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a parkway pantai quarterly

Parkway College nurtures its pioneer batch of Masters graduates

Parkway Pantai’s Long Service & Golden Years Service Awards

Dr Esther Chuwa gets personal
Our job is to ensure your road to recovery leads back to the things you love

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we want your feedback

Do you have an interesting story idea, news or happening you would like to share with us? Let us know and we will give you a special token of our appreciation. Write to: grpcorpcomms@parkway.sg, or Group Corporate Communications, Parkway Pantai Limited, #16-02, TripleOne Somerset, 111 Somerset Road, Singapore 238164.

Happy 2013 to you all! As we venture into this new year, we proudly take a look back at some of our achievements that have set the pace for more to come.

Special mention goes to our Long Service Award recipients for their unwavering commitment and support over the years (p8). They are truly an inspiration to us all, and not least to the new generation of graduates fresh out of Parkway College (p14).

Last October, Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur and Pantai Hospital Ipoh organised fund raising activities for breast cancer awareness, providing informative platforms to educate the public on the importance of early detection and prevention of breast cancer – a topic close to breast surgeon Dr Esther Chua’s heart (p32). You can also read about the encouraging advancements in breast cancer treatment (p40).

Also in this issue, orthopaedic surgeon Dr Suresh Nathan opens up to us on the importance of serving his patients, being there for his family and his passion for art (p28). And where one expresses their creativity in art, another does so through music. Introducing Gleneagles Hospital’s resident doctor-nurse band – DNightgales and Frenz – who released their first album for charity last year (p42).

We hope you will enjoy this first issue of the new year.
We wish you all a Happy and Healthy Year of the Snake!
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According to Australian researchers, personality and attitude seem to matter when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle, with a brighter outlook on life leading to healthier choices. In addition, they found that those who believe they are in control of their destiny are more likely to eat a healthier diet, exercise more, smoke less and drink less. The opposite is true for people who believe their destiny is in the hands of fate or that life is about luck.

In conducting the study, Deborah Cobb-Clark, director of the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, and colleagues used data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey to examine the diet, exercise and personality type of more than 7,000 people.

“Our research shows a direct link between the type of personality a person has and a healthy lifestyle,” said Cobb-Clark. The findings could help shape public health policies on certain conditions such as obesity, the study authors suggested.

“The main policy response to the obesity epidemic has been the provision of better information, but information alone is insufficient to change people’s eating habits,” Cobb-Clark explained. “Understanding the psychological underpinning of a person’s eating patterns and exercise habits is central to understanding obesity.”

Men and women also appear to have different views on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Although men seek physical results, women are focused on the daily pleasure they get from living a healthy lifestyle, the results indicated.

“What works well for women may not work well for men,” noted Cobb-Clark. “Gender-specific policy initiatives which respond to these objectives may be particularly helpful in promoting healthy lifestyles,” she suggested.

The report was published by the University of Melbourne in the *Melbourne Institute Working Paper Series*. source: MedlinePlus

Scientists have developed surgical tape that can be removed with minimal pain.

Their aim was to improve the care of premature babies. Their delicate skin can be damaged when plasters, used to attach vital tubes and monitors to their bodies, are peeled away.

According to the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the invention could also benefit the elderly whose skin is also fragile as well as those of a more sensitive disposition than most.

Professor Robert Langer’s latest invention has the same adhesive and backing as traditional plasters but has a textured middle layer. When it is peeled back, the glue that is left behind can be gently rubbed off.

Researcher Jeffrey Karp of Boston’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital said that doctors who had been involved in developing the tape could not wait to use it and added, “It works very well and it’s completely painless.”

Tests on babies are in the pipeline and if all goes well, the tape could be on the market in one to two years. source: news.com.au
According to researchers at the University of Westminster, watching horror movies can burn the same amount of calories as a half-hour walk.

Viewers who put themselves through 90 minutes of adrenaline-pumping horror action can use up as much as 113 calories, close to the amount burned during an hour of washing windows and the equivalent to a chocolate bar.

The researchers measured the total energy expenditure of 10 different people as they watched a selection of scary movies.

They recorded their heart rate, oxygen intake and carbon dioxide output, and discovered the number of calories used increased by a third during the films on the average.

The research also found that films featuring moments designed to make viewers jump in terror are the best calorie-burners as they cause heart rates to soar.

“Each of the 10 films tested set pulses racing, sparking an increase in the heart rate of the case studies,” said researcher Richard Mackenzie.

“As the pulse quickens and blood pumps around the body faster, the body experiences a surge in adrenaline.

“It is this release of fast acting adrenaline, produced during short bursts of intense stress or in this case, brought on by fear which is known to lower the appetite, increase the Basal Metabolic Rate and ultimately burn a higher level of calories,” he said.

source: IndianExpress
A new study shows when number-phobic people anticipate maths, their brains believe they are feeling physical pain.

Sian Beilock, psychology professor at the University of Chicago, and doctoral student Ian Lyons asked 14 adults with maths anxiety to verify the results of an equation or work on word puzzles while in a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machine.

They found that when people with high levels of maths anxiety anticipated equations, their brain reacted much like they would if they were in physical pain. The higher the person’s anxiety, the more the posterior insula – what springs into action when someone burns their hand or stubs their toe – flashed with activity. The researchers also found activation in the cingulate cortex which assists the brain’s pain centre. While people do not actually feel pain, the brain reacts as if the hand is being burned.

“We have this evolutionary, ancient pain system that responds when we burn our hands on the stove and are in physical pain… when people are anxious and anticipating the maths test, our brains activate the same system,” explained Beilock.

She was surprised to learn that people reacted as if they were in pain only when they anticipated maths, not while working on the equations.

She believes that when people actually started the maths problems, the pain and anxiety subsided because they focused on the task at hand. source: NBC News

Skipping breakfast may make fatty, high-calorie food appear far more attractive later in the day.

Researchers at Imperial College London took brain scans of 21 people of normal weight to see if skipping breakfast would change the way their brains responded to high-calorie food.

They were shown pictures of calorie packed food when they underwent scans in a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine.

The participants were given no breakfast before the scans one day and fed a large 730-calorie breakfast an hour and a half before the scans another day.

The researchers said skipping breakfast created a “bias” in the brain in favour of high-calorie food. The results showed how part of the brain – the orbitofrontal cortex – changed how it responded to pictures of high-calorie food (became more active), but not low-calorie food, when breakfast was skipped.

When the researchers offered the participants lunch at the end of the study, they ate a fifth more calories if breakfast was missed.

Dr Tony Goldstone, from Imperial College London, said: “Through both the participants’ MRI results and observations of how much they ate at lunch, we found ample evidence that fasting made people hungrier, and increased the appeal of high-calorie food and the amount people ate.” source: BBC News Health
While blueberries are often touted as the ultimate healthy food, one cup of raspberries has more than twice the fibre of one cup of blueberries. They also have an antioxidant capacity – a rating scientists use to determine the amount of antioxidants in foods – greater than strawberries, kiwis, broccoli, leeks, apples and tomatoes.

Research with black raspberries has shown that raspberries can fight DNA damage and the production of inflammation producing proteins in your body. Frozen raspberries contain levels of nutrients comparable to freshly picked ones.

Excessive sweating can be a mood killer, but this problem is very common and happens to completely healthy people. While it can occur on the face, sweating is usually more profuse on the palms, soles and in the armpits.

Treatment may include aluminum chloride antiperspirants, botox injections, oral medications, mild electrical currents, or even surgery.

Hiccups are an uncontrollable contraction of the diaphragm – the breathing muscle under the lungs. Eating too much or too fast, overdoing alcohol, or swallowing air can all cause hiccups. They usually go away on their own, but you can try remedies like holding your breath, drinking water quickly and breathing in a bag to help hasten hiccups away.
reaping the rewards

Veteran and exemplary staff received special recognition.

357 of Parkway Pantai’s own were honoured for their steadfast dedication at the company’s annual Long Service & Golden Years Service Awards Presentation Ceremony on 23 October 2012.

These employees have been with Parkway Pantai for five years, 10 years and some even 30 long years. 2012 also marked the fourth year the Group has presented the Golden Years Service Awards to honour the 26 staff who have decided to stay with the company beyond the official retirement age.

For award recipients Sivaganam Komala Devi, Mary Chiang Seng and Hamidah Fendi, strong friendships and a strong desire to excel in their profession are some of the reasons why they decided to spend decades working for Parkway Pantai.

The company’s continued perseverance in medical and healthcare excellence keeps them inspired. Its ability to listen and grow in tandem to account for their needs and aspirations is another pull factor.

Come together, right now

It is common to hear from award recipients that they cannot bear to leave the company because of all the touching friendships they have made in Parkway Pantai.

Mary says that besides having made lifelong friends working at the same establishment, having the respect of your peers is a big factor as well when it comes to job happiness.

"It is important to grow professionally and personally in a job. If you continue to do so, there are fewer reasons to move elsewhere.

"I also gained a lot of respect and recognition from doctors and my healthcare colleagues, and patients keep coming back and they recommend others to see me also. This is good for flying the physio flag and the hospital," she added.

Devi and Hamidah, having worked for so long, know each other and speak fondly of each other as well. They feel they have grown up with Parkway Pantai.

"If anyone has a problem we share and try to solve the problem immediately. We are very close and we maintain our morale by helping each other," says Devi about her 16-strong team.

Besides good and strong bonds with co-workers, good relationships are forged with patients too as they keep returning to the same and familiar department for the top-notch personalised service.
By staying at Parkway, I can do better, and patients come back, insisting on getting their blood taken only at our department.

– Sivaganam Komala Devi

“I’ve been headhunted before and have had attractive offers, but I can’t bear to leave this place. By staying at Parkway Pantai, I can do better, and patients come back, insisting on getting their blood taken only at our department,” reveals Devi.

upgrade, upgrade and upgrade

They may all have a so-called job title but they wear many hats at any one time. And that is something the three women love, though some would ponder: “Aren’t you doing more work for the same pay?” But for someone like Devi, that is just a way of saying the cup is half empty.

She started out as a nurse. Along the way, she picked up various skills, some via training and some simply because she was keen and learnt from others. “From microbiology to taking X-rays to lab techniques to physiotherapy, I picked these skills up along the way. Even, checking blood gas, urine via microscopes,” she says. “Yes, some people would say they want more money if you ask them to do different things but for me it is important to learn new things and upgrade yourself.”

Such unique drive and the search for challenges might be a reason that compels the Long Service award recipients to be loyal to their company and still produce the best results possible.

Indeed, for others, like Mary, she thrives on challenges. Her creative streak and that twinkle in her eye when she speaks about how she varies her treatment to yield maximum results for her patients, speaks far louder than any resume would. She calls her craft a mental chess game.

“You have to be good with time management and think on your feet. Treat diverse types of patients and juggle different kinds of people and situations, all at the same time.

“People come in with pain and they leave smiling. We give them hope.”

– Mary Chiang Seng

This is a profession that is more than just nursing, it gives high satisfaction, the rewards can be very overwhelming. – Hamidah Fendi
Mary Chiang Seng  
*Senior Principal Physiotherapist*  
*Mount Elizabeth Hospital*  
31 years with Parkway Pantai

Becoming a top-notch physiotherapist in the region was not something Mary had planned. “I didn’t know what to do after my A-levels and during a medical check-up, the doctor asked me what I wanted to do. He suggested physiotherapy. I couldn’t even pronounce the word.

“But the next thing I knew, I was in Liverpool, training to be a physiotherapist and here I am now,” says the veteran who wears her heart on her sleeves.

“Flying the physio flag”, as Mary calls it, is not just about work. It is something more deeply personal for her.

She has volunteered in medical outreach missions at exotic places like Kathmandu, where she says she had an enriching time partaking in work that required extreme teamwork as well as legwork. “People from all over the villages showed up, some had walked for many hours to come for help.”

However, when you ask her how her fellow department workmates feel about her Long Service award, she laughs and says in jest that there are mixed feelings. “The young ones ask me why I am here for so long. The older ones like me, we like a place, we stay and continue.”

She admits her job can be emotionally draining at times, especially when there are patients with difficult and complicated conditions.

“I do ask myself sometimes: who motivates who? We need both parties,” she explains the two-way seamless process between medical care provider and patient. While she encourages patients by creatively varying what they do during their physio session, she also gets an overwhelming sense of achievement and motivation when she observes her patients getting better.
Hamidah Fendi
Nursing Manager
Parkway East Hospital
25 years with Parkway Pantai

Being a Nursing Manager means Hamidah not only has to ensure the smooth running of her ward and impress upon the nurses the importance of excellent service, she also trains junior nurses on the job. And her advice to younger nurses is: “Never give up. This is a profession that is more than just nursing – it gives high satisfaction – the rewards can be very overwhelming.”

Family always comes first for Hamidah. Once, her department head made flexible arrangements for her to come in a bit later during the morning shifts so that she could send her child to a day care centre first. Small things like these have helped her bond with the company and fellow employees at a more emotional level.

Her 28-year-old daughter used to ask her why she is still working at Parkway Pantai after all these years. “But now, my daughter understands, after she has seen the enjoyment I get from working here,” says Hamidah.

Friendly and warm, Hamidah is also one who takes her job very seriously.

“I can be a friend, but when you are at work, you have to conform to what the hospital requires you to do.

“When new nurses come in here, I talk about ‘ASK’. ‘A’ for attitude, ‘S’ for skills and ‘K’ for knowledge. If you have all these, you are safe in my department.”
Sivaganam Komala Devi
Principal Phlebotomist
Mount Elizabeth Hospital
31 years with Parkway Pantai

If they ever needed a consultant for the Hollywood blockbuster vampire series *Twilight*, then Devi would be the right person. She is no vampire but she could teach Robert Pattinson a thing or two about collecting blood realistically. As a Principal Phlebotomist, blood is, well, in her blood. “Blood taking is a talent and it’s not just straightforward work. You have to feel the veins and also ensure you get the right sized needle. One wrong move and you might upset some patients, who may already have a mind-set of fear even before you poke them with the needle,” explains Devi.

As if having a full-time job and being a mother to three children and grandmother to four were not demanding enough, Devi wows you with this information: she also volunteers for her local grassroots organisation as well as for the police force, doing door-to-door visits in the evenings. And to top it off, she also represents the staff of ParkwayHealth Laboratory as their Union Chairman since 1991.

She gets her energy from the belief that if you are happy with your work, work and life will not be a chore – a simple and true philosophy that most of us find hard to adopt.

She puts more weight on job satisfaction over money and says she hates job-hopping. “I love this job because it is my passion. The longer you stay at a company, the more people you will know from the wards, reception or theatre, etc. And if you do good work, you get good recognition from the people who know you. If you jump to a new place, you may have to start from scratch,” reasons Devi, who maintains a work-life balance by never allowing the two close realms to interfere with each other.
shaping the future of healthcare

Parkway College celebrated its pioneer batch of 10 graduates in Masters in Health Administration, a professional two-year course developed in collaboration with Flinders University of South Australia.

Together with 138 other graduates and close to 500 proud family members, friends and colleagues, the mood was festive at the college’s second graduation ceremony on 5 November 2012 at the RELC International Hotel. Associate Professor Fatimah Lateef, Deputy Chairman of the Singapore Government Parliamentary Committee for Health, was the Guest-of-Honour.

“Healthcare is an important pillar of our society that has been facing a severe shortage of manpower in Singapore for some years,” said Mrs Nellie Tang, Chief Executive Officer of Parkway College. “I am proud to see so many have committed to taking on this noble profession, and others already in the sector going the extra mile to upgrade their skills.”

The part-time Masters in Health Administration saw a doubling in enrolment numbers since its launch in 2010. Its flexibility allows healthcare professionals, which include those in medical, nursing, healthcare as well as administrators in related fields hoping to hone their management skills, to continue their day jobs while pursuing the degree.

Among the other graduates, 53 will graduate with a Diploma in Nursing, 25 with an Advanced Diploma in Critical Care Nursing and 33 with an Advanced Diploma in Perioperative Care Nursing. The remaining 27 will graduate with Diplomas in Healthcare Management and Graduate Diplomas in Healthcare Management.

This new cohort of graduates from Parkway College will support the need for qualified healthcare professionals in Singapore at private and public healthcare institutions.

An alumni network, formed in August 2012, allows graduates from Pantai College of Nursing and Health Science and Gleneagles College of Nursing and its sister colleges in Malaysia to stay connected and share ideas for best practice.
For me, the key takeaway from the programme was this: that the passion to serve and to make a difference in the healthcare field knows no boundaries, professional or organisational.

ADMINISTERING CHANGE

While many of her peers were considering or pursuing a Masters in Business Administration, Celene Ting chose to take the less travelled path and applied to pursue a Masters degree in Health Administration instead.

“I was confident that the additional insights that I would gain on healthcare management through the course would give me an added advantage,” said the 27-year-old.

Celene discovered her keen interest in healthcare during a stint at an advertising and public relations firm where she was servicing several healthcare accounts.

Having been trained in the field of journalism and public communications, she wanted to do something with a greater purpose and decided to put her professional skills to good use by serving and supporting those in need.

The Masters in Health Administration course became the perfect complement to her existing skillset, enabling her to gain practical experience and interact with like-minded people who share the same motivation and passion for healthcare.

“The rigour of the curriculum, the dedication of the lecturers as well as the ample opportunities we were given to exchange knowledge and insights with fellow healthcare professionals strengthened our competencies and capabilities in our respective areas of work,” said Celene.

Upon graduation from Parkway College, Celene joined the hospice care sector as Assistant Manager for Community Relations.

“The ground exposure to home hospice care has really opened my eyes to a piece of reality that most people would rather shy away from,” she said. “I am confident of making a meaningful difference in hospice care and research which are growing areas that need greater public attention and support.”
THE THINKING NURSE

It is uncommon to find a job where one can marry two diverse interests, but for 28-year-old Aung Htet Htet, nursing was the perfect opportunity to pursue her passion in medical knowledge and teaching.

Htet Htet, who is from Myanmar, was first exposed to the medical field while handling specimens and chemical reagents during her undergraduate years in Yunnan, China. She then spent five years as a secondary school teacher in Mandalay, Myanmar before joining Parkway College’s School of Nursing in 2009.

“Nursing is an art,” said Htet Htet, who was one of the 53 who graduated with a Diploma in Nursing. “Not only do we need to know how to care for patients, we also need to know how to think and prioritise in order to be a good nurse.”

Over the last three years, Htet Htet not only learned medical-related knowledge like microbiology and pharmacology, but also about communication and collaborative management as part of an all-rounded course. A clinical attachment with Mount Elizabeth Hospital (MEH) exposed her to real situations where she learnt to keep calm in the face of emergency.

Although the workload was tiring and stressful, Htet Htet enjoyed the interesting modules and lecturers who inspired through their teaching methods. “It is their patience and support that helped us become what we are today,” she said.

Equally memorable was the companionship of her course mates who shared a passion for healthcare. Like Htet Htet, they came from other cities across Asia. Balancing the demands of school and bouts of homesickness also brought them closer as friends.

“We studied together, missed home and cried together,” she said. “Most importantly, we worked towards our calling as nurses together.”

Since April 2012, Htet Htet has been working full-time as a nurse in MEH. She has been enjoying every moment of her job and learning to apply nursing theories to real situations and building rapport with patients and their family members.

While little actions like a simple “thank you” from patients and encouragement from the doctors make her day, the joys of nursing has impacted her life in more ways than one.

“Nursing has inspired me to be systematic and thoughtful in my daily life. I am proud and glad to be a thinking nurse,” she said.
IHH wins Most Transparent Company Award

IHH Healthcare Berhad (IHH), which owns Parkway Pantai Limited (PPL), received the Most Transparent Company Award in the New Issues category at the SIAS Investor’s Choice Awards 2012.

Receiving the award on behalf of IHH at the 3 October 2012 Awards Ceremony was Dr Tan See Leng, Executive Director of IHH and Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of PPL.

The Investor’s Choice Awards recognises public-listed companies, which have demonstrated exemplary corporate governance and transparency practices throughout the year.

Since then, IHH has been given eight more awards from five other financial publications. The awards are:

• “Best IPO 2012” and “Best Malaysia Deal 2012” [FinanceAsia Achievement Awards]
• “Best Equity Deal/Best IPO 2012” and “Best Deal 2012 (Malaysia)” [The Asset Triple A Regional Awards]
• “Best IPO” [Asiamoney Awards]
• “Malaysia Capital Markets Deal Of The Year (2012)” [International Financing Review (IFR) Asia Awards]
• “Best Dual-Listed IPO 2012” and “Best Equity Deal 2012 – Southeast Asia” [Alpha Southeast Asia Awards]

Parkway Pantai Achieves JCI Accreditation

Parkway Pantai hospitals have achieved a JCI triennial re-accreditation hat trick! Congratulations to the Mount Elizabeth (MEH), Gleneagles (GEH), and Pantai Kuala Lumpur (PHKL) teams for passing with flying colours despite the more stringent standards. Impressively, both MEH and GEH scored full compliance in several important areas such as International Patient Safety Goals, Quality & Patient Safety, and Medication Management & Use. PHKL is now the first hospital in the Klang Valley and the second in Malaysia to achieve re-accreditation.
GLENEAGLES JPMC CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Parkway Pantai’s joint venture tertiary cardiac centre in Brunei has turned 10.

On 20 October 2012, Gleneagles JPMC marked the special occasion with a celebratory dinner graced by Guest-of-Honour Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr) Hj Awg Abu Bakar bin Hj Apong, Brunei’s Education Minister and Chairman of the Brunei Investment Agency, and Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Utama Dato Seri Setia Aug Hj Yahya, Minister of Industry and Primary Resources.

In his welcome speech, Dr Tan See Leng, Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Parkway Pantai Limited (PPL) lauded the close partnership between Parkway Pantai and the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Dr Tan was proud to note that Gleneagles JPMC has been consistently at the forefront of medical technology, and has helped thousands of heart patients over the decade.

According to Dr Peter Tay, Chief Executive Officer of Gleneagles JPMC, annual clinical audits by world-renowned cardiac specialists show that treatment modalities at Gleneagles JPMC are appropriate and the outcomes are equal to, or better than those of large international cardiac centres.

He added that Gleneagles JPMC is the third centre in Asia to use bioresorbable stents, among its many accomplishments.

The 21-licensed bed hospital, located in Jerudong Park, provides clinical services such as cardiac inpatient and outpatient specialist services, health and cardiac screening, coronary angiogram and interventional cardiology, open heart surgeries and cardiac rehabilitation.
A SEASON OF HOPE AND LOVE

Christmas descended early at Parkway Pantai’s four hospitals, with Mount Elizabeth, Mount Elizabeth Novena, Gleneagles and Parkway East bringing festive cheer to patients and staff alike.

MOUNT ELIZABETH HOSPITAL
Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital
GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL

SNAPSHOTS
PARKWAY EAST HOSPITAL

...
DOCTOR WHO

Used to looking after people’s health 24/7, over 300 of Parkway Pantai’s accredited doctors from its four hospitals comprising Mount Elizabeth Novena, Mount Elizabeth, Gleneagles and Parkway East found themselves well taken care of on the evening of 14 November 2012 in appreciation of their dedication.

For a relaxed tête-à-tête between the healthcare luminaries and Parkway Pantai’s board of directors, the doctors were treated to a luxurious evening of fine food and wines at the Four Seasons Hotel. Established a cappella group Budak Pantai gave a rousing performance as the icing on the cake.
Six Strong Years

Parkway Cancer Centre (PCC) celebrated its 6th year anniversary at the Goodwood Park Hotel on the evening of 2 November 2012 with the theme “Stay Connected”.

Within the short span of six years, PCC has had centres in Mount Elizabeth and Gleneagles hospitals, including a spanking new one that opened this year in Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital. More than half of PCC’s patients are referred to by friends or family through word-of-mouth.

PCC Co-founder and Medical Director, Dr Ang Peng Tiam, noted that beyond celebrating the anniversary, the dinner also brought together, for the first time, the different groups responsible for PCC’s success such as the Singapore staff, the regional network of CanHOPE counsellors, partner doctors and the pharmaceutical companies.
We have come a long way since we started six years ago and we will continue to work hard to bring the best care for our patients. All this is made possible because everyone worked together in the cause of PCC. We should all give ourselves a pat on the back and continue to work hard for the future.

— Dr Khoo Kei Siong, Deputy Medical Director, PCC

My heartiest congratulations to PCC on six magnificent years of patient care and I wish them many more years to come.

— Dr Lim Swee Wun, Executive Vice President, Singapore Operations, Parkway Pantai

“To me, it is phenomenal that they (the founders) were able to start out with four people having the same goals and aspirations and be able to harness the resources to create this entity called PCC over a short period of six years. It’s been a great honour and pleasure to be able to work with this great team that is Parkway Cancer Centre. Congratulations!”

— Dr Dean Koh, Colorectal Clinic Associates, Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Centre

May this family continue to grow and grow.

— Sister Tay Sok Har, Nursing Manager, PCC

“It’s always nice to celebrate a success story. I’ve known them since their inception and I’ve worked closely with them. I know the PCC story and it’s great to celebrate their success. Here’s wishing you more good years ahead.”

— Dr Leong See Odd, Kidney & Medical Centre, Gleneagles Medical Centre

“I hope that PCC will continue with its growth, continue to provide excellent care, and continue to be cohesive with its inter-referrals. I wish it all the best!”

— Dr Ronald Brett, Brett Ear, Nose and Throat Surgery, Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre

“Congratulations on these last six years. I hope to see 60 more good years of PCC.”

— Dr Freddy Teo, Senior Consultant, Haematology, PCC
no sacrifice big enough

To orthopaedic surgeon Dr Suresh Nathan, serving his patients and being there for his family trump everything else.

“Suresh has a way of identifying the contradictions that exist around us which we take for granted.”

Truer words could not have been spoken by his mentor Dr John Healey in New York, explaining the philosophical underpinnings of orthopaedic surgeon Dr Suresh Nathan’s early success.

the hospital a playground
Growing up with a nursing officer mother, it was quite common for Dr Nathan to accompany his mother to work and interact with her patients. A polio patient who was in an iron lung became his constant playmate at one point.

“The hospital was essentially our playground. The smell of disinfectant was always in the air. The clanging of the equipment, the things I touched. All of that was severely imprinted into my psyche,” recalls Dr Nathan.

Exposed to that kind of sensory bombardment, it became only natural for him to gravitate towards a career in medicine.
Orthopaedic surgery was also a decision he made without wavering. The carefree words of a child wanting to be a “bone doctor” was realised when he specialised in orthopaedic surgery, which offered him structure and precision.

“There’s a certain amount of fuzzy logic that goes into soft tissue operations such as a bowel surgery; they are not as anatomically defined. I love how the results in orthopaedics are always reproducible,” shares the 44-year-old, who sub-specialises in limb salvage, joint replacement and tumour surgery at his recently set up clinic at Mount Elizabeth Hospital.

discovering new knowledge
An academic at heart, Dr Nathan also got into research rather early in his medical career. In fact, he wrote his first scientific paper as a first year medical officer. With that, he was hooked to the entire process of discovery and sharing. These days, he has made inroads into molecular research, an aspect of research not usually considered the domain of an orthopaedic surgeon.

“I was one of the first researchers in the world – certainly in the region – who discovered that stem cells could be derived from fat. Back then the whole theory was debunked. But I wrote the paper anyway because that’s the truth, and I was not shy to present it,” he asserts.

That paper eventually earned him numerous accolades but that did not give him the satisfaction he craved. He went on to do a fellowship in oncology in New York, which not only exposed him to a whole new level of joint replacement techniques, but also an entirely new realm of self-fulfilment.

Upon his return, he was appointed as professor at the National University of Singapore, a position he had been coveting since young. His research delved deeper into cancer. A little quirk he discovered about six to seven years ago, though initially dismissed, began to gain momentum and is now believed to be quite real.

“I found a pattern in how tumours regulate their blood flow. Though there were many detractors, I continued developing it and now it is a very robust thing. I have a PhD student who has finished her thesis on it and if my theory is true, and I think it is, it may explain why a certain type of therapy in cancer doesn’t always work,” he explains.

“But none of this is very orthopaedic, is it?”

big responsibilities
His double interest in orthopaedics and oncology (cancer) may be new here but orthopaedic oncology is an accepted term in the global stage.

“There are a few of us around the world and some of us have become so far ahead of the curve that the systems are not ready to accommodate us. The energy that goes into implementing many things actually rests on our shoulders,” he reveals.

Another huge responsibility he takes seriously is the raising of his two young kids; a commitment he feels was worth giving up his professorship for.

“I made professorship at a very young age and I was given many leadership positions, but if I were to take them up, I think I’d be doing a great injustice to my kids. I won’t be there for them in the years they most need me,” says the father of a 10-year-old daughter and a seven-year-old son.
After mulling over it for a few years, he decided to move from an academic career to private practice. So now he is able to spend most of his time with his kids even if it means simply driving them to tuition, piano classes or swimming lessons. Married to his junior college sweetheart who is a family physician with her own practice, Dr Nathan could not be in a happier place. “All that’s left now is for me to get back to painting again. I have projects on the shelf at home right now that were started a year ago. I have been very lucky because my wife is very tolerant. I actually have a room at home dedicated to my art,” says the highly technical painter whose clinic walls showcase his talents.

being a doctor again

And he has no regrets about his move. “Although moving was a tough decision, each and every day I sit in this clinic and I create something new, I know I made the right choice. Knowing that there is an immediate impact in all I do really keeps the fire in me burning.”

One of the things that has been rekindled is the joy of giving the maximum possible time to each patient. “It’s like being a doctor again. As I talk to the patients now, I feel like a friend, I feel the warmth,” he says with a contented sigh.

Being in private practice has also allowed him to implement his visions without any constraints. He now does consultations over Skype, and has patients emailing him from across the globe from Pakistan, the Middle East, and even Russia. He is also able to purchase the equipment he believes are necessary to best treat his patients.

His patient-centric attitude was also the biggest reason for choosing Mount Elizabeth Hospital to set up his clinic. “A patient, especially someone who has had limbs or pelvis removed, can’t be going from centre to centre for his problems. It is simply not practical. Limb salvage needs a very mature institution that is able to provide all the services under one roof. I did my homework and I knew this is where I needed to be.”
It was just about 20 years ago when Dr Esther Chuwa, then a student in junior college, sat with her family across the table from her mother’s doctor, listening to him tell the family that her mother had been diagnosed with colon cancer.

“That was a turning point in my life, when all of a sudden, I had to grapple with such a diagnosis in the family. At that point of time, I didn’t fully understand what cancer meant. I just knew that it was a disease that you can die from,” she remembers. “It was then that I realised what a powerful position doctors are in, and that the job could affect not just the lives of their patients, but of their families as well.”

That was when the dream of becoming a doctor was birthed in Dr Chuwa’s mind. And after years of hard work and dedication, this dream has brought the 37-year-old back full circle to Gleneagles Hospital, the very place where her mother was treated for her cancer.

**full circle**

From being on the receiving end of a cancer diagnosis for a family member, to being the one giving the diagnosis, Dr Esther Chuwa has dedicated her life to making recovery easier for breast cancer patients.
close to the heart
After medical school, Dr Chuwa underwent surgical training before choosing her specialty in breast surgery. “I chose general surgery from the start, because I found that I was quite good with my hands. And my choice of breast surgery came about because I discovered during my training that as a woman, I was able to identify with the patients,” she shares.

“Many come to me with the idea that breast cancer can kill you – which isn’t always true… and they are always very concerned about their breasts, which are a very important symbol of women’s femininity,” Dr Chuwa says of her patients. “And as a fellow woman, I can hold their hand, or give them a hug if they need comfort. And as somebody who is trained, I can offer information about surgeries or treatments, instead of believing the myths about the disease.”

To help give her patients a better quality of life after breast surgery, Dr Chuwa chose to sub-specialise in oncoplastic breast surgery, which incorporates plastic surgery techniques into breast surgery to produce better surgical results. “Many people think that surgery for breast cancer means you either take out the whole breast or a part of it. But if you give a woman a choice, rarely do they choose to remove a breast if they don’t have to, because that leaves them flat-chested,” she explains.

“With oncoplastic breast surgery, part of the breast is removed and the breast is reshaped so the shape of the breast is retained. So even if they have to suffer from cancer, they don’t have to be reminded of it when they look in the mirror. Some of my patients even say that they feel that they look better after the surgery.”

shaping a patient’s future
While there are less people dying of breast cancer, Dr Chuwa finds that their quality of life after breast cancer is often lacking. “When a diagnosis is first made, or when the patient is undergoing treatment, many of their friends and family will rally around to support them. But after treatment, there is a void that leaves the patient helpless,” she shares. “They are not sure if
they can go back to their previous roles, and that is the point where they need a lot of support.”

In a bid to help breast cancer survivors embrace all that they have gone through on the road to recovery, Dr Chuwa became active in the breast cancer support group, Alpine Blossoms, at KK Hospital in 2008 where she was formerly practising. “Being doctors, we are always proud of having a new drug or new surgical procedure to help our patients, we often forget about the psychosocial effects such an illness can have, where they may feel lost as wives, mothers and daughters,” she reveals. “The support group helps them to embrace what they have gone through, and to go on to live productive lives.

“We hope to empower them with knowledge so that they can debunk the myths surrounding cancer. In return, the older members become living testimonies and are able to help others who have been newly diagnosed.”

Now that Alpine Blossoms has become self-supporting, Dr Chuwa is no longer involved in their activities. But she continues to help breast cancer survivors as one of the doctors on the Breast Cancer Foundation panel, speaking at workshops and talks aimed at helping the patients cope with cancer and survivorship.

maternal instincts

Outside of the hospital, Dr Chuwa is happily married to a lawyer, and is a mother of two young children: a two-and-a-half-year-old daughter and newborn son. And she has quite an epic love story to tell.

“There were only three female doctors in my batch, and I listened to my professor’s advice back in training that I was not to be in a relationship or get married until I completed my surgical training and became a specialist – after I turned 32!” she laughs. “I knew my husband from our Junior College days. However, because our parents didn’t allow us to date at that age, we only got together later. And he patiently waited eight years to marry me, and even took no-pay leave from his job to come with me when I had to go overseas for my sub-specialty training.”

Being a wife and mother has given Dr Chuwa a new outlook on what it means to be a woman, allowing her to relate to her patients better. But with her new role also comes an even bigger challenge – time management. “This is the very reason why I decided to enter private practice, to allow me more time with my family,” she says. And the choice of opening her clinic in Gleneagles Hospital was easy – not only is her older sister a senior nurse manager at the hospital, Dr Chuwa also saw that there was a lack of female breast surgeons in the hospital.

When she needs to unwind, Dr Chuwa takes time out to run or swim, and she also loves to bake. “These days my daughter has become my little helper when I’m baking, so it’s a lot more fun. And she absolutely loves it!” she laughs. “We also like to go out as a family to the beach or the park – anywhere with wide, open spaces for us to relax and to spend time as a family.”

Dr Chuwa has two big motivations in life – to be with her family at the end of the day and to send her patients home healthy. “It’s a constant déjà vu when I’m on the job – seeing my patients recover brings me back to the time when I was the patient’s family, when I saw my mother recover her health. That’s what I want at the end of the day, to ensure that their life isn’t totally changed by cancer. You may have to change their lifestyle, but beyond that they are still the same person.”
Deputy Minister of Health Yang Berhormat Datuk Rosnah Shirlin Binti Haji Abdul Rashid Shirlin launched Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur (PHKL)’s Wear It Pink 2012 campaign in October. This campaign was part of PHKL’s initiative in conjunction with the International Breast Cancer Awareness month to raise awareness on breast cancer through health education, prevention, early stage diagnosis and effective treatments.

“I truly admire Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur’s effort over the years in educating the society and reminding the public on the importance of early detection and prevention of breast cancer. It takes strong commitment and unfading enthusiasm to constantly deliver an informative platform such as the Wear It Pink campaign for over 10 years!” said Yang Berhormat Datuk Rosnah Shirlin.

Encik Khairil Anuar Abdullah, Chairman of Pantai Holdings Berhad said in his speech, “With the unified efforts and smart partnerships of various support groups, NGOs, breast cancer survivors, medical practitioners and members of the public, we are able to reduce premature deaths from non-communicable diseases such as breast cancer.”
At the launch, PHKL also donated RM20,000 in the form of breast prostheses to Dr Shoba Nainani, Vice President of Breast Cancer Support Society Negeri Sembilan, recipient of the Wear It Pink 2012 campaign. The support group is a non-profit organisation established in Negeri Sembilan to address the lack of peer support for women and men diagnosed with breast cancer.

The Wear It Pink 2012 campaign activities included a two-month subsidised mammogram to the public and talks at several corporate organisations, culminating in a charity gala musical night at the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Petronas Twin Towers. This musical Spanish Sensations featured renowned Spanish guitarist Rafael Serrallet and proceeds of the ticket sales were channelled to Negeri Sembilan.

Present at the gala musical night were H.E. Madam Maria Bassols, Ambassador of Spain; H.E. Mr Luc Vandebon, Ambassador and Head of Delegation to the European Union; H.E. Mr Marco V Balarezo, Ambassador of Peru and H.E. Madam Lyudmila Vorobyeva, Ambassador of Russia.
from high tea to air rescue

Pantai Hospital Ipoh (PHI) navigates from event to event with ease. It is all in a day’s work for the healthcare provider.

pink october charity high tea

In conjunction with ‘Pink October’ celebrations last year, PHI and Persatuan Pink Champion Perak (PPCP), a breast cancer support group, with the collaboration of Baiduri, Puspanita, Soroptimist International and Kelab Bakti Gunung Kledang organised a fund raising charity high tea in October 2012.

Guest-of-Honour YB Dato Dr Mah Hang Soon, State Executive Council Member said in his address, “Breast cancer continues to be the most predominant cancer amongst women in Malaysia. One in 19 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer by the age of 85 and about 4,000 women are diagnosed each year, mostly between 35 and 60 years old.

“The key to prevention is early detection and local research has shown that Malaysian women are more likely to go for breast cancer screening if the men in their lives are supportive,” he added.

He stressed that it is important that the patient’s support network, especially men, are equipped with adequate knowledge about the disease and how to help their female loved ones cope with breast cancer.

The charity high tea also saw dance performances and a highlight fashion show by breast cancer survivors as well as a guest appearance by Y Bhd Dato Mohd Nor Khalid (DatoLat), a renowned Malaysian cartoonist. The event raised about RM60,000 with Dato Dr Mah pledging another RM3,000.

The funds will be channelled towards breast cancer awareness activities, social outreaches, campaigns and running of a recently established PPCP resource centre at PHI for patients and relatives.
2nd concepts in retrieval medicine

Pantai Holdings and PHI lent their support to the 2nd Concepts in Retrieval Medicine Course, an international medical symposium supported by the Commonwealth through the Australia-Malaysia Institute under the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Held for the first time in Perak from 22 to 25 November, the symposium drew 156 participants from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Australia and USA. They comprised mainly medical professionals such as doctors, paramedics and nurses and non-medical staff such as pilots, police, fire and rescue personnel and air crew.

Through lectures and skill stations, the participants were taught best practices in retrieving sick patients, including cardiac patients, with a specific focus on aeromedical transportation.

medical partners appreciation night

PHI organised a Medical Partners Appreciation Night in November 2012 to recognise its strategic partners and doctors for their longstanding support and cooperation.

In his welcome speech, Encik Anwar Anis, CEO of PHI, said, “Together we see ourselves as a team who have become of paramount importance for the general public. We have come a long way as partners in health, bringing quality care to those in need. Pantai Hospital Ipoh has become one of the preferred healthcare providers in the state due to the support of doctors as its integral partners.”

Encik Anwar also shared about the latest upgrades in hospital facilities including the Cardiac Catheterisation unit and purchase of a bone densitometry machine and a lithotripter in December. He added that PHI was refurbishing its wards in stages and recently had a new coat of paint on the building exterior.
The word “cancer” brings fear and trepidation to the minds of many, with the common misconception that all cancers will lead to death. But there are cancers that you can recover from with early detection and treatment. Breast cancer is one of them.

**breast cancer in Singapore**

Though breast cancer is the cancer that claims the highest number of lives of women in Singapore, it is also considered one of the most treatable cancers. At present, there are two common surgical methods of treatment. The first is the mastectomy, which is the removal of the entire breast, and sometimes muscles in the chest wall and lymph nodes that surround the area.

If the cancer is detected in its early stages, it is also possible for surgeons to conduct Breast Conserving Surgery. This is when the surgeon removes only the cancerous lump and some normal tissue around it while leaving the rest of the breast tissue intact.

**locate, remove, recover**

Introducing Radioisotope Occult Lesion Localisation, a pioneering method that improves and simplifies treatment for breast cancer now available at Mount Elizabeth and Mount Elizabeth Novena hospitals.
The advantage to this surgery is that the cosmetic appearance of the breast is maintained, and both physical and psychological recovery from the surgery is easier.

**present technology**

As breast conserving surgeries are best conducted when tumours are non-palpable, or too small to feel physically, one of the biggest challenges surgeons face is precisely locating the tumour before removing it.

At present, the most commonly used procedure is the hookwire localisation method. A highly experienced radiologist is required, not just in reading breast imaging but to insert the wire using image guided by ultrasound to the precise location of the tumour. Radiologists use ultrasound, MRI image or stereotactic mammogram to first locate the tumour, and then insert a hookwire into the breast as a guide to mark the location of the tumour before the surgeon can remove it.

But a major problem with this method is the possibility of the wire slipping or breaking during the procedure, thus causing injury to the area surrounding the tumour and making it difficult for the surgeon to accurately identify the location of the tumour.

**better for surgeon and patient**

In order to improve the accuracy of surgeons locating a non-palpable tumour, the European Oncology Institute in Milan invented the Radioisotope Occult lesion Localisation (ROLL) method in 1996.

Dr Felicia Tan, a specialist in breast surgery who practises at Mount Elizabeth Hospital and Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital, first introduced this technique to Singapore in 2011. She also pioneered ROLL in the region.

In this method, surgeons first use image guidance to locate the tumour and place a radioisotope marker in the centre of the occult lesion. A manual gamma probe is then used during surgery to locate and remove the lesion and any cancerous tissue around it.

Aside from improving the accuracy of locating an occult lesion, ROLL allows for faster surgery. The patient also spends less time under anaesthesia as compared to other surgical methods. ROLL has been found to cause minimal discomfort to the patient, and no additional radiological protection is required for surgical staff during the procedure.

According to Dr Tan, “Precise localisation of the abnormal tissues is critical as it allows the surgeon to better plan the skin incision for better cosmetic outcome, as well as optimising the results in breast conservation surgery. ROLL also allows minimal removal of healthy breast tissues while ensuring that the tumour is entirely removed.”

ROLL has been accepted as the alternative to wire-guided localisation in patients with non-palpable breast tumours undergoing biopsy, leading to easier lesion excision and greater patient comfort.

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**RADIOISOTOPE OCCULT LESION LOCALISATION (ROLL)**

- Suspicous microcalcifications / lump in the breast.
- Injection of radioactive material under image guidance.
- Gamma probe used to detect area of radioactivity during surgery.
- Suspicious lump is removed and sent to the laboratory for testing.
Gleneagles resident doctor-nurse band has released its first original album.

It is said that music soothes the savage beast, helping one to relax and calm down. At Gleneagles Hospital, there is a group of over 10 doctors, nurses and staff – known as D’Nightingales and Frenz - who use their musical talents to unwind after a hard day’s work and connect with one another.

In a short span of four years, from casual jamming sessions as hobbyists who bonded over a shared passion for making music and singing, they have since evolved to getting paid gigs at medical conferences, corporate dinner and dance events and even collecting awards along the way, the latest being the runner-up of Live-O-Rocks, a nation-wide live band competition in July 2012.

D’Nightingales and Frenz embarked on a new challenge last Christmas: launching their debut music album of original songs for charity. This original album was entirely funded by Gleneagles Hospital as part of its ongoing corporate social responsibility initiatives and features 10 of the band members.

"Working on this album was a dream come true for the band. Now that we have undergone professional recording, we have set higher standards and expectations of one another, and together as a band. We thank Gleneagles for their encouragement and turning our dream into reality. Now we can hopefully realise other people’s dreams through the album sales as 100 per cent of the proceeds go to charity," said Dr Patrick Goh, a full-time specialist sports physician who wrote, composed and produced all 10 tracks in the album.

“We are very happy to be funding this album for a good cause. It is inspiring that our healthcare professionals have taken the initiative to harness their talents to improve lives beyond providing quality care and service to our patients," said Dr Kok Mun Foong, Chief Executive Officer of Gleneagles Hospital.

One thousand copies of the album, entitled Will You Remember, have already been on sale since December for S$10 a copy at Parkway Pantai’s four hospitals in Singapore: Gleneagles, Mount Elizabeth, Mount Elizabeth Novena and Parkway East. All proceeds from the sale of the album will be donated to Mercy Relief, an independent non-governmental humanitarian charity, which seeks to provide assistance to disaster-stricken communities in Asia.
Formed in 2008, D’Nightingales and Frenz is a band comprising doctors and nurses mostly from Gleneagles Hospital who share a passion for live music and singing. Their philosophy towards music mirrors their approach to providing medical care, which is not to dwell on past glories and to remain progressive and relevant. They have been playing covers of pop and slow rock but are increasingly playing more of their self-compositions to challenge themselves.

**MUST LISTEN TRACKS**

*Describing the music album as “epic, intimate and in-between”, a celebration of friendship and community and backed by an uplifting thematic concept rooted in the resilience of the human spirit, Dr Goh shares his thoughts behind some of the recommended tracks on the album.*

**The Beautiful One** - This track is about loving the environment and the ailing earth.

**Will You Remember** - This is a song about how just one encounter with a person could make a difference to your life – this is especially significant for anyone working in disaster relief, where it isn’t just the person being helped whose life is changed. The things they see and experiences they have out in the field also impact the lives of volunteer workers.

**The Rain** - This song came to me after my daily swim in the mornings, on a day where the rain was just pouring down. The idea behind the song is a flame that cannot be snuffed out by the rain, and how resilient people can be.

**Sound of Rain** - This song ties in perfectly with The Rain, and talks about the healing effect of the rain, which helps to wash away your burdens and fears.
**VEGETABLE MEDLEY**

**BY CHEF JANICE WONG**

*This recipe is adapted with kind permission from Parkway Cancer Centre's Awakening the Appetite.*

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**This dish is full of nutrients, especially protein from the beans, low in fat, high in fibre and delicious to boot. It can be eaten as a main course or a cold salad.**

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**SERVES 4**

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon curry powder
8 ladyfingers (okra), cleaned, and cut on the diagonal into chunks
6 quail eggs
50g long beans, cut small
½ cup frozen peas, thawed
1 bunch watercress, washed, large stems removed, and chopped
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
1 cup canned kidney beans, rinsed, and drained
1 cup canned lentils, rinsed, and drained
½ small white radish (daikon), peeled, and diced small
1 small beetroot, peeled, and diced small
Salt and pepper to taste
⅛ teaspoon basil seeds, soaked in water (optional)

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**DIRECTIONS**

Heat a wok until very hot and add the olive oil. Next, add in the curry powder and cook for about 30 seconds, till the smell of curry hits you in the nose. Add the ladyfingers and stir-fry until slightly softened —about 5 minutes.

Set a very small pot of water over medium heat and gently cook the quail eggs until hard boiled —about 5 minutes. Let cool and remove the shell. Cut in quarters.

Cook the long beans and peas in salted boiling water for about 3 minutes. Drain and let cool slightly. In a large bowl, toss all of the ingredients together and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. When ready to serve, sprinkle the basil seeds (if using) over the vegetable mixture.
There are very few pairs of hands you can fully trust.
We can offer you some more.

Whether welcoming a new member to your family or using another of our specialised services, you’ll find that we are with you every step of the way. At Parkway East, our range of medical facilities combined with the warmth of a family environment ensures that each of our patients and their loved ones feel completely at home when they are with us.
Imagine a hospital where keeping you exceptional is business as usual.