

Cynthia Goh Distinguished Lectureship 2026

The Power of Presence: Bringing the Person back into Focus

In an era of super-specialisation and the increasing use of technology, the fundamental human connection between patient and clinician is often lost. Despite claiming to provide patient or person-centred care the focus is on diagnosis, not on the person with the diagnosis. Efficiency is valued more than empathy. However, being present with deep attention and vulnerability can create a healing space that restores dignity and trust. Presence is not merely physical proximity but an intention to be with the patient, rather simply doing something for the patient. Listening without judgement or the urge to fix problems allows the person to reveal themselves and to feel seen, heard and valued.

Presence can alleviate total pain, addressing not just physical symptoms but existential and spiritual suffering that often goes unrecognised. This is not a soft skill but a vital competency that humanises the care environment and enriches the life of the person and the carer.

Friday, 13 February 2026

11.30am – 2.00pm

Lecture Theatre, National Cancer Centre Singapore

30 Hospital Boulevard, Singapore 168583

Lunch with Lohei will be served from 11.30am

Programme starts at 12.30pm

To register for the onsite lunch and lecture, please click [here](#)

If you prefer to attend via Zoom, please register [here](#)

Closing date for registration: 20 January 2026

For more details and enquiry, please contact Wei Yee at sum.wei.yee@nccs.com.sg

Speaker

Dr Rosalie Shaw

PSM, OAM, PBM, FRACMA, FACHPM
Palliative Care Consultant
Hollywood Private Hospital
Perth, Australia



Dr Rosalie Shaw is a pioneering palliative care physician, instrumental in establishing services in Australia and Singapore. In 1981 she established the first hospital-based palliative care unit in Australia at the Repatriation General Hospital (now Hollywood Private Hospital), Perth. In 1992 she was invited to Singapore to be the Medical Director of Hospice Care Association (now HCA Hospice), a position she held until she was appointed as the inaugural Executive Director of the Asia Pacific Hospice Palliative Care Network (APHN) in 1999 to 2009. During her time in APHN, she made 124 visits to 22 countries as a clinician, teacher, and management consultant, helping places like India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam, and Mongolia, conducting bedside and classroom trainings to doctors and nurses. She had also served as an expert consultant with the World Health Organization (WHO), providing management consultation and advocating for palliative care inclusion in primary health care systems in places like Kuwait, Tonga, and Kiribati.

Dr Shaw was awarded the Public Service Medal and the Order of Australia Medal by the Australian Government, and the Public Service Medal (PBM) by the Singapore Government. She wrote about her experiences in Singapore in *Soft Sift in an Hourglass – Hope and Resilience at the End of Life*, published in 2009.

Programme



Opening Address



Cynthia Goh Distinguished Lecture



Panel Discussion

Organised by



Cynthia Goh
Palliative Care Institute

Lunch sponsored by



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