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HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
6 NOV 2013

HSA HONOURS 62 HEALTHCARE EXPERTS, AGENCIES AND ASSOCIATIONS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC HEALTH AT INAUGURAL AWARD CEREMONY

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) honoured 62 healthcare professionals, partner agencies and associations at its first ever Excellent Stakeholder and Partnership Awards (ESPA) today. Organised by HSA's Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG), ESPA recognises the efforts and teamwork of government agencies and public health institutions, as well as clinicians, pharmacists and various associations, which have worked collaboratively with HSA to protect public health and safety, and enhance the regulation of health products.

2 Senior Minister of State for Health and Manpower Dr Amy Khor was Guest-of-Honour and presented the awards to 9 teams from government agencies and hospitals, 11 associations and 10 healthcare experts who provided scientific and technical advice to HSA (please refer to [Annex A](#) for the list of winners). The winners were selected by a panel of judges, based on their contributions and efforts.

'Protection of Public Health & Safety Awards' - 'Excellent Team Player Awards'

3 Among the award recipients are teams from the Singapore Police Force's Geylang Neighbourhood Police Centre, the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority's (ICA) Ops Division and Checkpoint Commands, ICA's Intel Operations Branch Team 1, and the Central Narcotics Bureau's Supervision Division. These teams worked closely with HSA's enforcement officers in joint operations which collectively prevented the entry of unregistered and prohibited health products into Singapore, crippled a syndicate supplying illegal cough syrup to abusers, and led to the seizures of illegal health products including sexual enhancement drugs and addictive medicines worth some \$1.5 million in street value through these joint operations. For their contributions towards safeguarding public health in Singapore, these teams were honoured with the **'Protection of Public Health & Safety Awards' - 'Excellent Team Player Awards'** (please refer to [Annex A, no. 1](#) for the list of award recipients).

4 Other award recipients of the Excellent Team Player Awards included the KK Women's and Children's Hospital and the Health Promotion Board which worked with HSA to monitor and enhance vaccine safety in Singapore. As a result of its initial success in monitoring the safety of the H1N1 vaccine in women and children during its rollout in 2009, this model of vaccine safety monitoring has been extended to include all vaccine adverse events following childhood immunisation. Another award recipient, a team from the Ministry of Health, developed the Critical Medical Information Store, a national electronic platform available in all public healthcare institutions in Singapore, which allows healthcare professionals to record and access adverse drug reactions in the patients' medical records online, and also submit these reports directly to HSA. This platform has greatly enhanced HSA's ability to detect serious adverse drug reactions in Singapore, hence enabling HSA to alert healthcare professionals and the public on health products safety swiftly. It has also propelled Singapore to be the top country in World Health Organisation's (WHO's)

international ranking with regard to adverse drug reaction reporting, in terms of the number of valid reports per million inhabitants submitted to the WHO's global database.

5 The Pharmacogenetics Team comprising clinicians and researchers from various institutions (National University Hospital, Singapore General Hospital, Changi General Hospital and A*STAR's Singapore Immunology Network) was another winner of the **'Excellent Team Player Awards'**. In 2009, HSA had initiated studies with this team to investigate possible genetic associations behind serious drug-induced adverse skin reactions in the local population. This study provided evidence of a strong association between the HLA-B*1502 allele and carbamazepine (CBZ)-induced Stevens-Johnson Syndrome/Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (SJS/TEN) in Singaporeans. As a result, this led to HLA-B*1502 genotype testing being recommended and implemented as the standard of care prior to the initiation of CBZ therapy in new patients since April 2013.

'Appreciation Awards' – 'Chairs & Deputy Chairs of HPRG's Advisory Committee Awards' and 'Excellent Partnership Awards'

6 Ten outstanding healthcare experts were awarded the **'Chairs & Deputy Chairs of HPRG's Advisory Committee Awards'** for having provided scientific and technical advice to HSA on matters relating to pre-market evaluation of product registration as well as post-market health products risk management. Their contributions, through serving on HSA's scientific advisory committees and expert panels, have helped in the shaping of sound regulatory decisions and policies that benefit public health and Singaporeans. Eleven organisations and associations which worked closely with HSA to refine regulatory processes and policies pertaining to health products were also awarded the **'Excellent Partnership Awards'** (please refer to **Annex A, no. 2** for the full list of award recipients).

7 Emphasising the importance of effective engagement between HSA and this diverse group of stakeholders to better manage the challenges of a fast evolving healthcare and biomedical landscape, Dr Khor said, "It is important for HSA to work in collaboration with its key stakeholders to ensure that the health product regulatory framework is adaptive, efficient and inclusive, without compromising public health. The goal is to ensure that Singaporeans have ongoing access to safe, effective and quality health products."

8 "The high quality and safety standards of health products in Singapore reflect the strong partnerships established over the years with the different stakeholders gathered and represented here today. Such partnerships are critical for strengthening the robustness and relevance of our health products regulation system. I look forward to widening and deepening this network as we pursue our goal of advancing and protecting national health and safety through the smart and sound regulation of health products in Singapore," said Associate Professor John Lim, HSA's Chief Executive Officer.

9 The ESPA ceremony was held at the National University of Singapore Society's Kent Ridge Guild House, and will be organised biennially.

About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSAsg.

About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

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List of ESPA Award Recipients

1. Protection of Public Health & Safety Awards

Excellent Team Player Awards

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| Operation Skyfall – Enforcement Cooperation with Central Narcotics Bureau, Singapore |
| Collaboration with ICA to Curb Inflow of Prohibited & Controlled Products |
| Crackdown on Illegal Codeine Cough Syrup Supply |
| Operation Wipeout – Joint-Operation with Singapore Police Force against Illegal Medicines Supply |
| Enhanced Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Programme through the Critical Medical Information Store |
| Vaccine Adverse Event Sentinel Surveillance Programme |
| National Immunisation Registry Vaccine Safety Surveillance Project |
| Power 1 Walnut Crackdown |
| Pharmacogenetics of Adverse Drug Reactions – Serious Skin Reactions |

2. Appreciation Awards

a) Chairs & Deputy Chairs of HPRG's Advisory Committee Awards

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| Dr Ng See Ket | Chairman, Advisory Committee on Cosmetic Products |
| Prof Sonny Wang Yee Tang | Chairman, Medicines Advisory Committee |
| Prof Lee Kok Onn | Dy Chairman, Medicines Advisory Committee |
| Prof Woo Keng Thye | Chairman, Medical Clinical Research Committee |
| Clinical Prof Goh Chee Leok | Chairman, Product Vigilance Advisory Committee |
| Prof Edmund Lee Jon Deoon | Dy Chairman, Product Vigilance Advisory Committee |
| A/Prof Heng Wan Sia, Paul | Chairman, Quality Control Advisory Committee |
| Prof Fong Kok Yong | Chairman, Biologics Expert Panel |
| A/Prof Vincent Chow | Dy Chairman, Biologics Expert Panel |
| Prof Vernon Oh | Chairman, Scientific Review Committee on Claims of Complementary Health Products |

b) Excellent Partnership Awards

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| Academy of Medicine |
| Association of Medical Device Industry (Singapore) (AMDI) |
| Health Supplements Industry Association of Singapore (HSIAS) |
| Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore (PSS) |
| Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC), SPRING Singapore |
| Singapore Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (SAPI) |
| Singapore Pharmaceutical Manufacturer's Council (SPMC) |
| Singapore Pharmaceutical Trade Organisation (SPTO), Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF) |
| Singapore Traditional Chinese Medicine Organisations Committee (STOC) |
| The Cosmetic, Toiletry & Fragrance Association of Singapore (CTFAS) |
| The Medical Technology Industry Group (MTIG), Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF) |