



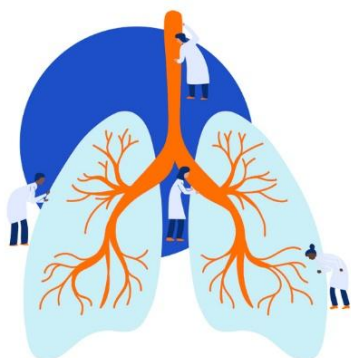
# BRIDGING THE GAP

## Enhancing Equitable Access & Innovation in Lung Cancer Care in Singapore

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Singapore** is a global leader in lung cancer care, with advanced treatment options, comprehensive research funding, robust public awareness campaigns, and a well-established screening program. Despite these achievements, challenges remain in ensuring that these advancements reach all populations equitably and continue to evolve in the face of emerging cancer care needs. This policy brief highlights key areas where Singapore's lung cancer care system can be further optimized to maintain its leadership position in Asia and globally.

Yes, Singapore's infrastructure and outcomes are exemplary, but as the population ages and cancer prevalence rises, continued innovation and adaptation are essential to sustain progress. This brief proposes targeted actions to ensure that Singapore continues to lead in lung cancer care, with a focus on sustainability, accessibility, and inclusivity.



### INTRODUCTION

#### A Leader in Lung Cancer Care with a Focus on Equity and Sustainability

Lung cancer remains one of the most prevalent and deadliest cancers in Singapore, but the country's advancements in early detection, treatment, and research have resulted in significantly improved survival rates. With a five-year survival rate of over 30%, Singapore is a regional leader in lung cancer outcomes. However, to maintain and further this success, the country must focus on addressing emerging challenges related to an aging population, healthcare accessibility, and ensuring that advancements in treatment and care continue to be inclusive.

Singapore is classified as **Level 5 - Leading** in the Cancer Care Maturity Framework. The country's high maturity level reflects its comprehensive cancer care infrastructure, including specialized centers, cutting-edge research funding, universal healthcare coverage, and high-quality palliative services. Continued leadership in lung cancer care depends on sustaining and expanding these successes.







# LUNG CANCER IN SINGAPORE

## Current Landscape and Systemic Gaps

While Singapore excels in nearly all aspects of lung cancer care, the following table outlines the country's strengths, systemic gaps, and proposed policy actions to address these challenges:

Pillar	Current Status	Strength	Policy Action
Early Detection & Diagnosis	Nationwide lung cancer screening program targeting high-risk individuals.	Yes, a robust screening program exists, providing early detection and significantly improving survival rates.	Continue expanding the screening program to reach more high-risk populations, including addressing barriers to access in elderly and marginalized communities.
Biomarker & Molecular Testing	Comprehensive molecular testing available in specialized centers such as NCIS and SGH.	Yes, testing is widely accessible and forms the basis of precision oncology treatments, contributing to high survival rates.	Ensure continued funding and development of new biomarker tests to keep pace with advances in precision medicine.
Treatment Access	MediShield Life and Integrated Shield Plans cover chemotherapy, targeted therapy, and immunotherapy.	Yes, comprehensive coverage under public insurance schemes ensures equitable access to treatment.	Regularly review insurance schemes to adapt to new treatment modalities and ensure all patients have access to cutting-edge therapies, including
Clinical Guidelines	National guidelines aligned with international standards (e.g., ESMO, ASCO).	Yes, guidelines are up-to-date and widely followed in the public and private sectors, ensuring standardized, high-quality care.	Continue ensuring that clinical guidelines are continuously updated to incorporate the latest research findings and treatments. Provide regular training for healthcare providers.
Palliative & Survivorship Care	Well-developed palliative care services, including HCA Hospice Care, providing comprehensive end-of-life support.	Yes, there is strong palliative care infrastructure, ensuring quality of life for patients in advanced stages.	Expand palliative care services to cover all regions and address the growing demand due to an aging population. Improve training for caregivers to provide emotional and psychological support.





## CONCLUSION & Call to Action

Singapore stands as a model for lung cancer care in Asia, with cutting-edge treatment options, excellent survival rates, and a strong focus on early detection and research. However, as the population ages and the burden of cancer continues to rise, it is crucial that the country remains adaptable and proactive in addressing emerging healthcare challenges.

This is not just a medical issue—it's a social and economic one. With continued investment in research, access, and inclusivity, Singapore can maintain its leadership in cancer care while ensuring that all citizens have equal access to the highest standards of care.



### KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

- 1 Expand the national lung cancer screening program** to include more high-risk populations, especially elderly and underserved communities.
- 2 Enhance access to molecular testing** across all public and private hospitals, ensuring that no patient is excluded from precision medicine due to regional disparities or financial barriers.
- 3 Regularly review and update MediShield Life and Integrated Shield Plans** to include the latest advancements in targeted therapies and immunotherapy, ensuring equitable access to all treatment modalities.
- 4 Continue updating national clinical guidelines** to align with the latest international research and clinical best practices, with regular training for healthcare providers.
- 5 Expand palliative care services** to cover all regions of Singapore, ensuring that comprehensive end-of-life care is accessible to all patients, and improve emotional and psychological support services for families.

Singapore's lung cancer care system is already a benchmark for the region. By addressing emerging challenges, continuing to innovate, and ensuring that every patient has access to the best available care, Singapore can further solidify its leadership in lung cancer care and continue to improve survival rates for the future. This is an opportunity to not only maintain the country's high standards but to ensure that all Singaporeans benefit from the latest advancements in cancer care, regardless of their socioeconomic status or location.