

PARTNER OF LABOUR MOVEMENT

Lim Sock Hia

Deputy Director, Human Resources
National University Hospital

Nominated by the Healthcare Services Employees' Union.

Lim Sock Hia played a pivotal role in signing the first National University Health System (NUHS) collective agreement after re-clustering with the Healthcare Services Employees' Union (HSEU) in 2018 to harmonise the terms and benefits for NUHS staff across the institutions within the NUHS cluster. She played a key role in the subsequent collective agreements in 2020 and 2022 to ensure that staff were well-remunerated for their unwavering contributions. The collective agreement in 2022 significantly enhanced shift allowances, benefitting 60 per cent of NUHS employees, and expanded the scope of representation of professionals, managers and executives to 90 per cent of the workforce in NUHS.

As someone who cares deeply about the livelihood and well-being of staff, she works closely with HSEU to improve worker's wage outcomes. For instance, during HSEU's negotiations for the annual increment and performance bonuses of staff in 2023, she strongly supported HSEU's call to apply the National Wages Council guidelines for sustained wage growth for lower-wage workers to the bottom 20th percentile wage level of the cluster's workforce, instead of the national level. She also supported HSEU's call to recognise staff's efforts when transitioning to an endemic setting through a competitive bonus payout.

Sister Sock Hia was also actively involved in implementing initiatives to improve staff welfare holistically. To better care for the mental health and well-being of staff, she backed the partnership that was entered into between the NUHS and the Association of Psychotherapists and Counsellors Singapore in 2018 to provide confidential counselling services for staff. Beyond mental well-being, she also cares for the financial well-being of staff. She supported the partnership that was entered into between NUH, HSEU and MoneyOwl in 2022 to promote and provide a corporate financial wellness programme for the staff of NUH. She actively encouraged NUH staff to upgrade their financial life skills and learn to plan for retirement adequacy through MoneyOwl's financial wellness programme and financial literacy webinars/workshops. She is an excellent industrial relations liaison for NUH and the NUHS cluster.

Over more than 20 years, Sister Sock Hia has had excellent rapport, trust, and relationships with the NUH branch union leadership and HSEU key leadership. She was instrumental in identifying potential union leaders who are also role models at work. The strong NUH branch union leadership stems from NUH management's close collaboration with the union to nurture current and future leaders and to give them opportunities to participate in union-management negotiations and industrial relations cases.

To improve staff work prospects, she also supported the Ministry of Health-led job redesign of support care staff, such as Patient Service Associates and Healthcare Assistants, to expand their job scope and take on more clinical roles. With the job redesign, the support care staff can look forward to better career progression and better wages.