



# THE COLLEGE MIRROR

JUL - SEP 2001

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

One of the major highlights of the year is winning the bid to host the 18th Wonca World Conference in Singapore in 2007. We beat the Australians narrowly by one vote.

This World Conference will undoubtedly thrust the College of Family Physicians Singapore into the international medical scene once again.

We were hosts of the 10th Wonca World Conference in 1983.

We congratulate two of our Council members and our former Administrative Manager. A/Prof Goh Lee Gan has been elected Wonca Vice-President for the Asia-Pacific Region. His term of office is for 3 years. One of our former Presidents,

Dr Alfred Loh, has been appointed CEO of Wonca.

Ms Yvonne Chung, the former Administrative Manager of the College Secretariat, is now the Administrative Manager of the Wonca Secretariat.

The College's 8th Scientific Conference and 7th Meditech Exhibition will be held in Orchard Parade Hotel from 25-26 August 2001. The theme for the Conference is

"Training the Family Physician". Professor Lee Eng Hin, Dean,

Faculty of Medicine and Director, Graduate School of Medical Studies, NUS,

has kindly consented to be the Guest-of-Honour

for the opening of the Conference on 25 August 2001.

We are honoured that Mr Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Health and 2nd Minister for Finance, has kindly accepted our invitation to be the Guest-of-Honour at our 30th Anniversary Dinner on 26th August 2001, also to be held at the Orchard Parade Hotel.

A post-conference Minor Surgical Course will be held on 16th/23rd September 2001. This clinical course is a collaboration between Tan Tock Seng Hospital and the College of Family Physicians Singapore.

Ms Christina Cheong  
Administrative Executive

### **Introducing the New College Council**

At the 30th Annual General meeting of the College of Family Physicians, Singapore, held in Lecture Room 1, College of Medicine Building on Sunday 24 May 2001, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean was elected President of the 18th Council (2001-2003). A/Prof Cheong was President of the Singapore Medical Association from 1996-1999.

The following doctors continue to hold office in the same capacity for this term:  
Dr Arthur Tan Chin Lock as Vice-President, Dr Lee Kheng Hock as Honorary Secretary and Dr Lau Hong Choon as Censor-in-Chief.

Dr Tan See Leng now serves as Honorary Treasurer. We also welcome both Dr Tay Ee Guan and Dr Yii Hee Seng as new Council Members of the 18th Council.

A/Prof Goh Lee Gan, Dr Kwan Yew Seng, Dr Matthew Ng Joo Ming and Dr Tan Chee Beng continue to serve as Council Members, together with A/Prof Lim Lean Huat (Immediate former President) and Dr Richard Ng Mong Hoo (Immediate former Honorary Treasurer).

We would like to congratulate the office-bearers of the 18th Council (2001-2003). We look forward to the College of Family Physicians Singapore scaling even greater heights under the wings of this newly elected Council.

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### **Introducing our New Administrative Executive**

Ms Christina Cheong joined the College of Family Physicians Singapore as Administrative Executive, with effect from 28th May 2001. She takes over the management of the College Secretariat from Ms Yvonne Chung, who is now serving as Administrative Manager of the Wonca Secretariat.

Christina's work experience spans from a Database Manager in an international conference house, to a short stint as Operations Executive in the then promising Internet industry.

After leaving her dot.com dream behind, Christina took on a challenging position as Event Executive with an events management consultancy.

She ultimately realised that this fast-paced lifestyle of working 24-7 wasn't what she was looking for.

Having a love for administrative work and a keen interest in the medical field since young, Christina looks forward to contributing her utmost in serving the College.

Outside work, Christina finds happiness in spending time with family and friends. She enjoys travelling, listening to music and surfing the Internet for information.

The College Secretariat now has a strength of three staff. The other two staff are Ms Rosalind Ong, who joined as Administrative Officer on 8th May 2001, and Ms Katy Chan who has been an Administrative Assistant of the College for the past 5 years.

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# Singapore's Wonca 2007 Bid in Pictures

Preparations for the bidding of Wonca 2007 started as early as June 2000. Since this is the second time the Singapore College is bidding to host the conference, the bidding committee was determined to succeed this time.

We were able to secure generous sponsorship for the bidding process. Strong support came from the Singapore Tourism Board, Peridot Health, Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Diamond Industries and many letters of well wishes from the various professional organisations, ministries, statutory boards and NTUC Income.

team of 4 doctors from our College took on the Australian team. They Australians had a much larger team, numbering more than 20 strong, made up of professional event organisers, doctors and university dons.

It was a tussle between the Australian and the Singapore College, both lobbying for support right from the time of arrival. Both were determined to woo as many votes of Wonca world Council as possible. We had very crucial support at our bidding speech from Professor Goh Lee Gan and Professor Lim Lean Huat, our President.

We managed to beat the Australians by just one vote. With the winning bid in the Singapore College's hands, we look forward to welcoming the world of family physicians to our Island nation in July 2007.



WHERE THE BID TOOK PLACE. THE ALPINE HEALTH RESORT IN THE DRAKENSBURG MOUNTAINS.



THE BID TEAM. FROM LEFT DR TAN SZE WEE, WONG CHIANG YIN, ARTHUR TAN, RICHARD NG, LIM LEAN HUAT, TAN SEE LENG AND LEE KHENG HOCK.

The bid process took place in a mountainous resort deep in the heart of South Africa, about 4 hours' drive from Durban. The Committee carried more than 250kg of bid documents, souvenirs and publicity material to prepare for battle against the Australian College.

Set against the back-drop of the Drakensburg mountains, the



PRESENTING THE SINGAPORE PACKAGE. DR TAN SEE LENG, CHAIRMAN OF THE WONCA 2007 COMMITTEE IN ACTION.

## CELEBRATING THIRTY YEARS

A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean

In this commemorative issue to celebrate thirty years of the Singapore College we chronicle activities and developments in the areas of training, research and practice. Each of these areas may be regarded as the College's ongoing academic challenges.

In training, the challenge of the College is to work towards leveling up the family physician. Primary care doctors need to work towards the capability of providing care that is more than care of episodic, acute, self-limiting conditions. This high volume, low value work must be transformed into high value and lower volume work of continuing care, integrated disease management with the hospitals, and care of the elderly. In this way, the specialist outpatient clinic workload can be reduced and a better distribution of work to the whole health care system can be achieved.

We have now in place programmes for each of the three phases of the training of the doctor, namely, clinical attachment for the medical undergraduate, vocational training and continuing medical education for the graduate doctor. The vocational training programmes lead to the diploma, masters and fellowship by assessment. The College is a member of the SMC CME Committee and has the responsibility for delivering a CME programme for family physicians. A cyclical modular CME programme based on the 8 modules of the family medicine training programme has been drawn up. The Annual Scientific Conference is another of the College's CME Initiatives. We look forward to each family physician taking an active part in participating in these programmes.

From the standpoint of research, the College has in the past embarked on sporadic research activities. The time has come for the College to consolidate these sporadic efforts into a systematic primary care research programme. Plans are underway to embark on collaborative research efforts with primary care doctors in private and public sectors as research partners.

In practice, there are many innovations that can make primary care more effective. The Ministry of Health is working on integrated disease management programmes both within the polyclinics and also vertically between hospitals and the primary care sector. Such policy changes provide the family physicians opportunities for greater participation in health care delivery. Family Physicians must also re-tool themselves and their practices to better cater for continuing care especially that of the elderly. A more effective and workable healthcare financing system must evolve to support this. Neither the fee-for-service contract system nor managed care as it is practiced in the private sector in Singapore is adequate.

Primary Care is affordable now because of public subsidy for the 20% of patients seen in the polyclinics and the predominantly acute episodic care provided by General Practitioners for the other 80%. Means must therefore be introduced

to ensure that the 80% of care provided by GPs is not just affordable but responsive to the national challenge of implementing disease management and providing high quality care to the elderly.

College members in this year's Annual General Meeting in June unanimously adopted resolutions to look into setting up an independent Department of Family Medicine in a University in Singapore and a Family Medicine Foundation in the near future. An independent Department will provide the due emphasis on Family Medicine education. After all, half of all doctors will be family physicians. A Family Medicine Foundation that is founded partly by private and partly by public funding will serve to develop Family Medicine at a surer pace than hitherto to also benefit the majority of doctors in the private primary care sector.

The *raison d'être* that spurred the founding fathers to set up the College 30 years ago has not changed. To improve the health of our people, family physicians must play their part. Training is still the foundation. Funding and seamless delivery structure can then kick in to actuate it.

CHEONG PAK YEAN, MBBS(Sing), MMed(Int Med),  
MRCP(UK), FAMS, FCFPS, FRCPE, FACP  
President, College of Family Physicians, Singapore

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