

# CEO'S MESSAGE



Over the past year, HSA has intensified efforts to optimise and make the most of our finite time and resources. Through streamlining processes, reprioritising work, and leveraging new technologies and digitalisation, we are committed to transforming and becoming an even more efficient and effective organisation, better equipped to tackle future challenges.

Every single transformation effort contributes to better productivity, better service, or a more pleasant work experience. Transformation requires hard work, dedication, and a willingness to embrace change.

## **ADVANCING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: IMPROVING STAKEHOLDER CONVENIENCE AND ENHANCING SURVEILLANCE**

In January 2024, we introduced the Singapore Health Product Access and Regulatory E-System (SHARE), a one-stop portal for Cell, Tissue and Gene Therapy Products (CTGTP) Dealer's Notice and Class 1 CTGTP Notification. SHARE enables the seamless submission, checking, and updating of new dealer's notices and product notifications within a unified system. This new portal is part of our ongoing efforts to streamline regulatory processes and to achieve efficient transactions and enable closer collaboration between regulators, businesses, industry partners and the general public, facilitating access to safe health products in Singapore.

To enhance our surveillance of health products in Singapore, we used data analytics and artificial intelligence to improve and optimise the generation of adverse event statistics for trend analysis. We strengthened our analysis of electronic health records data by harnessing natural language processing models, large language models, and new algorithms to detect adverse drug reactions and

facilitate safety signal evaluation. This enables us to take proactive and swift measures, to safeguard public health when required.

## **SECURING THE BLOOD SUPPLY: ENLARGING DONOR POOL AND ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY**

In our commitment to securing the blood supply, we have kept abreast of the latest scientific evidence. We reviewed and eased our restrictions on donors who have previously lived in the variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD)-risk areas of France, Ireland, and the United Kingdom from October 2023. This is in light of recent international data indicating minimal risk of vCJD transmission through leucodepleted blood products. This revision, which applies to apheresis donation, has expanded the pool of eligible donors.

To make blood donation more accessible, we opened our fifth Bloodbank, Bloodbank@One Punggol, in August 2023. Strategically located in the North-East region, Bloodbank@One Punggol is a convenient facility for our donors who are living, working, and studying in the area. It also features smart digital solutions, including self-help BMI machines, post-donation refreshment vending machines, and an enhanced queue management system.

Our commitment to patient-centric care led to the successful right-siting of pre-transfusion testing previously conducted by HSA's Crossmatch Laboratory for all private healthcare institutions. This enables private hospitals to undertake the testing in their own premises. Right-siting has enhanced patient safety by making compatible blood available within private hospitals. As a result, this initiative has led to expedited pre-transfusion testing, minimised risk of errors, and reduced waiting times for patients.

## **FURTHERING OUR SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE: INNOVATIONS IN VACCINE, URINE, AND DISASTER VICTIM IDENTIFICATION ANALYSIS**

We have developed a Lot Release App for locally manufactured vaccines. The digitalisation and automation of the lot release process has enabled us to streamline the workflow and improve efficiency, productivity, and data management. This has led to significant savings in man-hours. The new system also features real-time tracking of lot release status and an alert system that triggers different actions to ensure timely lot release.

We have also introduced automation for drugs of abuse urine sample analysis, which has notably reduced cannabinoid analysis processing time from two working days to four hours, resulting in a saving of 350 man-hours annually. The urine testing service has also been expanded to cover emerging drugs and achieved enhanced sensitivity in our testing of controlled drugs in a wide range of edible products, including medications.

We are the first laboratory outside of the United States to implement CODIS 11 to enhance our Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) capabilities. This enables us to process DNA profiles and perform kinship reconciliation from DVI incidents in-house, strengthening our capabilities for DVI in mass fatality incidents.

## **LOOKING TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL**

By optimising resources, embracing new technologies, and streamlining processes, we are well-positioned to fulfil our mission and vision. Our focus on innovation and dedication to enhancing public health and safety, securing the blood supply, and advancing the administration of justice has enabled HSA to be well-prepared to fulfil our responsibilities and duties for a better future for all.

**Dr CHOONG MAY LING, MIMI**  
Chief Executive Officer