

# Beyond the Call of Duty:

## Interview with Dr Chiang Wing Chiong

Interviewed by Dr Kelvin Goh, Editorial Board Member

**D**octor Chiang Wing Chiong, 40, a family physician from Dayspring Medical, appeared on the TODAY paper on 21st April 2010 in an article titled "The doctor who went above and beyond the call of duty"

The College Mirror is delighted to invite Dr Chiang, a positive role model, to share with us his experience in assisting an out of hospital cardiac arrest.

**CM: In view of the recent negative media exposure about doctors in the local papers it is inspiring to see a fellow family physician rising to the occasion. Tell us what actually happened on the morning of 20th April 2010?**

**Dr Chiang:** On the morning of 20th April 2010, I came to work as usual at about 9am. My clinic is at Basement 1 of Century Square shopping centre, so I park my car in the basement car park. As I entered the car park, I saw a middle aged gentleman lying on the floor of the car park, right in the middle of the driveway. There was nobody standing around him at that point in time. As I drove closer, he looked as if he was not breathing. I got out and attended to him. He was gasping and there was no pulse. By this time, a lady who had just parked her car arrived and I told her to call for the ambulance. I ran up to my clinic which was about 100m away, got the bag and mask resuscitator kit, one vial of adrenaline, syringe with needle and came back down. I started CPR.

I did CPR for about 10 to 15 minutes before the ambulance crew arrived. The ambulance could not come into the car park due to height constraints. The ambulance crew helped with the CPR when they arrived. They had an automated external defibrillator. He was diagnosed with ventricular fibrillation. We shocked him a few times with the defibrillator, but it was unsuccessful. We then evacuated him to the ground floor taxi stand and into the waiting ambulance. We continued CPR en route to Changi General Hospital.

After we transferred him to the waiting doctors and nurses at the Changi General Hospital, I came back to the clinic.

**CM: When was the last time you performed CPR? What were your thoughts at that point in time? What are your fears and concerns?**

**Dr Chiang:** This is the third CPR I have performed in the past 10 years since leaving hospital practice. The last time I had to do CPR was about 5 years ago. It was during a housecall. The patient complained of abdominal pain. He was talking to me one moment, started gasping and then stopped breathing the next. I did not have the bag and mask with me and had to perform mouth to mouth CPR. He had a ruptured undiagnosed hepatoma and passed away a few hours later in hospital.

I did have fears of contracting infections from the patient but I guess my moral obligation as a doctor outweighed that fear at that point. After that incident, I started carrying a CPR barrier mask with me whenever I do housecalls.

For the incident in the car park, it was fortunate that the bag and mask was readily accessible in my clinic.

**CM: Thanks to your immediate CPR, the paramedics were able to perform early defibrillation. It was reported that you assisted the paramedics all the way to Changi General Hospital, going beyond the call of duty. What prompted you to do that? Do you feel that doctors should accompany the patient in emergency cases to the hospital with the ambulance?**

**Dr Chiang:** The paramedics in Singapore are very well trained, however, when a person has no pulse and is not breathing, I think every little help that he gets could make a big difference to the outcome. Therefore I have made it a point to accompany all my CPR cases to hospital. The two paramedics would be



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**Dr Chiang:** After graduation and housemanship, I did 3 years of hospital postings before working as a family physician in Bedok. I did my Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine in 2003. I was working in the Haig Road branch of Dayspring Medical Clinic before we set up the Tampines branch in Century Square in August 2009.

**CM: What is one change you would like to see happening within our profession?**

**Dr Chiang:** I would like to see more emphasis on preventive medicine and the management of chronic diseases in the family physician setting. The private sector family physician should be engaged to care for some of the subsidized cases that are currently seen in the polyclinics. Appropriate and fair remuneration should be paid for the management of such cases. This would help to prevent the current “brain drain” of doctors into the more lucrative aesthetic trade as well as reduce the workload of the overworked polyclinic staff.

**CM: Any parting advice to our valued readers and colleagues?**

**Dr Chiang:** Life is short. We should stop and smell the roses as often as we can.

**CM: Thank you, Dr Chiang, for this opportunity. ■CM**



busy with the CPR, so the extra person could help with the setting of intravenous lines or the administration of emergency drugs (although very difficult in a speeding ambulance). For the above reason, I feel that doctors should accompany the patient in the ambulance should the patient require CPR. However, for other emergency cases (eg stable AMI patient) where resuscitation is not required, I do not think that it is essential for the doctor to accompany the patient to hospital in the ambulance.

**CM: How did you prepare yourself and your clinic for such emergencies?**

**Dr Chiang:** I do periodic checks on the resuscitation equipment in the clinic to make sure that they are in working order and the emergency drugs are not expired.

**CM: Do you feel that BCLS certification is a necessity for all practicing doctors?**

**Dr Chiang:** I do not think that BCLS certification is a necessity for all practicing doctors as most doctors would have performed some form of CPR in their career. BCLS was also part of the medical school curriculum during my time. I think CME programs that incorporate a CPR refresher course would be more appropriate.

**CM: Tell us more about yourself?**

**Dr Chiang:** I am 40 years old. I am married with 3 children. I graduated from NUS in 1996. I am currently working as a family physician in Century Square Shopping Centre. When I am not working or spending time with my family, I can be found on the golf course. I don't consider myself a golf addict, though.

**CM: What was your journey into family medicine like?**