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Headline: Community hospital adopts tracking system developed by SMU students

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SMU School of Information Systems students (from left) Lam Zhao Yin Aloysius, Wu Jiawei Jason, Ang Zhuang Kai Friedemann, Abdul Shahid bin Rahmat, Yu Zheng Yuan and Christopher Teo Ming Jian showcasing the visitor tracking system developed for Ang Mo Kio Hospital. ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM

SINGAPORE - Ang Mo Kio-Thye Hua Kwan Hospital (AMKH) has adopted a new visitor check-in and tracking system developed by infosystems students of the Singapore Management University (SMU).

The new system, known as Stepwise, uses simple user-friendly technology and is fully integrated with the hospital's existing patient database.

Using Stepwise, hospital staff scan the NRIC's of visitors upon entry and exit to the hospital wards.

Once logged in the system, staff are able to track the contact between visitors and patients. Stepwise also allows for the visualisation of visitor data.

Replacing the largely manual system currently employed at AMKH, Stepwise has improved the hospital's efficiency.

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Mr Ong Sing, 53, AMKH's IT manager, said: "The system cuts down processing time by more than half."

Stepwise was conceived with the intention of improving the hospital's ability to trace contact between patients and visitors, which helps to track the spread of infectious diseases. It is especially useful in emergencies, for instance during the outbreak of volatile diseases such as SARS or H1N1.

Stepwise will also allow the hospital to track the number of visitors present within their compound to assist in managing overcrowding.

The system was developed with the needs of AMKH as a small community hospital, without government funding. The software will subsequently be made available for free for other agencies to tap on.

Requiring only laptops and a generic barcode scanner, the system cost the hospital nothing to implement. Tracking systems used in bigger hospitals can cost between \$50,000 and \$2 million.

Stepwise was developed by a team of six SMU students as their final year project. Students put on display 14 projects, including queue shortening mobile app CHOMP, yesterday (April 21) in SMU.