

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Publication

NUHCS ACHIEVES ASIA'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION FOR DIAGNOSTIC VASCULAR LAB

International accolade recognises institutes for the quality of diagnostic services and patient care provided



A vascular scan being performed at the National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS). (Photo credit: NUHCS)

SINGAPORE — Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death in Singapore, accounting for 31 per cent of deaths in 2022. Timely and precise diagnosis is crucial to ensure that patients receive prompt and effective treatment for their condition. Diagnostic vascular laboratories within hospitals, outpatient centres and physicians' offices play an important role in early detection through vascular testing procedures.

Since July this year, the National University Heart Centre, Singapore's (NUHCS) Diagnostic Vascular Laboratory (DVL) has become the first and only laboratory in Asia to earn the acclaimed Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) accreditation. This accolade recognises institutes for the quality of diagnostic services and patient care provided.

NUHCS's DVL has been accredited by the IAC for peripheral arterial testing, extracranial cerebrovascular testing and peripheral venous testing. These tests are vital for detecting common vascular issues such as deep vein thrombosis, peripheral arterial disease, cerebrovascular disease and abdominal aortic aneurysm.

Vast applications of vascular testing

NUHCS's DVL scans over 7,000 cases a year, which help doctors make important clinical decisions across various fields beyond vascular surgery, including emergency medicine, internal medicine, orthopaedics, cardiothoracic surgery and paediatrics. The lab's diagnostic capabilities extend to patients as young as a few days old.

DVL scans are pivotal in optimising interventions for common vascular issues. For instance, the lab scans can help establish blood flow anatomy in patients with foot gangrene or ulcers, enabling vascular surgeons to plan amputations with higher success rates of wound healing. For gangrene patients with renal dysfunction, DVL scans can provide an alternative to CT scans, which can affect their kidney function.

Patients with deep vein thrombosis also benefit significantly from DVL scans, which can help identify the location and extent of clots, assess the condition of neighbouring vessels, and serve as a roadmap for treatment plans, leading to better clinical outcomes.

Ensuring diagnostic accuracy and quality care

The IAC accreditation is awarded after a rigorous evaluation process that assessed the expertise in imaging and intervention-based procedures. All medical technologists in the NUHCS DVL are also awarded the Registered Vascular Technologist (RVT) certification by the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS).

Dr Peter Chang, Director of the NUHCS DVL and Senior Consultant in the Department of Cardiology and Department of Cardiac, Thoracic and Vascular Surgery (CTVS) at NUHCS, said, "The certifications of our technologists and the IAC accreditation distinguishes our team as experts in vascular ultrasound scanning and vascular ultrasound interpretation. This assurance of quality enables our patients and referring physicians to trust the scans we provide and the subsequent medical decisions based on them."

Dr Chang has also been awarded the Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation (RPVI) certification.

Adjunct Associate Professor Rajesh Dharmaraj, Head of Division and Senior Consultant, Division of Vascular Surgery, Department of CTVS, NUHCS, said, "As the only centre in Asia to hold this accreditation, we continue to set the benchmark for vascular diagnostic excellence, on par with the best laboratories internationally. This achievement underscores our ongoing commitment to innovation in vascular imaging and our mission to enhance patient care."

Chinese Glossary

National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS)	新加坡国立大学心脏中心 (国大心脏中心)
Dr Peter Chang Director, Diagnostic Vascular Laboratory National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS)	张书咏医生 血管诊断实验室主任 国大心脏中心
Senior Consultant Department of Cardiology National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS)	心脏内科高级顾问 国大心脏中心
Senior Consultant Division of Vascular Surgery Department of Cardiac, Thoracic and Vascular Surgery (CTVS) National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS)	血管外科高级顾问 心胸血管外科部门 国大心脏中心
Adjunct Associate Professor Rajesh Dharmaraj Head of Division and Senior Consultant Division of Vascular Surgery Department of Cardiac, Thoracic and Vascular Surgery (CTVS) National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS)	Rajesh Dharmaraj 客座副教授 血管外科主任兼高级顾问 心胸血管外科部门 国大心脏中心
Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) accreditation	跨学会认证委员会 (IAC) 认证
American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS)	美国诊断医学超声登记处 (ARDMS)
Registered Vascular Technologist (RVT) certification	注册血管技术员 (RVT) 认证
Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation (RPVI) certification	血管解释注册医师 (RPVI) 认证
Peripheral arterial testing	外周动脉检测
Extracranial cerebrovascular testing	颅外脑血管检测
Peripheral venous testing	外周静脉检测

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About the National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS)

The National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS) is an academic, national specialist centre under the National University Health System (NUHS). NUHCS brings together the resources, expertise and capabilities in the areas of Cardiology, Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery to better meet the needs of the growing number of patients with heart disease and raise the future generation of medical professionals.

As one of two national heart centres in Singapore for the treatment and management of complex cardiovascular diseases, NUHCS offers six core clinical programmes including Heart Failure & Cardiomyopathy, Structural Heart Disease, Acute Coronary Syndrome, Heart Rhythm, Congenital & Structural Heart Disease and Women's Heart Health. The centre has been awarded two institutional Peaks of Excellence for its Minimally-invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery and Aortic Centre Programme, and has been ranked top in Singapore for three consecutive years in 2022, 2023 and 2024 for the specialty of Cardiac Surgery in Newsweek's "World's Best Hospital" Award.

Comprising a team of internationally-recognised cardiologists and surgeons from the cardiothoracic and vascular specialties, NUHCS serves as a referral national centre for cardiothoracic and vascular conditions and provides a comprehensive approach to the treatment of these patients. The holistic patient-care approach is backed by leading translational research at the Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI) and Cardiovascular Metabolic Translational Program, all of which complements these advanced quaternary clinical services to deliver state-of-the-art treatment solutions to the most challenging heart, lung and circulatory diseases.

NUHCS services span across four locations to serve the western and central locations in Singapore:

- NUHCS at National University Hospital (NUH), Kent Ridge - Main Operations
- NUHCS Heart Clinic @ Ng Teng Fong General Hospital (NTFGH)
- NUHCS Heart Clinic @ Jurong Medical Centre (JMC)
- NUHCS Heart Clinic @ Alexandra Hospital (AH)

For more information, visit: <https://www.nuhcs.com.sg>.