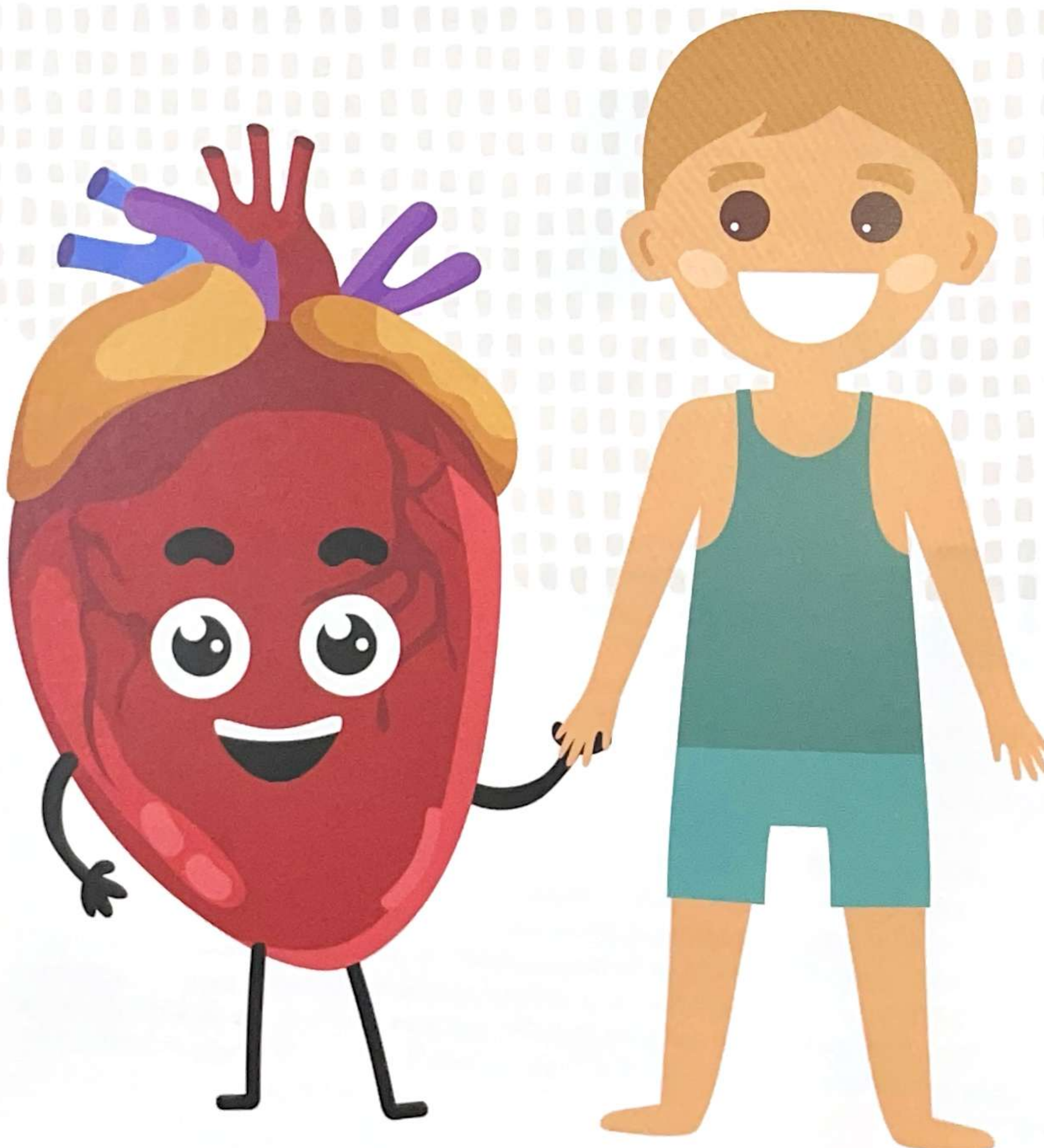




PAEDIATRIC & CONGENITAL HEART CENTRE
Institut Jantung Negara

MARCHING TO YOUNG HEARTBEATS OF EXCELLENCE

IJN's Paediatric & Congenital Heart Centre proudly celebrates its fifth anniversary. What makes their heart beat with passion? Find out about their inception and challenges while serving children and adult heart patients.



Dr. Hasri Samion, Senior Consultant
Paediatric Cardiologist

Humble beginnings

It all began in 1992 when IJN first opened its doors to patients. There were only three core departments then - Cardiology, Cardiothoracic and Anaesthesiology. The treating of children born with heart issues or congenital heart diseases had already started at this stage, but with only two

paediatric cardiologists attending to them. There was no dedicated unit for children.

After caring for many child heart patients, IJN realised that the treating of child patients comes with its own specific requirements. Hence, paediatric cardiology services was born as a separate unit from the Cardiology Department in 1997.



'Growing up' years

Forging ahead, the Paediatric Cardiology Unit started to focus on sub-specialisations as paediatric cardiology extends beyond babies born with heart problems. The Unit realised it faced a few unique situations that contributed to its expanding needs. First, due to the advances in paediatric cardiology and congenital heart surgery, paediatric congenital heart patients increasingly survive into adulthood and would need long-term follow-up care to monitor any complications or residual lesions. They may also need multiple surgeries or even non-surgical procedures.

Second, IJN recognised the importance of training new and existing doctors and medical personnel in managing these Adult Congenital Heart Disease Patients (ACHD) in addition to their child heart patients. There have been concerns over the late detection of ACHD.

Third, early detection and the use of advanced technology is vital. The Paediatric Cardiology Unit set out to train their specialists to detect these congenital heart diseases at an earlier stage through sonography, echocardiograph as well as the use of up-to-date non-surgical techniques to treat congenital heart diseases.

The Paediatric Cardiology Unit continued to expand steadily as they addressed these three key areas to improve their services.

As growth accelerated with these training developments and technologies put in place, finally, the Paediatric & Congenital Heart Centre or PCHC was born in 2012.

PCHC in action

The PCHC is now a one-stop centre with its own clinical area for congenital heart patients as well as adult heart patients. Its outpatient services include clinical services such as a General Paediatric Cardiology Clinic, Adult and Congenital Heart Disease Clinic, Foetal Echocardiography Clinic for foetal cardiac screening, Combined Obstetrics and Gynaecology Clinic and more. There's even a Marfan Clinic to diagnose and provide comprehensive care for Marfan patients. These outpatient clinics are run daily with an average of 50-75 visiting patients.

Besides open and closed-heart surgeries, the PCHC also offers diagnostic Catheterisation and Interventional Cardiac Catheterisation Services. Every year, about 800 procedures are done by PCHC's skilful and experienced cardiologists, half of which are of the interventional nature.

World class imaging services and facilities

Furthermore, PCHC also offers a wide range of Paediatric Cardiac Imaging Services to accurately detect, diagnose and treat patients. They have invested heavily in training their human resources and in acquiring machinery to ensure world class imaging facilities for the heart.

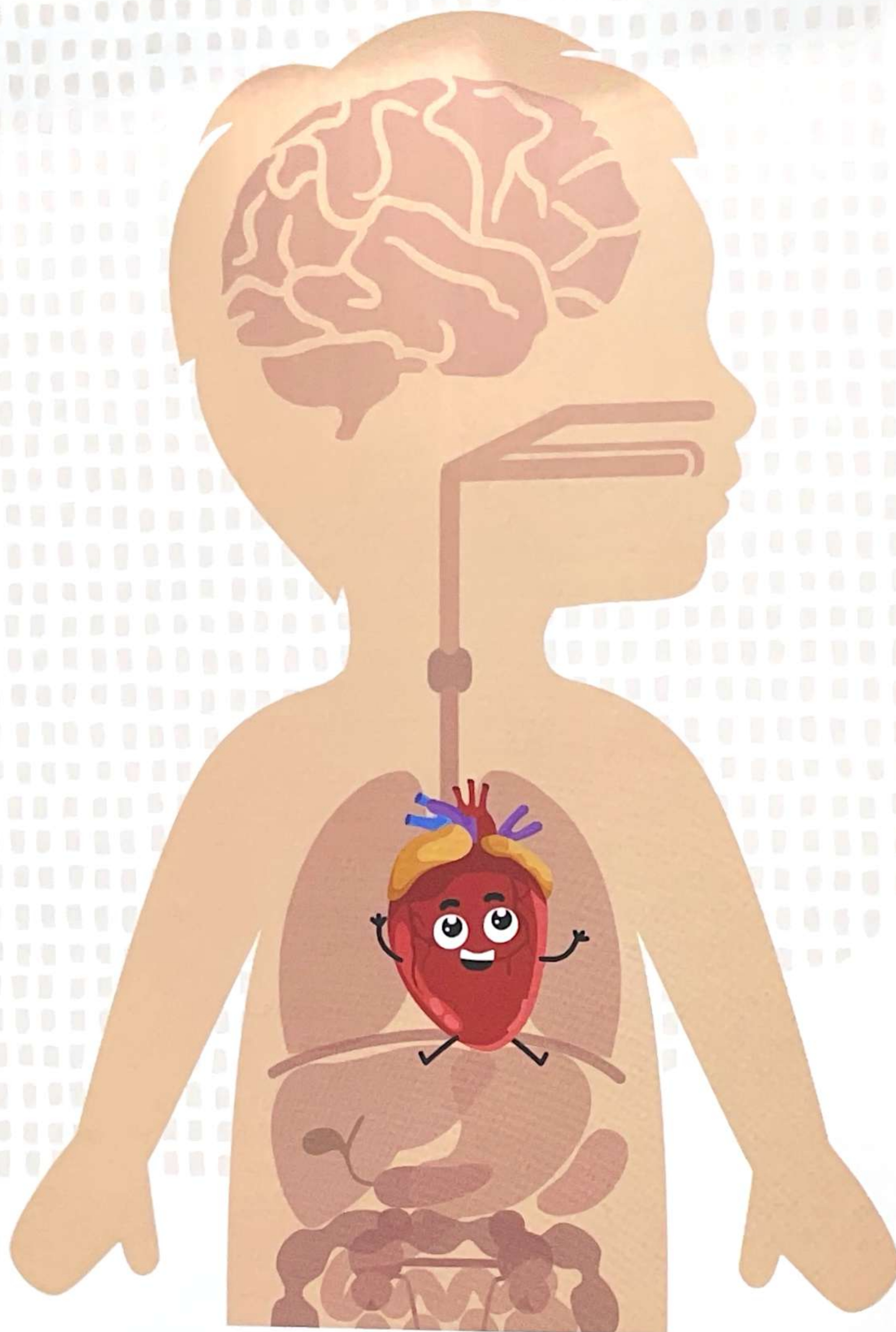
Today, on any given day, the PCHC is running on full capacity. It has 52 beds and 24 paediatric ICU beds dedicated to the PCHC general ward which includes patients of all ranges of age. One ward is dedicated for children aged below seven while another ward is for older children and young adults. It also has three operating theatre slots for older children and young adults. In its current capacity, the PCHC can handle up to six heart surgery slots per day. Their operating theatre room only operate five days a week.

Strong team culture drives service excellence

The team is led by PCHC's Head of Department and Senior Consultant Paediatric Cardiologist, Dr. Hasri Samion who specialises in Catheter Intervention and Arrhythmia and Deputy Head & Consultant, Dr. Geetha a/p Kandavello who specialises in ACHD.

There is also a core team of three consultant paediatric cardiologists and senior medical officers in charge of the unit.

The PCHC team of doctors and supporting staff subscribe to a philosophy of "ohana" from the Hawaiian word which means family. To the team, it also means "no one in the department is left behind". The continual education provided for them and care for each other's wellbeing and development gives the team their ability to continuously provide excellent, world class care to their patients.



Putting patients first: Education and care

The doctors have worked hard together with the administrators to ensure top-notch synchronisation between departments to ensure smoother standards of operating procedures. This means patients' needs are catered to from A to Z from the moment they enter for consultation to post-treatment stages.

IJN is also leading the way in terms of onboarding new or existing patients and their family members. PCHC goes the extra mile in educating heart patients' parents by explaining to them the best and safest options for their child's procedure, the risks, as well as the rehabilitation process. PCHC also holds "open forums", plays educational videos at waiting areas and distributes flyers

to caregivers. This, they believe, would help parents to comply with treatment and compulsory follow up visits.

PCHC also launched NADI as a support group for parents in 2014. For patients whose families face financial challenges, NADI assists parents with daily allowances for food as well as a stay in a dormitory while their child undergoes treatment at PCHC.

Looking ahead, advanced techniques

Thanks to IJN's achievement as one of the first few centres in the Asia Pacific region to use non-invasive techniques to treat congenital heart diseases, PCHC patients no longer need to wait for surgeries. This is for heart cases involving ASD (Atrial Septal

Defects), VSD (Ventricular Septal Defects) and Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA).

There have been so far, no reported mortalities with VSD, also known as blue babies syndrome where there's an incomplete wall between the ventricles. This is not an easy feat to achieve. Furthermore, cardiac catheterisation for PDA and ASD has been excellent for many years.

In 2016, the PCHC carried out 1,200 to 1,400 surgeries per year. They've also performed 900 to 1,000 cardiac catheterisation and intervention procedures cases per year.

Looking ahead, PCHC is targeting 12,000 to 13,000 cases in their outpatient centre with 2,000 slots among these allocated to new patients.

In order to achieve these objectives in the long run, the PCHC doctors and supporting staff know that setting the right foundation in place is crucial towards building a sustainable and world class unit. They're constantly improving the work space to be a happy and stress-free environment, where patients will benefit from the positive atmosphere in terms of healing. What's more, with expansion to other cities besides KL, accessibility will be improved for earlier diagnoses. It looks like the PCHC is very much ready for its next five years and beyond to be a "Patient Centric Congenital Heart Centre in this region", in line with IJN's aspirations.

For more information, please contact our Paediatric & Congenital Heart Centre at +603-2617 8984 visit www.ijnpchc.com.my