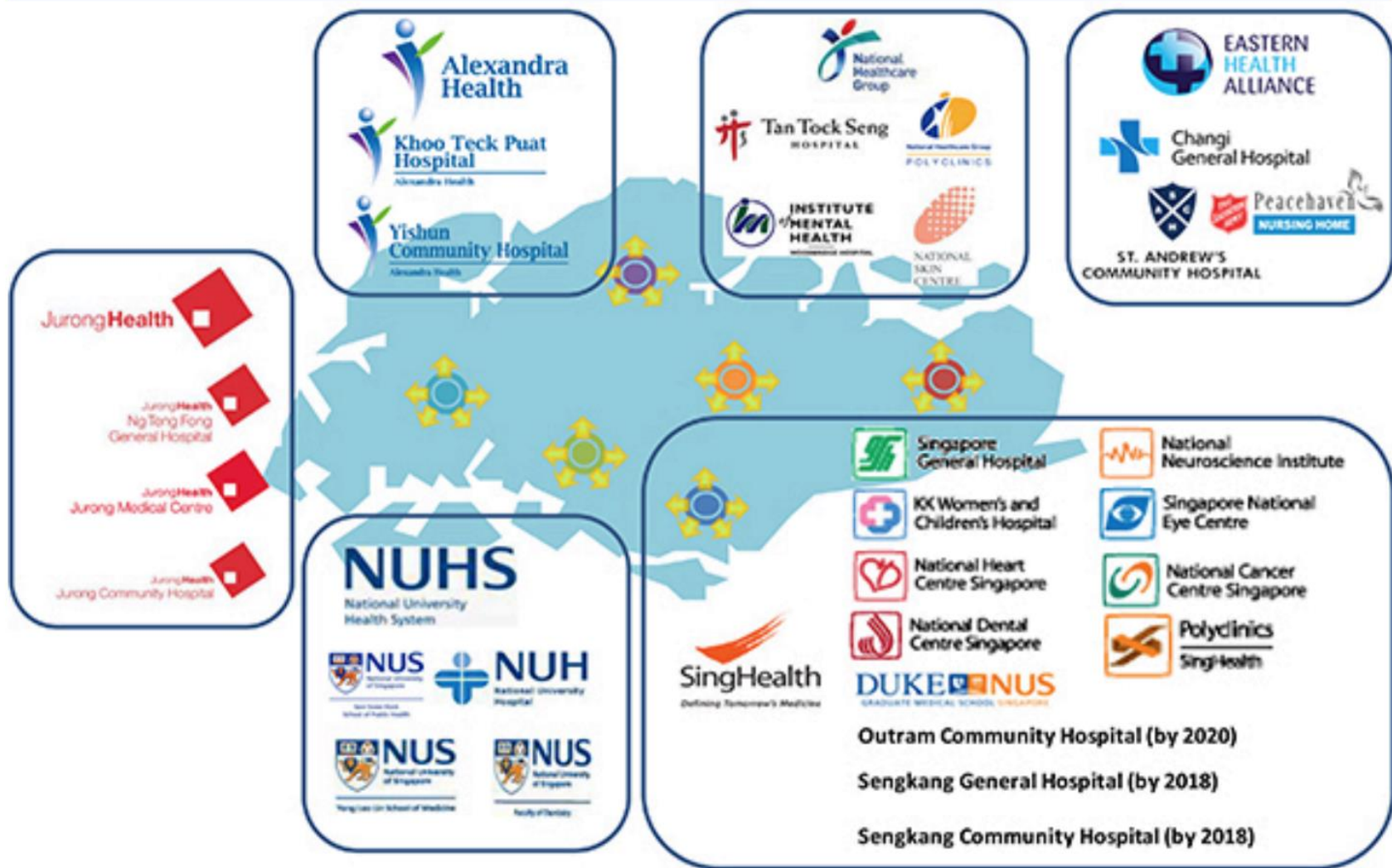


Singapore 1.3521° N, 103.8198° E

- Southern tip of the Malayan Peninsula, just north of the equator.
- Densely populated island with ~5.5mil people residing in 720km² of land
- 4 main ethnic groups (Chinese, Malay, Indians, Eurasians)
- English is the main language but many other languages/dialects spoken as well



Singapore's Public Healthcare Sector MOH HOLDINGS



Registration



- The Melbourne MD is **recognised** by the **Singapore Medical Council (SMC)**
 - No additional exams to work as a medical practitioner in Singapore
 - <http://www.smc.gov.sg/>
- **PGY 1 = House Officer (HO) aka Intern**
 - Work as a House Officer (HO) under **Provisional Registration**
 - Satisfactory completion of PGY1 required to gain **Conditional Registration**
- **PGY2 = Medical Officer (MO) aka HMO2**
 - Completion of internship in Australia is recognised for **Conditional Registration**
- For **Full Registration** (non-specialist track), 2 years of supervised practice while under **Conditional Registration** for Singaporeans, and 4 years for SPR/foreigners is required.

Application and Employment

The logo for MOH HOLDINGS, featuring the text "MOH HOLDINGS" in a purple, sans-serif font. The "O" in "MOH" is a light purple circle. Below the text is a thin, grey, curved line that arches under the letters.

- Employment by a single body: **MOH Holdings** (MOHH Pte Ltd)
 - Holding company of Singapore's public healthcare assets
- Common **employer of all junior doctors** in Singapore
 - Coordinates the posting of house officers and medical officers
 - Coordinates the residency application process

PGY1 – House Officer



- **House Officer (HO)** equivalent to Intern in Australia
- **3 x 4 monthly rotations**
 - **4 months of General Medicine +**
 - **4 months of General Surgery / Orthopaedic Surgery +**
 - **4 months of Gen Med / Gen Surg / Ortho / O&G / Paediatrics**
- You can preference your rotation combinations and which hospitals you would like to do each rotation in
- Orientation and **work commences in Feb/March** after graduation

Applying for a Job as an HO

- **Apply to MOHH**
 - http://www.physician.mohh.com.sg/medical_service_scheme.html#ready_to_apply
- **Submit application to physician@mohh.com.sg with:**
 - Completed employment application form
http://physician.mohh.com.sg/download/MOHH_Employment_Form.pdf
 - CV
 - Academic transcripts
 - Copy of passport
 - Photograph
 - Names of 2 professional referees
- **NO OFFICIAL CLOSING DATE**
 - But submit before the end of June (the earlier the better) in order to secure an interview spot

Interview

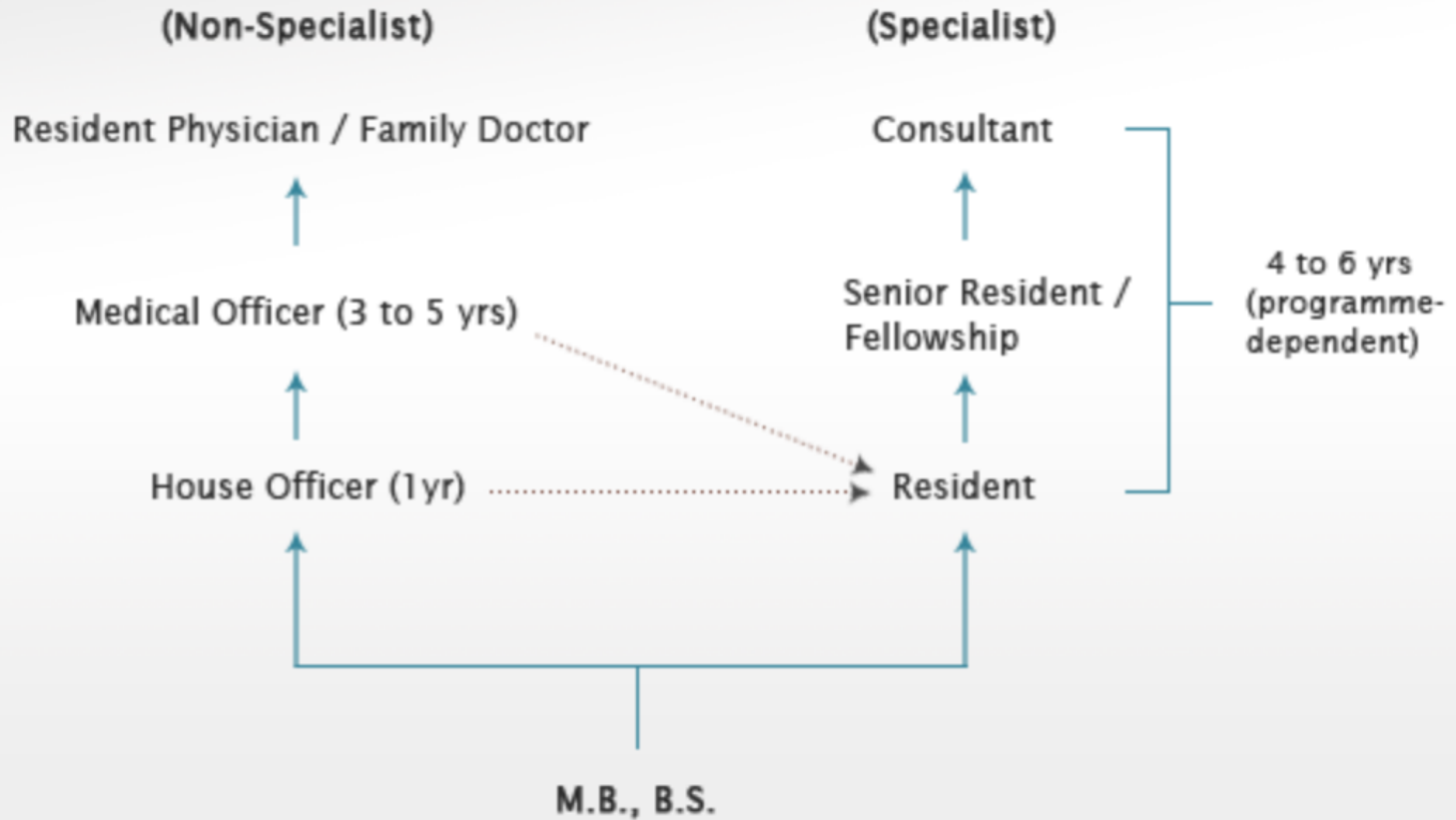
- Employment interviews **held in Melbourne**
 - ~**July/Aug** (11/12 Aug this year)
 - Panel interview
 - Mix of general and clinical questions
 - Recent focus on clinical questions
- Same process for interns/HMOs in Melbourne who wish to apply for a MO position
- **NOTE:** While it is not difficult to gain employment as a HO in Singapore, PGY1 positions are becoming increasingly saturated in recent years and you should not treat this as an absolutely fail-safe backup

What Happens after PGY1



- **Become a Medical Officer (MO)** with similar responsibilities as HMO2+ in Australia
- If you have decided what specialty you want to do, **apply for residency (specialist training program)**
- If you are still unsure of which residency to go for or fail to match to a program
 - Medical Officer Posting Exercise (MOPEX)
 - 6-month rotations in almost any specialty and institution (by preference and availability)
 - Try out different things and network with potential referees

OVERVIEW



http://www.physician.mohh.com.sg/medical_service_scheme.html#ready_to_apply

Residency in Singapore

- **Structured specialist training** modelled after the US system (with elements from the UK such as exams)
- 3-8 years depending on specialty and sub-specialisation then exit as a specialist (Associate Consultant)
- You **DO NOT** have to enter a residency program to work as a doctor in Singapore (Resident Physician)
- As of 2019, can only be matched for residency after PGY1
- Residency programs are run under 3 Sponsoring Institutions, each comprising a cluster of healthcare institutions
 - SingHealth <http://www.singhealthresidency.com.sg/>
 - National University Health System (NUHS) <http://www.nuhs.edu.sg/nuhsresidency/>
 - National Healthcare Group (NHG) <https://www.nhgresidencyprogram.com.sg/>

Applying for Residency

- You need to **secure employment with MOHH first** (i.e. submit job application and attend the employment interview in Melbourne)
- **4-station Multi-Mini Interview** (non-clinical scenarios, 10 minutes each) **IN SINGAPORE** in November
- Those who pass the MMI → ranking and matching process
- **If matched, enter program in July** the following year for direct entry programs
- Difficult but not impossible for IMGs to successfully match as a medical student. It becomes easier after you have worked in the system for a while and people know who you are
- Only apply if you know which specialty you want and only apply for the specialties you want – if you back out you will be barred from applying for one year
- Have a good read through the residency website at <http://physician.mohh.com.sg/residency/index.html>

Find out More: MOHH Info Sessions

- MOHH comes down to **Melbourne in March every year** to hold career information sessions
- Topics covered
 - Medical career in Singapore
 - Remuneration and benefits
 - Residency and application process
- Employment **interviews are usually held in Melbourne around July/August**
- Keep an eye out for details on <http://physician.mohh.com.sg/> for details and updates

The Pros

- Arguably one of the most advanced medical hubs in the region
- High job security (you don't have to apply for a job every year)
- High patient volume therefore amazing variety of cases and very rigorous training
- Many highly specialised tertiary centres
- Amazing public transport system
- Awesome yet CHEAP food everywhere



Potential Challenges

- Long hours, heavy workload and very fast pace
 - Normal day is 0700-1700 but can be longer in surgical units (0530-2000)
 - ‘Call’ system: HOs work from 7am to 12+pm the next day (30 hours straight), ~4 times a month
 - Slowly moving to a “night float” system
 - ~70+ hours per week for medical rotations and longer for surgical rotations
- Lower pay compared to Australia (but taxes are much lower)
- Potential language barriers (most patients speak English but some elderly patients only speak Mandarin, various Chinese dialects, Malay or Tamil)
- Local culture and slang can take a while to get used to, plus unique terms (hypocount / set plug / blue letter / TCU ???)
- Perennial hot and humid weather (some wards don’t have air-conditioning)



Experience it for yourself!

- Do an elective in Singapore
 - Guaranteed to be an unique experience 😊
 - Also helps with networking and finding referees for residency application if you are really keen
- Ask your Singaporean classmates
 - Hopefully you know who we are by now 😊
 - Many of us have done electives in Singapore and have some experience with the system
- Try our much coveted local food

Clinical Electives in Singapore

- The following hospitals accept direct applications
 - Singapore General Hospital (SGH) <http://www.sgh.com.sg/Education/Undergraduate-Medical-Education/Pages/application.aspx>
 - National University Hospital (NUH) <http://www.nuhs.edu.sg/education/medical-education/medical-students/electives.html>
 - Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) <http://www.ttshppee.com.sg/home/medical/electives-for-overseas-medical-students>
 - KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) <http://www.kkh.com.sg/educationandtraining/overseaselective/Pages/Paediatrics.aspx>
- Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore (YLLSoM, NUS) coordinates electives for other hospitals as well as the above <https://itumed.nus.edu.sg/scep/default.aspx>



Thank You

- For all information regarding a medical career in Singapore, visit
 - <http://physician.mohh.com.sg/>
 - or contact physician@mohh.com.sg
- Singapore Medical Council (medical registration)
 - <http://www.smc.gov.sg/>
- Residency Information and Application
 - <http://physician.mohh.com.sg/residency/index.html>
- Residency Sponsoring Institutions
 - SingHealth <http://www.singhealthresidency.com.sg/>
 - National University Health System (NUHS) <http://www.nuhs.edu.sg/nuhsresidency/>
 - National Healthcare Group (NHG) <https://www.nhgresidencyprogram.com.sg/>
- Pre-employment grant (PEG – only open to Singaporeans, applications open Dec– Jan)
 - <http://www.physician.mohh.com.sg/peg/>

Questions?

