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SINGAPORE: With a rising ageing population in Singapore, the role of physiotherapists will become more important.

This comes amid intensified efforts to enable seniors to age well and in place even after an acute illness such as a fall.

This point was raised by Health Minister Gan Kim Yong at the Singapore-International Physiotherapy Congress on Saturday.

The theme for this year's congress is "Enhancing health through Physiotherapy - 50 years and beyond", in recognition of the crucial role physiotherapists play in promoting and enhancing public health through physical activity and education.

Mr Gan added that the role of physiotherapists is integral in the continuum of care.

He elaborated: "Physiotherapists indeed play an important and vital role in the continuum of healthcare services, from rehabilitation to enhancing our physical well-being. Early intervention by physiotherapists can alleviate medical complications, expedite recovery and reduce hospitalisation stay.

"For instance, a patient at the Singapore General Hospital (SGH) had developed excessive lung secretions after a major surgery. With an SGH physiotherapist's help to clear the mucus and assist the patient with the correct breathing techniques, the patient avoided being placed on artificial ventilation in the Intensive Care Unit."

- CNA/gn