

# A Few Good Men And Women

By Dr Ong Jin Ee, MCFP, Editor

**R**iveting court room drama *A Few Good Men* (1992) had a few Navy lawyers bent on seeking out truth in a murder involving the entire marine corps in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. It pitted Defense attorney Lieutenant Kaffee (played by Tom Cruise) against high level Navy Colonel Jessup (played by Jack Nicholson). In it a group of men and woman engaged themselves in a court battle to uphold justice and bring truth to light.

After Family Medicine(FM) Convocation in Oct 2004, we meet up with a few of our own good men and women who have just completed their fellowship programme and hear from them their own experience in pursuit of excellence in family medicine.

The FM Fellowship programme is a 2 year programme whose objective is to develop the family physician in the areas of clinical practice, teaching and research so that he can take on leadership role in family medicine. Entry requirements programme include completion of MMed(FM), MCGP or equivalent, embarked on personal professional development and training related to family medicine and active involvement in postgraduate training and undergraduate education in FM.

**Dr Loke Wai Chiong,**  
Director/Associate Consultant,  
SingHealth Polyclinics-Geylang

### **On his experience**

It is about continual professional development, among a small group of like-minded motivated senior family physicians, intellectual sparring, reflection on our practice and comparing it against best evidence and practice according to literature or experience.

Also to be able to continue along a fruitful professional development track, a few yrs after my MMed(FM) exams, & to complete it, of course! I also enjoyed the fellowship ("pun" intended) & camaraderie we had as a class, over the past 2 yrs together!

### **How I hope to contribute and continue to practice...**

As a Fellow of the College, I hope to play a part in the transformation of Primary Health Care in our country, a topic that is of much interest to our Health Ministry at this time.

### **What can be improved about the programme?**

I feel the FMFP programme is still in evolution and work in progress so certain assignments & assessment formats changed along the way. My suggestion is that formative assessment in the setting of coaching/mentoring can play a much bigger role, & summative assessment should be more structured, & communicated clearly.

**Dr Kang Aik Kiang,**  
Family Physician, Raffles Medical Group,  
Compass Point

### **On his experience**

I felt it was training for clinical leadership in Family Medicine. What was satisfying was the opportunity to participate and interact with various experts and talents from FM and other specialists. Definitely intellectual stimulating.

### **How I hope to contribute & continue my practice...**

Focus on quality time management. Be motivated and passionate about family medicine practice.

### **What can be improved about the**

### **programme?**

Doing a research project for FM was tough. Perhaps, research projects for 5 trainees to work on over a 2 years may be more appropriate instead of individual effort. Also my suggestion is perhaps there is need to look into advanced skill training courses for Fellowship...Must be a continuum ..perhaps in-patient management for family medicine ( seeing our patients in the hospital) or advanced surgical or procedural skills.

**Dr Marie Stella P Cruz,**  
Family Physician, National Healthcare  
Group Polyclinics – Yishun

### **On her experience**

The FMFP enabled me to do & learn things that I ordinarily wouldn't have – eg how to do research, design a clinical audit & become a good teacher to adult learners. It has given me a helicopter view of Family Medicine, making me realize that primary care & the family physician play an equally, if not more important, role as other established medical disciplines, in healthcare. Networking with colleagues from Singhealth cluster polyclinics, & from the private sector was good. My GP colleagues always gave interestingly differing views from us public sector doctors.

I immersed myself in teaching, both within the polyclinic as well as in the M Med Private Practitioners Stream programme. As the saying goes 'To teach is to learn'. The programme allowed me to become familiar with the theory of conducting research, critical appraisal, clinical audit and significant event analysis. The 'training of teachers' workshop taught on varied aspects of teaching including on the psychology of learning, different styles of teaching, designing a study curriculum and setting exam questions eg OSCE and MCQs.

I also presented on 'Healthcare Management' and wrote a review paper on 'Legal Requirements of Setting Up a

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General Medical Practice in Singapore'. Other memorable moments was when I attended the WONCA Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on Training of Teachers held from April 16 to 18, 2004 in Kuala Lumpur. The synergy from being with more than 100 doctors from neighbouring ASEAN countries was invigorating. Besides the knowledge gained from this intensive workshop, this was also the first time I had ever traveled alone, *sans* husband and kids! The FMFP literally took me out of my comfort zone!

I would say that I have come out a more confident, mature and knowledgeable doctor from the FMFP.

#### ***How I hope to contribute and continue my practice...***

I see myself as staying on in the polyclinic in the next several years, as there is a need for more senior doctors here. Providing a good level of care here, where manpower is so short, is a good way to contribute to the FM community.

Besides teaching, I would like to be involved in primary care research. However, doing research in the polyclinic setting would be a challenge, as necessary resources such as the infrastructure set-up, time and experience are just not available yet.

#### ***What can be improved about the programme?***

I would have liked it to be more practically oriented. Specifically, one project each of clinical audit and significant event analysis should be done by each trainee. Or, to embark on a small pilot research project.

It would be good to make it compulsory to attend one overseas FM conference/meeting/ workshop e.g those organized by WONCA. The lessons gleaned from interacting with FM counterparts from other countries can be tremendous.

The activities at our monthly meetings should be more varied. Besides presentations, other activities like critical appraisal of papers, significant event analysis and debates could be held.

#### **Dr Derek Tse, FamilyPhysician–SingHealth Polyclinics– Tampines**

#### ***On his experience***

It's an interesting & challenging experience to organise a group of senior, extremely busy family physicians to come together every month for 2 yrs. I've learnt from the meetings to look at things, ranging from practice guidelines to ethical issues through the eyes of different practitioners working in different environments. Prof Goh Lee Gan brought us through the steps of writing a review article in a systematic manner, which was extremely helpful. The informal sharing with fellow candidates also helped me gain invaluable insights into future directions and challenges in the development of family medicine in S'pore.

#### ***What can be improved about the programme?***

I hope to see expectations more clearly laid out to the trainees at the onset to ensure that the trainees are able to craft out an efficient and meaningful training programme. Hopefully we can reach a stage where there is more uniformity, with the fellowship exit interview more a final check of the candidate. My viewpoint is at the moment doing the fellowship training programme is born of personal aspiration and intention to contribute, hence the the focus should be on the process, rather than the assessment at the end. So apart from a solid training schedule, continual monitoring and guidance (formative assessment) should be the main form of assessment in the programme.

#### ***How I hope to contribute and continue my practice...***

After having gone through the fellowship programme, I am thinking more of family medicine as a fraternity. I've become aware that there're like-minded people around.

In terms of future contribution I'm passionate in doing my bit in whichever area, be it teaching, research or quality improvement, to help raise the practice of family medicine.

## WELCOME

*The College would like to extend a warm welcome to the following members who joined us between Jul-Oct 04.*



#### **Ordinary Members**

Dr Ang Li-Shan Constance  
Dr Chiam Yih Hsing John  
Dr Chng Shih Kiat  
Dr Gan Ow Tin  
Dr Ho May San Karen  
Dr Khoo Yiok Bin Christine  
Dr Lee Oh Chong Leng  
Dr Lim Hwee Boon  
Dr Lo Yoke Hwa Penny  
Dr Ng Shu Ping Linda  
Dr Oon Hwee Boon Hazel  
Dr Puvanendran Rukshini  
Dr Seah Chin Mui Jaime  
Dr Tay Wen Sien  
Dr Vasanwala Farhad Fakhruddin

#### **Associate Members**

Dr Ang Pei-Ming Samuel  
Dr Chan Pai Sheng Daniel  
Dr Chao Tar Liang Anthony  
Dr Chin Khong Wee Justin  
Dr Htwe Tin Cho  
Dr Lee Mun Heng  
Dr Lee Wei Hsin Carol  
Dr Lwin Sann  
Dr Myat Htwe  
Dr Ng Wei Kian  
Dr Tan Eileen  
Dr Tan Eng Chun  
Dr Zuberi Quaratulain Tahira

## Notice

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<http://www.moh.gov.sg/corp/publications/enb>