



AMS News

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Message from Master

Dear Fellow Academicians,

The Academy of Medicine, Singapore celebrated its 50th Anniversary or the Golden Jubilee of its foundation during the 41st Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine (SMCM), held from 19 to 22 July 2007 at the Raffles City Convention Centre, Singapore. The Opening Ceremony of the Congress on 19 July 2007 was specifically chosen to coincide with the date of the first meeting of the 34 founding members of the Academy 50 years ago.

We were honoured to have the official participation of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine at the Congress for the second time. A record number of Presidents or Representatives of sister Academies and Colleges from around the world came to join in our celebration.



Prof Ho Lai Yun presenting the gold medallion to Dr Chew Chin Hin, the 18th Gordon Arthur Ransome Orator.

At the Opening and Induction Ceremony, 97 new inductees and 19 distinguished Presidents and Fellows of our sister Overseas Colleges and Academies were admitted into the family of the Academy. This year, the Council of the Academy is also privileged and deeply honoured to confer the Honorary Fellowship of the Academy on Mr Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore. He is the 39th Honorary Fellow of the Academy in its 50-year history.

Dr Chew Chin Hin delivered the Gordon Arthur Ransome Oration. He brought us through some of the important milestones in specialist education, training and assessment in Singapore.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Organising Committee of the Congress, headed by Prof Fock Kwong Ming, and the secretariat for their hard work in ensuring the success of the Congress and in making the celebration a memorable one for all participants. A special commemorative issue of the *Annals, Academy of Medicine, Singapore* was published, together with a special video production, featuring some of our founding members and past Masters and their memories and wishes for the Academy. A special thanks to Fellows who have kindly donated to the Academy during the recent donation drive.



Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong mingling with some of the guests at the cocktail reception.



From left to right: Prof Fock Kwong Ming, Organising Chairman, 41st SMCM and Assistant Master, Academy of Medicine, Singapore; Prof Ho Lai Yun, Master, Academy of Medicine, Singapore; Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Republic of Singapore; Professor Khalid Kadir, President of the 41st SMCM and Master, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia; Prof Grace Tang, President, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine.



Prof Ho Lai Yun, Master, Academy of Medicine, Singapore conferring the Honorary Fellowship on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.



Dr Lim Shih Hui, Scribe, putting on the Honorary Fellowship robe on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.



Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong being introduced to the Presidents of Colleges and Academies from overseas.



At the cake cutting ceremony during the Golden Jubilee Congress Banquet (from left to right): Dr Chew Chin Hin, Dr VK Pillay, Dr Robert Loh, Dr Lim Pin, Dr Ho Lai Yun, Mr S R Nathan, Dr Fock Kwong Ming, Dr K Satku, Dr Raj Nambiar, Dr Walter Tan and Dr Low Cheng Hock.

His Excellency Mr S R Nathan, President of the Republic of Singapore and Patron, Academy of Medicine, Singapore was the Guest-of-Honour at the Golden Jubilee Congress Banquet on 20 July 2007.

While the Golden Jubilee celebration was the occasion for us to pay tribute to the leading role of the senior academicians whose passion and pioneering spirit had brought the Academy to what it was today, it was also the starting point for current and future generations of academicians to reflect and work even harder towards realising the vision of the Academy; to ensure its relevance and continuity, and to protect its dignity.

In his Congratulatory Message to the Academy, Mr S R Nathan commended Fellows of the Academy for their devotion in promoting the highest standards of professional practice, as well as in maintaining an exacting code of ethical conduct amongst its members. However, he also pointed out that the future, as we enter into a new era of healthcare, in a new environment with different emphasis and priorities, will be both exciting and challenging. He encouraged all Fellows to redouble their commitment to the highest standards of professional excellence in the practice of medicine and be responsive to the health needs of the society, as well as to help to position our city state as a bright spot in the world map of healthcare provision.

The Council has identified 3 major thrusts the Academy must play a critical role in moving forward: postgraduate specialist training and examination, continuing professional development, and the generation and dissemination of knowledge to provide expert advice to the society on matters of health.



Prof Ho Lai Yun presenting a token of appreciation to His Excellency Mr S R Nathan, President of the Republic of Singapore and Patron, Academy of Medicine, Singapore

Following the historical signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Singapore, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, UK, and the Division of Graduate Medical Studies, National University of Singapore (DGMS, NUS), in September 2005, the conjoint MMed/MRCOG examinations was conducted for the first time in Singapore in May 2006. The MOU between the Royal Colleges of Physicians, UK, the College of Physicians, Singapore, the Academy of Medicine, Singapore and DGMS, NUS for MRCP (UK)/MMed (Int Med) examination was also signed on 21 July 2007 during the 41st SMCM.

The Lee Kong Chian Room at the basement of the Academy Building will be renovated to house some of the staff of the Joint Committee on Specialist Training (JCST). Furthermore, a Committee on Postgraduate Training and Examination has been formed recently to work closely with the University and the Ministry of Health in defining the role of the Academy in this area.

The Academy has also signed another MOU with the Ministry of Health in advancing our third thrust, i.e., providing professional and expert advice on health matters to the Ministry and to generate and disseminate knowledge and advice to the public.

All these initiatives towards achieving the Academy's mission and vision would not be possible without the continuing support and volunteerism of our Fellows. I look forward to all of you coming forward to serve with a sense of mission for the profession.

Ho Lai Yun
Master, 2007-2008 Council



Prof Ho Lai Yun presenting a replica of the Master's Medallion to Prof Low Cheng Hock.



Golf, individual championship: Dr Chew Chin Hin presenting the Academy of Medicine, Singapore Trophy to Dr Chang Keng Wee, representative of the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia.



Golf, team championship: Prof Khalid Kadir presenting the Tan Sri Abu Bakar Trophy to Dr Tan Kok Chai, representative of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore.

Acceptance Speech by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong for the Conferment of Honorary Fellowship by the Academy of Medicine, Singapore on 19 July 2007 at Raffles City Convention Centre, Singapore

Professor Ho Lai Yun, Master of Academy of Medicine, Singapore,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am honoured to accept the honorary fellowship from the Academy of Medicine. I am also happy to join you tonight for your Golden Jubilee, and for the 41st Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine. I understand that members of the Hong Kong Medical Academy are here as well for the Congress. To all our foreign guests, let me extend a very warm welcome to Singapore.
2. Healthcare in Singapore has come a long way since the Academy was founded. Half a century ago, we were struggling to keep malnutrition and infectious diseases under control. Today, Singaporeans enjoy standards of healthcare equal to or exceeding the advanced countries. Internationally, Singapore healthcare stands for quality and ethical practice. The growing numbers of foreign patients who seek advanced medical treatments in Singapore each year is testimony to this.
3. We owe this position to past generations of doctors who served with compassion, humility and high ideals. Indeed, Singapore is fortunate to have had a pioneering batch of doctors deeply steeped in the ethics and values of medicine. Professors Ransome, Sheares, Seah Cheng Siang, S S Ratnam – they, together with many others, served selflessly with the single purpose of providing the best possible care for their patients, whether rich or poor. They inspired subsequent generations to aspire to the highest standards of professional excellence.
4. We must cherish and build on this precious legacy. This is particularly so because moving forward, our healthcare system faces some daunting challenges.
5. One challenge is the rapidly growing demand for healthcare services. Ours is one of the fastest ageing populations in the world. On current demographic trends, the number of Singaporeans aged 65 years and above will double in 15 years. Older people are hospitalised more often, and each time stay in hospital longer on average. Our public hospitals already run at near capacity. The existing infrastructure clearly will be inadequate to meet the needs of this surge in elderly numbers, plus the steady growth of our overall population year by year.
6. The Government is investing to expand the capacity of our healthcare system. The Khoo Teck Puat Hospital in Yishun is already under construction, and should be completed by 2010. MOH has begun planning for another hospital in the Western part of Singapore. We will also reserve several sites scattered across the island, so that new hospitals can be built when the population and patient load builds up.
7. But building hard infrastructure is the easier part. We also need to train and recruit the people – doctors, nurses, other healthcare workers – to staff the new institutions and make them work. Without them, quality of care will be compromised, and we will fall short of the high standards that Singaporeans have rightly come to expect.
8. The numbers involved are large. MOH, for example, projects that we will need to recruit over 2,000 more doctors by 2015. Given our small local talent pool and competing needs from other sectors in the economy, there are limits to how far we can expand the local supply. It will not be a simple matter of just investing more money to train more Singaporeans to become doctors or healthcare workers. We have been raising the intake of medical students each year, but this will not be enough. Increasingly, we will have to recruit medical talent from abroad. We must be open minded in accepting such imported talent, while maintaining medical standards and helping foreign trained doctors to adapt to conditions in Singapore.
9. While we will invest more in healthcare, it is even more important to get the economics of healthcare right. Countries all over the world have taken different approaches. Their experience shows that more resources do not necessarily improve healthcare outcomes. The reality is that demand for healthcare is unlimited and has to be rationed. Some countries have gone for free healthcare at point of use, only to face the intractable challenges of meeting insatiable demand and curbing abuse while keeping high standards of healthcare. Problems are compounded as populations age and vast amounts of high-tech resources are marshalled to manage the last few weeks of the terminally ill, delivering poor quality of life to the patients at very high cost to society.
10. The practice of medicine has its limits. It takes wisdom to know these limits and the true needs of the dying. Heedless pursuit of “pure” medicine to prolong life, without regard to cost or the wishes of the patients, cannot be sustained in the long term, not even in the wealthiest countries. This is a serious problem plaguing the US healthcare system today. Alas fixing it is politically difficult. We must not get into such a situation.

11. Singapore has opted for pricing and co-payment to bring market forces into play, minimise waste of resources, and incentivise efficient delivery of healthcare. MOH has been pushing for greater transparency, publishing information on bill sizes of hospitals and encouraging hospitals to track and publish clinical quality indicators. This will enable patients to make more informed choices and the market to function better.
12. Our system relies on compulsory savings through Medisave and risk-pooling through MediShield, a medical insurance scheme to cover large hospital bills. Medifund provides the final safety net. This approach has helped us avoid the problems experienced elsewhere and contain national healthcare expenditure, yet with very good outcomes. But managing healthcare cost escalation requires continuous effort, particularly with the ageing population. We must keep on identifying better ways to keep Singaporeans healthy and help those with chronic diseases to manage their illness, so as to avoid future complications. We need to maintain our market-based system, while exploring new and creative approaches to improve it.
13. This includes exploiting IT to the full. The National Healthcare Group, for example, has introduced teleradiology at its polyclinics, where x-ray images are sent to Bangalore to be read. As a result, prices have been reduced and turnaround time has been cut dramatically from 2 to 3 days previously to an hour or less. Increased competition has also led to local radiologists charging less for x-rays and reporting the results faster. Patients benefit all round, saving money and time as they no longer need to make return trips for their results.
14. We must press on with such initiatives. There are other applications of telemedicine, such as telepathology, where technology has advanced to a stage where it makes economic sense and improves the quality of care, while assuring patient safety. Complete computerisation of hospital information systems is an ideal goal which is still some way away. These changes may be unsettling for incumbent practitioners. But the response cannot be to dig-in and resist. Just like in other industries, incumbents must look for new niche areas on the value chain, where our more advanced capabilities and recognised quality standards justify our higher costs.
15. Finally, we must not lose sight of the core values which underpin and provide the moral compass for our healthcare community. Senior members of the community must lead by example, teaching and mentoring their younger colleagues. Financial incentives play a role, and successful specialists can do very well, particularly in the private sector. There is nothing wrong in this. But values built up over many years, such as caring and compassionate service to patients and striving for the highest standards of professional excellence, must never be diluted or lost in the midst of change. Senior doctors must pass them on to the younger generation of doctors, so that they will in time produce a new generation like Gordon Ransome, Seah Cheng Siang and the other pioneers. This is perhaps the most fundamental challenge of all for the medical profession.
16. The Academy of Medicine is committed to advancing the art and science of medicine in Singapore, and promoting and maintaining the highest professional standards of competence and ethical integrity. It plays a leadership role in keeping the profession true to its mission of providing the highest quality of patient care in Singapore. I am confident that you will draw upon the rich values that have guided your profession through the years, to guide your way forward.
17. I congratulate you on the 50th Golden Anniversary of your Academy, and wish all participants of this Congress a fruitful and productive meeting



At the Opening Ceremony of the 41st SMCM (from left to right):

1st row: Chang Keng Wee, Chew Chin Hin, Anthony Heng, Fock Kwong Ming, Ho Lai Yun, Mr Heng Chee How, Mrs Lee (Mdm Ho Ching), PM Lee Hsien Loong, Mr Khaw Boon Wan, Khalid Kadir, Grace Tang, Lim Shih Hui, Gilbert Chiang, Zaki Morad, Steven Chow
 2nd row: Louis CK Low, Chang Tou Choong, Chan Heng Thye, Lai Kar Neng, A E Delikan, Zainudin Md Zin, Lilian Leong, S Selvarajah, Zephne van der Spuy, Walter Thompson, Tony Chung, Johan Thambu, John Ling, Evelyn Ho, Yap Hwa Ling
 3rd row: Edward Pang, Tan Ai Ling, Tan Kim Ping, Selan Sayampanathan, Ng Keng Yeen, Daniel Goh, Vijay K Sethi, Ng Boon Keng, Chan Yew Weng, Neil Wigg, Lum Siew Kheong, George Lim, Patricia Hamilton, Stewart Bryant
 4th row: Lee Kok Onn, Ikshuvanam Swaminathan, Zafar Ullah Chaudhry, Luk Hung To, Mohd Namazie Ibrahim, V Anantharaman, Andrew Aw, David C Dale, George Yeo, Derrick Heng, Vithya Vathanophas, Rey Melchor F Santos, Napier M Thomson, Andrew Sutherland

41st Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine

Redefining Gold Standards in Medicine: The Next Chapter

held in celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore

19-22 July 2007

The scientific session was held from 20 to 22 July 2007. The programme was divided according to the various specialties. Well-known overseas and local experts were invited as speakers. In line with the theme of the Congress, there was a re-look at the current gold standards in treating certain diseases. Five main topics were discussed – Ageing & Aesthetic Medicine, Cancer, Infectious Diseases, Professional Ethics & Standards and Sports Medicine. The

Golden Jubilee Symposium on Professional Standards generated a lot of interest among delegates. Among the speakers were Mr Paul Van Ostenberg, Managing Director of Joint Commissions International (Asia-Pacific) with a lecture titled “Maintenance of Professional Competence – The New JCI Standards”; Prof Napier Thomson, President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians with a lecture titled “The Role of CME/CPD in Maintenance of

Professional Standards”; and Prof David C Dale, President of the American College of Physicians with a lecture titled “Recertification – The American Experience”.

A number of the Colleges held their annual scientific meeting and named lectures during the Congress. A short report is listed below:

College of Physicians Annual Scientific Meeting, 20-21 July 2007



The Council of the College of Physicians, Singapore with visiting overseas Presidents and Master, Academy of Medicine, Singapore.



Prof Ng Keng Yeen, President of CPS, presenting the honorarium and plaque to Prof Napier Thomson, the 17th Seah Cheng Siang Memorial Lecturer.



Prof Ng Keng Yeen, President of CPS, presenting the gold medal to Prof Neil Douglas, the 4th College of Physicians Lecturer.

The College of Physicians, Singapore (CPS) held its 4th Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) in conjunction with the 41st Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine on 20-21 July 2007 at the Raffles City Convention Centre. The programme included the 17th Seah Cheng Siang Memorial Lecture titled “Chronic Disease Management – Lessons Learnt from the Treatment of Diabetic Nephropathy”

delivered by Professor Napier Thomson, President of The Royal Australasian College of Physicians; the 4th College of Physicians Lecture titled “Postgraduate Medical Training and Certification – Where Do We Go From Here?” delivered by Professor Neil Douglas, President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh; as well as the symposia “50 Years of Progress in Internal Medicine in

Singapore” and “Advances & Innovations in Internal Medicine Specialties” which were held to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS). The CPS also held its 2nd Conferment Ceremony during the ASM on 21 July 2007, during which 6 Presidents of overseas Colleges received Fellowships of the CPS.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the continuation of the conjoint MMed (Int Med)(Singapore)/MRCP (UK) PACES Examination was signed on 20 July 2007 between the Division of Graduate Medical Studies of National University of Singapore, AMS, CPS, and the 3 Royal Colleges of Physicians of UK.



Council News

Master-Elect

Congratulations to Prof Gilbert Chiang on being elected Master-Elect. His term of office for 2 years as Master will begin in May 2008.

Reinstatement

Dr JA Jansen’s name was inadvertently included in the list of those taken off the Academy’s membership in the November 2006 issue of the *AMS News*. The Council has reinstated Dr Jansen. The error is regretted.

3rd College of Paediatrics and Child Health Lecture, 22 July 2007

The 3rd College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Singapore Lecture was delivered by A/Prof Loke Kah Yin titled “The Past, the Present and the Shape of Things to come...”

College of Surgeons' Named Lectures, 20 July 2007

The College of Surgeons, Singapore held the following named lectures in conjunction with the 41st Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine: the 11th Yahya Cohen Lecture delivered by A/Prof James Hui Hoi Po titled "Comparative Study of the Ability of Mesenchymal Stem Cells Derived from Bone Marrow, Periosteum, and Adipose Tissue in Treatment of Partial Growth Arrest in Rabbit"; the 12th Yahya Cohen Memorial Lecture delivered by A/Prof Low Wong Kein titled "Dose-dependent Radiation-induced Apoptosis in a Cochlear Cell-line"; and the 2nd College of Surgeons Lecture delivered by Dr Yong Nen Khiong titled "Redefining Gold Standards for Medical Ethics".



Dr Chan Heng Thye, President of the College (standing on the right in both pictures), presenting the College gold medal to A/Prof James Hui (left picture) and A/Prof Low Wong Kein (right picture).



Dr Por Yong Chen, the 2007 Young Surgeon's Award winner.



Dr Chan Heng Thye (left) with Dr Yong Nen Khiong.

4th College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists Lecture and Dinner, 21 July 2007



Dr Chang Tou Choong, President of the College, presenting the gold medal to Prof Tony Chung.

The College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Singapore Lecture and Dinner was held at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel. The Lecture was delivered by Prof Tony Chung titled "Obstetrics in Hong Kong: The Impact of Mainland Mothers". The Guest-of-Honour was Prof Raj Nambiar, President of Singapore Medical Council. A total of 180 guests attended the lecture and dinner.



The Council of the College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists with Prof Raj Nambiar (4th from left) and Prof Tony Chung (5th from left).

Chapter of Emergency Physicians – Diploma in Emergency Care

The Chapter of Emergency Physicians has put together a 2-year Diploma in Emergency Care course. The course was inaugurated on 12 April 2007 at Alexandra Hospital. There were 11 candidates for this inaugural course. The course comprises 24 modules and within each module, topics are taught based on common presentations and problems that emergency patients bring to the Emergency Department (ED) and the management thereof. Some of the modules have practicum/hands-on sessions e.g. ABC of resuscitation skills, to ensure appropriate skills acquisition and to enhance understanding of the related topics. The duration of each module ranges from 2-3 hours for small modules, to 7-10 hours for major modules.

Most of the topics are conducted as interactive tutorials with case studies to maximise discussion between the instructor and candidates. A few topics in which concepts and principles are the focus, these topics will be taught as lectures. Three of the modules are seminars during which ethical issues, controversial topics and good practices will be shared and discussed.

Doctors who apply for and complete the course will be assessed periodically and also sit for the Final Assessment. Successful completion of the Final Assessment will lead to conferment of the Diploma in Emergency Care by the Academy of Medicine. With the Diploma, the medical officer (MO) is eligible for SMC conditional registration, which will help the ED to retain many of these dedicated and hardworking doctors. At the same time, conferment of the Diploma also allows the MO to apply for Staff registrar post and to embark on a planned and stable career track in the ED.

With monitoring and feedback, the Diploma Course will evolve and improve. With its strong emphasis on clinical relevance and practice orientation, the Diploma Course will become an important emergency medicine educational event. The Chapter of Emergency Physicians hopes that the Diploma in Emergency Care and its course will contribute to Singapore's excellent reputation for tertiary and postgraduate education and improve the care delivered to our emergency patients.

Dr Tham Kum Ying *FRCSE, FAMS, MSc*

**Course Director, Chapter of Emergency Physicians
and Senior Consultant Emergency Physician, Tan Tock Seng Hospital**