

A photograph of the Singapore skyline, featuring several prominent skyscrapers and a bridge over a body of water. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The buildings are modern and glass-fronted, reflecting the sky. The bridge in the foreground has multiple arches and is supported by pillars in the water. The water is calm, reflecting the buildings and the sky.

SINGAPORE HEALTHCARE IMMERSION PROGRAMME

PART 1: A GUIDE TO
SINGAPORE

MOH HOLDINGS

CONTENT

Introducing Singapore	01
Working in Singapore	03
Living in Singapore	04
Overview of Singapore's Public Healthcare System	07

INTRODUCING SINGAPORE

Singapore is a vibrant and cosmopolitan country located at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia.

A bustling city-state and world-class city to live, work and play, Singapore is a globally-connected and multi-cultural country that is also an international hub for the financial, IT, logistics and medical sectors.

Singapore is:

- The fourth largest exchange trading centre in the world and home to many global businesses given its variety of business-friendly policies that promote the ease of doing business;
- Ranked as having the best healthcare infrastructure in Asia and the fourth best in the world by IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook in 2009;
- Well-recognised as a city with one of the highest quality of living in the world (Mercer Survey, 2010) and ranked as Asia's best country to work in (IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2010);
- Regarded as a safe country with an efficient judicial system and vigilant law enforcement policies.

DID YOU KNOW?

- With a total land area of 710.3 sq km, Singapore is only slightly smaller than New York city, while Tokyo is three times larger.
- Commonly known as a 'Garden City', almost 50 per cent of Singapore is covered by greenery. Efforts to make Singapore a city in a garden started in 1963. To date, there are over 300 major parks and four nature reserves in Singapore.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT SINGAPORE

History and Government

Modern Singapore first established her roots in 1819 under colonial rule, with Sir Stamford Raffles building a British port. Singapore flourished as a major port city and quickly became a node of trade in Southeast Asia. In 1965, Singapore gained full independence, establishing a parliamentary republic with a legal system founded in the English common law system. The Cabinet has been led by the current Prime Minister, Mr Lee Hsien Loong, since August 2004. The current President, Dr Tony Tan, was elected on 27 August 2011.

People and Culture

Home to over five million residents, Singapore's population is made up of Chinese (76.8%), Malay (13.9%), Indian (7.9%) and other races (1.4%). English is the main language of instruction, with a mother tongue for each major ethnicity.

Many professionals and investors from all over the world come to Singapore to work and do business. About one in four skilled workers in Singapore come from overseas. Such diversity translates into a unique mix of religions, languages, cultural traditions and cuisines. To work in Singapore is to join an international workforce that is highly skilled and proficient in English and often, in one other regional language. The government and corporations also believe in training, offering continuous opportunities to boost qualifications, productivity and skills of the labour force.

A melting pot of various cultures, Singapore also celebrates the religious and cultural festivals of its population. These include the Muslim Hari Raya Puasa and Haji, the Hindu Deepavali, the Chinese Lunar New Year and Christmas.

For a list of Singapore's public holidays, visit www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/employment-rights-conditions/leave-and-holiday/Pages/PublicHolidays2012.aspx

Climate

Singapore is safe from natural calamities and has a tropical climate all year round, with the exception of two monsoon seasons in June and in December.

To find out more about Singapore, visit www.yoursingapore.com

Currency

Singapore Dollar (SGD)

International Country Code

+65

Internet Country Code

.sg

WORKING IN SINGAPORE

Work Pass

Non-residents must hold a valid work pass before they can work in Singapore. There are different types of work passes, each designed for applicants with different qualifications and experiences.

The **Employment Pass (EP)** applies to foreigners with recognised qualifications who earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD 3,000. Employers are required to make applications for EPs on behalf of the job candidates. Any change of employer will require a new application. The **S Pass** is for skilled middle-level talent, e.g. those earning at least SGD 2,000 a month.

For more information, visit the Ministry of Manpower's website at www.mom.gov.sg

Singapore Tax System

Singapore's taxation rate is one of the most competitive in the world. The amount of tax that one pays depends on how much he/she earns and on his/her tax residency in Singapore. After deducting personal reliefs, personal income taxes are levied on a graduated scale which starts at 0% and is capped at 20%.

For more information, visit the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore website at www.iras.gov.sg

DID YOU KNOW?

- Foreign talent rank Singapore as Asia's best country to work in. (The Global Competitiveness Report, 2011 – 2012, World Economic Forum)
- Singapore has the best labour/employer relations in Asia. (The Global Competitiveness Report 2011 – 2012, World Economic Forum)
- Singapore is the first choice for Asian expatriates. (ECA Location Rankings, ECA International, 24 March 2010)

LIVING IN SINGAPORE

Housing

Singapore has a wide selection of accommodation catering to a variety of budgets. These range from HDB flats and condominiums to service apartments.

HDB flats are public housing that are located in various towns across the country. Each town is a self-sufficient community with schools, bus/MRT stations, places of worship as well as sports, recreational and medical facilities. Condominiums are private apartments with facilities such as swimming pool, gym and round-the-clock security. Serviced apartments are another option that provide value-added services such as cleaning, laundry and room services.

Communications

There are three major service providers in Singapore, namely SingTel, Starhub and M1, offering a wide range of local and international calling services. One can opt for a fixed line or sign up for digital voice lines. One can also subscribe to a mobile service plan.

Transportation

Singapore's main forms of public transportation are buses, the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) and taxis.

Public bus transport is operated by two operators, namely SBS Transit and SMRT. Both operators serve their own network of routes and bus interchanges throughout Singapore. Most buses in Singapore are air-conditioned.

The MRT is another quick and easy way of getting around. The train network consists of four main lines which span across most of Singapore.

Taxis are readily available on the streets, from a taxi stand, or via phone or internet booking. They impose various surcharges, including those for Electronic Road Pricing (ERP), peak hours, midnight and public holidays. Surcharges are also imposed at certain locations such as Singapore Changi Airport. Fares are metered and surcharges are listed upfront.

'The Pinnacle@Duxton, 50 storeys high, is Singapore's tallest public housing development. It won the 2011 Urban Land Institute (ULI) Global Awards for Excellence and was developed by Singapore's HDB.'



Image Courtesy of the Housing & Development Board

Banking

Singapore is home to a wide array of financial institutions. There are six local banks - DBS (Development Bank of Singapore); OCBC (Overseas-Chinese Banking Corporation); UOB (United Overseas Bank); Bank of Singapore Ltd; Far Eastern Bank Ltd; and Singapore Island Bank Ltd. There are also 26 foreign banks operating in Singapore.

Each bank has its own requirements for opening an account. Generally, one is required to produce a copy of his/her employment pass, passport, employer's letter and proof of mailing address to open an account.

Many banks and billing organisations also offer GIRO. This is a service where one can make payment for utility, taxes, credit card expenses, etc. via electronic means. With GIRO, one's monthly salary can also be credited directly into his/her bank account. Application forms to arrange for GIRO transactions can be obtained from all participating billing organisations.

Dining and shopping

A myriad of cuisines are available in Singapore, from Chinese, Indian and Malay to French, Italian and Japanese. There are different types of dining establishments available, ranging from coffee shops, hawker centres and food courts in shopping malls to casual and fine-dining restaurants. Prices vary depending on the location and choice of establishments.

Most shopping centres are open seven days a week. A handful of shopping malls and stores offer late night shopping on selected weekends. Major supermarket chains include NTUC Fairprice, Cold Storage, Shop & Save and Giant. Some of the outlets are open 24 hours daily. There are also round-the-clock convenience stores such as 7-Eleven and Cheers across the island.

Most shops include a 7% Goods & Services Tax (GST) in their prices. Many dining establishments also include a 10% service charge in their final bill.

OVERVIEW OF SINGAPORE'S PUBLIC HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

The Ministry of Health (MOH), established to manage Singapore's public healthcare system, aims to ensure that good and affordable basic medical services are available to all Singaporeans. The population is encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle, taking responsibility for one's own health. Safety nets are provided however, to ensure that no Singaporean is denied access to the healthcare system or turned away public hospitals because of the lack of money.

Singapore's national healthcare expenditure is about 4% of its GDP. While its healthcare system has received praise and recognition both locally and internationally, Singapore is continuously fine-tuning and improving the system to ensure that the country remains committed to medical excellence.

Primary Healthcare

Singapore's network of 18 outpatient polyclinics and some 2,000 private medical practitioner clinics provide primary healthcare services. Each polyclinic is an affordable, subsidised one-stop health centre providing outpatient medical care, follow-up of patients discharged from hospitals, immunisation, health screening and education, investigative facilities and pharmacy services.

Private practitioners provide 80% of primary healthcare services while government polyclinics account for the remaining 20%.

Hospital Care

There are eight public hospitals in Singapore of which six are general hospitals one is a women's and children's hospital and the last, a psychiatry hospital. The general hospitals provide inpatient and specialist outpatient services and a 24-hour emergency department.

The hospitals are grouped into six healthcare clusters - Alexandra Health (managing Khoo Teck Puat Hospital), National Healthcare Group (managing Tan Tock Seng Hospital and the Institute of Mental Health), National University Health System (managing National University Hospital), Jurong Health Services (managing the upcoming Ng Teng Fong Hospital), SingHealth (managing Singapore General Hospital and KK Women's & Children's Hospital) and Eastern Health Alliance (managing Changi General Hospital) – to provide a seamless delivery of care.

There are also six national specialty centres for the treatment of cancers, heart conditions, eye, skin, nervous systems and dental problems.



Images Courtesy of Jurong Health Services, National Healthcare Group, National University Health System, Singapore Health Services, Eastern Health Alliance, Alexandra Health Pte Ltd



DID YOU KNOW?

- IMD's World Competitiveness Yearbook ranked Singapore's health infrastructure 3rd out of 55 countries in 2007.
- In 2003, the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) ranked Singapore's healthcare system as the third best in the world and the country best prepared to deal with a major medical crisis in Asia.
- All of Singapore's public hospitals have been accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI).

Intermediate and Long Term Care (ILTC)

There is a comprehensive range of residential and community-based healthcare services that cater to the long-term care needs of Singaporeans. Such services include community hospitals, chronic sick hospitals, nursing homes, in-patient hospice institutions, home medical, home nursing and home hospice care services, day rehabilitation centres, dementia day care centres, psychiatric day care centres and psychiatric rehabilitation homes.

Integrated Care

Singapore's public healthcare adopts the regional healthcare system model, where a region is anchored by an acute hospital that is linked to a community rehabilitation hospital and supported by a network of primary care providers, community home care teams and day rehabilitation centres. This system is replicated across Singapore to provide patients with holistic and integrated care. The Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) has been set up to smoothen the transition of patients from one care setting to another.

For more information, visit the following websites:

Ministry of Health

www.moh.gov.sg

Jurong Health Services (JH)

www.juronghealth.com.sg

Agency for Integrated Care

www.aic.sg

National Healthcare Group (NHG)

www.nhg.com.sg

Alexandra Health Pte Ltd (AHPL)

www.ktph.com.sg

National University Health System (NUHS)

www.nuhs.edu.sg

Eastern Health Alliance (EHA)

www.cgh.com.sg

Singapore Health Services (SingHealth)

www.singhealth.com.sg



MOH Holdings (MOHH), the holding company of Singapore's public healthcare assets, provides systems-level strategising and coordination and facilitates collaboration across clusters and healthcare institutions. In doing so, it enhances overall public healthcare system performance, while ensuring closer alignment to the Ministry of Health's vision, mission and priorities.

MOH Holdings Pte Ltd

1 Maritime Square (Lobby C)

#11-25 HarbourFront Centre

Singapore 099253

Tel : (65) 6622 0980

Fax : (65) 6720 0980

www.mohh.com.sg

