

# Study Team from Vietnam

A dozen-strong Family Medicine Study Team from Vietnam visited the College on 8 Jan this year. Singapore was the first part of the Study Team's two-venue tour. The second venue was the Philippines. The team was led by Prof. Le Van Khang, a member of the National Family Medicine Committee in Vietnam. Other members comprise representatives from the Vietnamese Ministry of Health, clinical teaching centres and various Universities. The team was here to study Singapore's system of undergraduate and post graduate training in family medicine.

Vietnam's development in Family Medicine Vietnam has embarked on a national programme to develop Family Medicine as a discipline in both in the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It is recognized as a first level specialty, somewhat like the situation in the United States. General Medicine, Paediatrics and Obygn are the other first level specialties. The vision for Family Medicine is to have at least one doctor trained in Family Medicine for its Government Health Centres. There are some 80 of these Health Centres in the whole of Vietnam. Currently, the University of Vermont in Maine in the United States is actively helping Vietnam develop its Family Medicine training programme. Many of the Teaching Faculty have gone to the United States for training.

## The Singapore visit programme

The Study Team spent one day in the Department of Community, Occupational & Family Medicine to exchange ideas and programme development in Family Medicine in the two countries. This was followed by a visit to the College of Family Physicians, Singapore. The focus of the visit to the College was to understand and learn from the structured training programs organized by the College. There was a great deal of interest in the Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine programme which was seen as a programme that can reach out to large numbers of family physicians.

## Syllabus and content of family medicine

The Vietnamese study team was very impressed by the syllabus and content of

the College's family medicine training programme and requested that the College gives permission for the useful parts to be incorporated into the Vietnamese national programme in addition to the Essentials of Family Medicine by Sloanne that Vietnam is currently using.



**Standing(L-R)** : Prof Hoang Cong Dac-Vice Director, E Hospital, Dr Quang van Tri - Lecturer, Hanoi Medical University, Dr Nguyen Van Thang - Lecturer of Pediatric Dept, Hanoi Medical University, Prof Le Van Khang - Member of National Family Medicine Committee, A/Prof Goh Lee Gan, Dr Alfred Loh, Prof. Nguyen Thi Kim Chuc - Member of National Family Medicine Committee, Dr Dang Thi Kim Oanh - Lecturer of Intermedicine Dept, Hanoi Medical University, Nguyen Thi Thuy - Health Strategy and Policy Institute.  
**Seated(L-R)** :Dr Nguyen Quoc Hung - Bavi District Hospital, Dr Trinh Xuan Trang - Lecturer, Thainguyn Medical School, Dr Tran Tien Manh - Post graduated Dept, Hanoi Medical University, Phan Thi Bich Thao - Science and Training Department, Hanoi Medical University, Dr Tran Quy Tuong - Secretary of Vice Minister, MOH, Vietnam.

## Teaching methods

The model of part-time teaching programme made up of self-directed learning and face-to-face learning through workshop and tutorials in the Singapore programme was felt to be a useful model. The Vietnamese Team said it would like model its programme after the Singapore system.

## Visit to Polyclinic

The team also visited Bukit Merah Polyclinic provided an opportunity for the Study Team to view the set-up of family practice in the public sector. The counterpart of the Polyclinic in Vietnam is the commune health center.

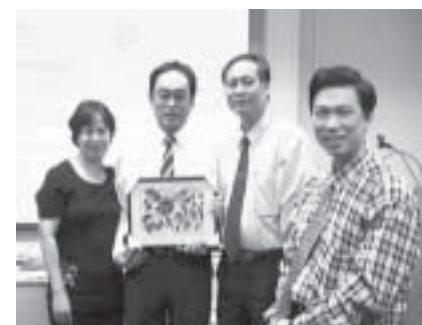
## Training Of Trainers (TOT)

It was agreed that TOT is important to build capacity of trainers. The three key areas in TOT programmes are: Family Medicine programme design; teaching methods (workshop and tutorials); assessment methods (written examination, MCQ, Key feature problems (KFP), and OSCE). In the discussion, it was suggested that one collaboration model is to have the US,

Philippines, and Singapore trainers form the FM TOT teaching faculty for the Vietnamese trainers. The first activity could be a TOT course in Hanoi with the participation of these three countries. The delegation will be discussing the model with Philippines. The desired length of the TOT course was set as 5 days. Another

idea that was floated by the visitors was to send about 20 doctors abroad for training each year. An alternative to full financial support given by the host country receiving the Vietnamese trainers is a work-for-pay programme.

The visit was extremely beneficial for both the hosts and the visitors. Both parties benefited from the exchange of ideas in training and improving the standard of family medicine. This visit is just another example of the College's continuing effort in building bridges and lending a hand to the family medicine fraternity in the region.



A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean receiving a gift from Prof Nguyen, Prof Le & Dr Tran