

# Novartis Singapore Partners Singapore Heart Foundation

Nov 01, 2022

- High Blood Cholesterol is amongst the top three non-communicable diseases (NCDs) , and has the highest prevalence compared to diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Collaboration between Novartis Singapore and Singapore Heart Foundation will seed new initiatives to enhance education on cholesterol management and the potential risks leading to complications of heart attack and stroke.
- The multi-year partnership, aimed at unblocking barriers to better heart health, supports Singapore's Healthier SG strategy to place a sustained focus on preventive care in achieving overall healthier living.

Singapore, 1 November 2022 – Novartis Singapore (Novartis) and Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on a 3-year campaign to raise awareness of high blood cholesterol and cholesterol management amongst the general public, patients and caregivers in Singapore. In support of the Healthier SG vision, the collaboration aims to amplify education around high blood cholesterol to be recognised as an important modifiable cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factor and drive a concerted effort towards preventive care.

Under the MoU agreement – signed by Novartis Singapore Country President, Ms. Poh Hwee Tee and SHF Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Vernon Kang – Novartis and SHF will join efforts to make cholesterol management a priority in the healthcare ecosystem, raise awareness and urgency amongst Singaporeans towards the severity and complications of high blood cholesterol and cholesterol management. The signing ceremony, which marks the start of a multi-year strategic partnership, was witnessed by Ms. Ruth Kuguru, Executive Director Communications and Engagement, Novartis Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa (APMA) and Dr. Bernard Kwok, SHF Board Member and Chairperson of SHF Corporate Partnership Committee.

“High blood cholesterol is one of the fastest growing risk factors of CVD, a leading cause of death globally. The urgency to address this health challenge is further intensified with Singapore's ageing population. Our collaboration with SHF to co-create solutions in a sustainable manner and drive behavioural changes is part of Novartis commitment to unblock barriers to heart health”, said Ms. Poh.

## **High Prevalence of High Blood Cholesterol in Singapore; Low to Minimal Awareness on Blood Cholesterol and Cholesterol Management**

In Singapore, 21 people die from cardiovascular disease (heart diseases and stroke) every day. CVD is a leading cause of death in Singapore, accounting for 32% of all deaths in 2021. This means that almost 1 out of 3 deaths is due to heart disease or stroke<sup>[1]</sup>. One of the modifiable risk factors associated with CVD is high blood cholesterol, which is amongst the top-three non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and has the highest prevalence compared to diabetes and high blood pressure.<sup>1</sup>

According to National Population Health Survey 2020, the prevalence of high blood cholesterol increased from 35.5% in 2017 to 39.1% in 2020. Despite high blood cholesterol prevalence – about four in 10 Singapore residents aged 18 to 74 years had high blood cholesterol during the period of 2019 – 2020<sup>[2]</sup> – high blood cholesterol is still competing heavily for attention amongst priority diseases like diabetes, heart attack, stroke

and hypertension.

Through this partnership, Novartis and SHF will jointly conduct a research to gather insights from the public, patients and caregivers to identify knowledge gaps and attitudes towards high blood cholesterol and cholesterol management. Strategies and tactics will be built from these survey insights to include public disease awareness campaigns, development of educational materials, and launching of dialogues with key stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystem to prioritise cholesterol management. This research is part of ongoing efforts to listen to and uplift patients' voices, which can be incorporated into the care paradigm in cholesterol management.

"The prevalence of high blood cholesterol in our population is worrying as it is a silent killer that usually does not present symptoms until a heart attack or stroke strikes. A 2021 study also found a lack of knowledge and awareness among Singaporeans, creating a barrier to effective disease control. Singapore Heart Foundation believes that providing the public with adequate knowledge of high blood cholesterol and other CVD risk factors is important in reducing disability and death from CVD. We are glad to partner with Novartis on this meaningful collaboration to raise awareness and improve cholesterol management among Singaporeans, and look forward to better preventive care for the long-term health of our population," said Dr. Kwok.

-End-

### **About Novartis**

Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people's lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world's top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach nearly 800 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 109,000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at <https://www.novartis.com.sg>.

Novartis Singapore is on LinkedIn. Join our community [here](#).

For Novartis multimedia content, please visit <https://www.novartis.com/news/media-library>

### **About Singapore Heart Foundation**

Singapore Heart Foundation is a social service agency at the forefront of the battle against heart diseases in Singapore. Since its inception in 1970, the Foundation has grown into a well-established and reputable organisation with local and international links.

Through strategic lifesaving programmes under the three core pillars of Prevention, Rehabilitation and Resuscitation, SHF fulfills its mission to promote heart health, prevent and reduce disability and death due to cardiovascular disease and stroke. In addition, SHF also offers financial assistance to needy heart patients for emergency relief and medical treatment.

### **Media Contacts**

Email : [comms.sg@novartis.com](mailto:comms.sg@novartis.com) Email : [samantha@heart.org.sg](mailto:samantha@heart.org.sg)

Irene Yong

Samantha Chan

+65 6722 6010

+65 6354 9360

<https://www.myheart.org.sg/health/heart-disease-statistics/#:~:text=In%20Singapore%2C%2021%20people%20die,to%20heart%20diseases%20or%20stroke>.  
Last Accessed October 2022.

[2] Health Promotion Board. National Population Health Survey 2020. Available at:  
<https://hpb.gov.sg/community/national-population-health-survey/survey-findings>. Last Accessed October 2022.

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.novartis.com/sg-en/news/media-releases/novartis-singapore-partners-singapore-heart-foundation>

### List of links present in page

- <https://www.novartis.com/sg-en/sg-en/news/media-releases/novartis-singapore-partners-singapore-heart-foundation>
- [#\\_ftn1](#)
- [#\\_ftn2](#)
- <https://www.novartis.com/sg-en>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/novartis-sg/mycompany/?viewAsMember=true>
- <http://www.novartis.com/news/media-library>
- <mailto:comms.sg@novartis.com>
- <mailto:samantha@heart.org.sg>
- [#\\_ftnref1](#)
- <https://www.myheart.org.sg/health/heart-disease-statistics/#:~:text=In%20Singapore%2C%2021%20people%20die,to%20heart%20diseases%20or%20stroke>
- [#\\_ftnref2](#)
- <https://hpb.gov.sg/community/national-population-health-survey/survey-findings>