

Commencement of FM Academic Year 2003

28th June marked the commencement of FM academic year 2003. A total of 59 trainees have been admitted this year of which 51 are in the GDFM programme, 8 in the Family Medicine Fellowship programme.

In order to mark this joyous occasion, the College is honoured to have Dr Lee Suan Yew, President of Singapore Medical Council, as our Guest of Honour.

Dr Lee gave the following address.

“May I congratulate the College for perpetuating the tradition of organizing good training and teaching programme for her members and non-members.

At the 15th Screenivasan Oration in May 1995, I entitled my topic “Dare to Dream”. I dared the young doctors to sit for the Master of Medicine (Family Medicine) Examination. There were only 19 post-graduates then.

After eight years, there are now 180 post-graduates. The College, the Department of Community, Occupational and Family Medicine and the Graduate School of medicine should be congratulated for organizing the vocational training programme leading to the M.Med(F M). I am glad to see so many young doctors taking up this challenge. There is no doubt that the quality of care of their patients has improved as a result of the varied and structured training. The College further embarked on more programmes apart from undergraduate training; Graduate Diploma of Family Medicine (GDFM), the Home Health Care Course, the Family Practice Skills Course and E-learning.

All these programmes are indicators of the progressive and energetic mission of the College. The leaders are not satisfied to rest on their laurels. Instead, they have launched more post-graduate programmes to further improve the knowledge and skills of Family Physicians. The Graduate Diploma of Family Medicine is recognized by the Singapore Medical Council.

At the same Oration, I also dared the doctors to actively participate in continuing Medical Education. It was voluntary since 1989 when CME was initially recommended by the SMC. The College had, since its inception, conducted many series of lectures, workshops and Annual Scientific Conferences. In January this year, the SMC made it compulsory for all fully and conditionally registered medical practitioners.

Each doctor has to fulfil 25 points a year or 50 points in 2



From Left: Dr Lee Kheng Hock, Dr Arthur Tan, Dr Lee Suan Yew, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean, A/Prof Goh Lee Gan

lectures given by “opinion leaders” or “Eminent doctors” because the information given by such persons is well-respected. Therefore, it would be prudent on the part of CME providers to assess their lectures and subjects judiciously.

I feel very confident that those of you who are committed to attend these courses will benefit from them and will eventually apply

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years. The College is a member of the Joint CME Committee within the Academy of Medicine and the Singapore Medical Association. The College is responsible in accessing 20% of the core subjects relevant to Family Medicine. The College is helping those doctors who are busy in their practice by launching E-learning. This is certainly a step in the right direction. Most of us are aware that our younger patients are better educated and are IT literate. They often surf the internet to learn more about their illnesses and medication. It would reflect badly on the doctors who do not update the medical knowledge and are found wanting by their patients.

However, the good effect of CME interaction on physician performance and healthcare outcome is not assured. In many instances doctors improve their outcomes if they attend

your knowledge and skills for the enhancement of your professional work. I wish to congratulate the College, led by the President, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean, a very able, dynamic and perceptive physician and your Council in spearheading the College's Academic programmes.”



Commencement held at Ministry Of Health auditorium

32nd College Annual General Meeting

In his opening address, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean who chaired the proceedings reported that the College had a very eventful year. One of the major events was the restructuring of the College Secretariat. He commented that he was very glad that now the College have Dr Lee Kheng Hock and A/Prof Goh Lee Gan working part-time in the College, giving direction to the College staff and organising programmes.

The house unanimously elected Dr Tan Cheng Bock and Dr Arthur Tan to Fellowship of the College. The composition of the new Council is given in page 2.

Other matters discussed are as follows.

CME

The College had remained focused on its twin roles of developing our own structured training programmes and evaluating CME programmes organized by other bodies. College has concentrated on developing the Family Practice Skills courses, including the distance learning and face-to-face sessions and the Singapore Family Physicians journal is now used as the resource materials.

The College managed to build up a very strong team not only in the production of CME training materials and e-learning but also in documenting and building up the membership database. The College was also fortunate to be able to obtain grants from various bodies, such as Infocomm Development Authority (IDA).

Vocational Training Programmes

The intake of Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine (GDFM) Programme trainees for 2003 is 51. This was partly due to the recent SARS outbreak that caused many doctors to think twice before embarking on postgraduate programme.

As for MCFP, there are six more members conferred with MCFP(S) last year. More than 20 members applied this year. Under the fellowship programme, there is a new batch of 10 fellow trainees, from both the private and public sectors. The future leaders of the College will come from these members.

Institute of Family Medicine

IFM was formed as an academic organisation

of the College to oversee the academic programmes. The IFM logo was also designed. With the change in philosophy, College would continue to encourage and advise pharmaceutical companies and societies in organising better CME activities for doctors while College would focus on developing programmes for our structured courses such as the GDFM and the FMFP. These would be made available as CME for all doctors as well.

E-learning

The current e-learning engine being deployed is being used by NUS and is stable, robust and well tested. The program used is known as IVLE. College is convinced that more and more structured programmes will take on this distance-learning platform. Programmes like GDFM have gained an international reputation and had received applications from overseas doctors. However, the current criteria for GDFM restricts to medical practitioner registered with the Singapore Medical Council. With the adoption of e learning, it is hope that the programmes evolved into a real distance-learning programme that can be offered to doctors overseas.

Singapore Family Physicians Journal

The new revamped Singapore Family Physicians (SFP) journal has a Family Practice Skills Course component (FPSC). There is a MCQ section which doctors can get CME points from attempting the MCQs.

Regional and International activities

The College is taking a higher profile in the international arena. College would be sending a team of delegates to attend the WONCA regional conference to be held in Beijing in November and to establish links with our Chinese counterparts. Among the many Wonca activities was the world conference on developing family medicine research held in Canada. Dr Matthew Ng, our honorary editor of the SFP and Dr Ruth Lim, one of the FMFP trainees, represented the College in this conference.

SARS outbreak

The Chairman also brought up the issue on the SARS outbreak, which caught everyone by surprise. College took the initiative to quickly mobilised resources to help doctors

cope with the SARS outbreak. As the routine activities of the College were suspended, the College took the opportunity to upgrade the lecture room's AV equipment and to bring forward the e-learning programme. Members can expect a full report next year.



From Left: A/Prof Lim Lean Huat, Dr Lee Suan Yew, Dr Tan Cheng Bock



Annual General Meeting 2003 held at college

Look out for the following Family Practice Skills Courses

Hyperlipidemia
11th & 12th October 2003

Men's Health
29th & 30th November 2003

See pages 12 and 13.

Musculoskeletal Disorders Skills Course

On the 12th and 13th July 2003, the College organized the Musculoskeletal Disorders CME.

- Low back pain
- Systemic disease that present as joint pain

The development of this Family Practice Skills Course was made possible with an educational grant from Merck, Sharp & Dohme (I.A.) Corp. The skills course was held in the Ministry of Health Auditorium and it received over-whelming response.

There was also a workshop session which covered Case Discussion on Osteoporosis – Putting knowledge into practice and Panel discussion and consensus – Best practice in the prescription of analgesics. The College received many positive feedbacks from doctors who had attended both the seminars and the workshops.

Within 3 weeks, 130 doctors had already signed up for the course. The topics rolled out during the seminars include :

- Osteoporosis
- Osteoarthritis of the knee and hip
- Therapeutic agents in joint pain
- Orthopaedic problems of the upper limb

With that, the College would like to thank all the resource persons and the sponsor who had contributed their time and efforts to making this skills course a success. The College looks forward to continual and greater support from all its members.



The skills course involves seminars, workshops and Question and Answer sessions

College Membership

Join as College Members

Many doctors have called the College to enquire about the membership criteria for Ordinary/Associate memberships as they are interested in the 4 free distance learning modules and other privileges accorded to College members each year. Due to amendments introduced in the AGM held on 29th June 2002, the College has drawn up a new membership form which will be available upon application to the College.

Associate Membership

a) is a registered medical practitioner or has an acceptable qualification, or

b) is a provisionally or conditionally registered medical practitioner. Provisionally registered doctors must become conditionally or fully registered within the number of years stipulated by the Singapore medical Council; and

c) is a registered medical practitioner who does not qualify for Ordinary or Collegiate membership

Ordinary Membership

a) is a registered medical practitioner or has an acceptable qualification,

b) has GDFM, MMed (FM) or equivalent, or is fully registered with the Singapore Medical Council and has held a registrable or acceptable medical qualification for not less than five years;

c) is engaged in family practice.

Annual Subscription Fee : S\$180

One-time Entrance Fee : S\$50

Application Forms can also be downloaded from <http://www.cfps.org.sg>

College Membership Response Form

Please send me an application form.

Name : Dr _____

MCR No : _____

Mailing Address : _____

Contact No : _____

Fax No : _____

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