

HEALTH

Healthcare professionals have role in reducing medical costs: Vivian Balakrishnan

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SINGAPORE: Healthcare professionals have a special role to play in giving patients the best opinion and most cost-effective medicine, reminded Environment and Water Resources Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, who spoke at a National University of Singapore commencement ceremony on Sunday (Jul 12).

He pointed out that with rising medical costs, healthcare professionals should contribute in bringing down this burden that will eventually fall on the Singapore population.

"Because we are professionals, and because we know the most about this field, we should be the ones who are trying systematically to bring down the burden that will fall on our population," Dr Balakrishnan said.

"How can this be done? First we know that the old model, where huge amounts of money are diverted and spent in acute care hospitals, cannot continue indefinitely. We know, even from a medical perspective, that preventive healthcare, care in the community and care at home is what people want, it's what people need and is actually the most effective.

"We need to re-organise ourselves, so that we can deliver healthcare, at the point of need in the most effective manner."

The former eye surgeon addressed 367 graduates from the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, who were receiving their degrees at the ceremony. It is one of the 23 ceremonies which are taking place till Jul 14.

In all, around 10,200 graduates will be getting their degrees at these ceremonies.

This year's Commencement marks the University's 110th year of founding, as well as Singapore's 50th year of independence.

- CNA/ek