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graduated in 1946 was over 50 years; by 1972 when I graduated it was about 12 years; currently it is less than a year. Information technology is both the source and the solution to this challenge, and so our students at LKCMedicine all have an iPad to access their lectures and other information online, anywhere and at any time. They are prepared for lifelong learning for which medical school is just the warm up lap.

At the 6th Asia Pacific Primary Care Research Conference held in Singapore this September in conjunction with the Family Medicine Symposium, the tagline was 'Advancing Best Care through Education and Research' and I want to highlight the benefits from engagement in teaching and research for the Family Physician.

It took me only a couple of minutes to come up with eight benefits for the Family Physician who contributes as a teacher. Perhaps the most rewarding is the motivation and inspiration we receive from our students. And after all, the word 'doctor' derives from the Latin 'docere' – to teach.

Similarly, it was easy to produce a list of eight benefits from engagement in research. One very good reason is the intellectual stimulation of what must be a very bright mind to have earned a place in Medical School. And

The answer is in preventive medicine and no one in the medical profession is as well placed as the general practitioner to do the job, provided he is well trained

don't we all have some responsibility to advance medical knowledge and improve care?

I believe there is great opportunity for a collaborative effort between Medical Schools, the College, the Academy and the

Ministry to improve the engagement of Family Physicians in education and research. A programmatic effort will not only enhance the standing and status of Family Medicine, it will improve standards of care, work satisfaction and will inspire our students to emulate impressive role models to choose a career in that most challenging but also most personally rewarding of medical specialties.

So what would Dr Sreenivasan and Dr Wong encourage us to do today? I think Dr Sreenivasan would urge you to be proud of your status as Family Physicians and to develop your skills in a particular area of interest, including education and research. I like to think that Dr Wong would be impressed with the progress that has been made in the four areas I have outlined – and he would encourage you to keep going!

Thank you also for the honour of giving the 40th Sreenivasan Oration.

■ CM

Dr Koh Eng Kheng

by Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee, President, 26th Council, College of Family Physicians Singapore

Dr Koh Eng Kheng was born on 10 July 1928. A keen medical student at the University of Malaya (Singapore), he scored a Distinction in Social Medicine & Public Health, and graduated MBBS in June 1955.

He became an associate member of the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) in the United Kingdom in 1957, obtained his Membership in the RCGP in 1962, and was later conferred the Fellowship of the RCGP in 1973.

He was elected President of the Singapore Medical Association in 1972, and led the first delegation of Singapore Doctors into China at the invitation of the China Medical Association.

A founder member of the then College of General Practitioners, Singapore, Dr Koh was instrumental in the events leading to the founding of our parent college. He introduced the late Lord Hunt of Fawley, then president of the Royal College of General Practitioners to the then Minister of Health, Mr Chua Sian Chin, a meeting that opened the way to the establishment of the College of General Practitioners, Singapore.

A founder member of the college, he served 5 years in the council, then served as Honorary Secretary as well as the chairman for undergraduate education in 1974 to 1975, Editor for the Singapore Family Physician Journal from 1978 to 1979, and publication chairman from 1979 to

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Dr Koh Eng Kheng (1928 - 2006)

1980. In 1979 he was the Convocation Lecturer for the Medical Faculty and in the same year, delivered the Second Sreenivasan Lecture on "Art in Family Medicine". In the following year, he was the Speaker for 75th Anniversary of the Medical School, University of Singapore. In 1979 to 1980, he was appointed as a Member of the Singapore Medical Council.

During his years as President of the College of General Practitioners Singapore from 1989 to 1991, the following milestones of the College were recorded:

1990

The proposal for a Family Medicine Programme leading to the award of MMed (Family Medicine) was adopted by the School of Postgraduate Medical Studies, National University of Singapore.

Established the Postgraduate Medical Library in partnership with the Academy of Medicine, Singapore

1991

The Family Medicine Training programme was finalised as a 3- year-programme, made up of two years of hospital rotation postings and 1 year in Family Health Service. In the 3rd year, the Family Medicine trainees spent six months in Community Health Service and six months in Maternal & Child Health Service. There were also attachments to the departments of primary care - School Health Service, Food & Nutrition department, Training & Health Education (now called National Health Education), Health Services for the Elderly (now called Home Nursing Foundation) and a GP clinic attachment.

The training programme is very much similar in structure today except that the Family Health Service is now the Government Polyclinic Service and there is amalgamation of the Community Health Service and the Maternal & Child Health Service into one service. It has evolved into the Family Medicine Residency Programme and is geared towards junior doctors working in Ministry of Health. The College set up a parallel programme for doctors in the private sector in 1995, previously known as Programme B, now called as the Masters of Medicine in Family Medicine, MMed(FM) College programme.

His Publications

The list of his publications included the following:

1968

SMA Newsletter

Medical Curriculum need for re-appraisal

1969

Editorial, SMA Newsletter

An Academic Body for GPs in Singapore

1969

Journal of Royal GP College UK

Emotional Disorders in General Practice in Singapore

1970

SMJ

General Practice in a Developing Society

1973

Journal of Royal GP College UK

Acupuncture

1975

Australian Family Physician

Mental Health & Urbanisation in Singapore

1975

Proceedings 5th Pan Pacific,

Conference International Society of Rehabilitation & Disabled, The Community & Rehabilitation of the Psychiatric Ill.

1977

AMA Gazette

Singapore Doctor Looks at Acupuncture

1977

Family Practitioner (CGP Malaysia)

The GP & Sex Education

1980

Royal GP College UK

Occasional Paper Family Counselling in the East

He had volunteered for National Service and served in the first Singapore Armed Forces (SAF's) Volunteer Medical Corps for several years. His contributions to the SAF

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included the composition a song, "The Medics of the Field" jointly with Dr Cheong San Than who penned the original lyrics.

In 1990, he was appointed a Justice of The Peace by the Minister of Home Affairs.

His Life's Work

Dr Koh Eng Kheng commenced his private general practice, the Chung Khiaw Clinic, in Upper Bukit Timah in 1957. This became a two-man practice when his brother Dr Koh Eng Soo joined him in 1965. Dr Kevin Koh, joined his practice in 2003. Dr Koh Eng Kheng practiced for more than three decades, and developed an outstanding reputation as a good family physician. He worked on until 7 May 2006, in spite of his 15 years of difficult times, coping with his illnesses.

His Final Journey

In 1991, Dr Koh Eng Kheng developed carcinoma of the descending colon. It was then that he decided to step down as College President, to embarked on an arduous task of doing battle with this disease. He underwent a year of chemotherapy, after which he was well enough to be seen at the many continuing medical education meetings and events. In 1998, he was diagnosed with Ischaemic Heart Disease, and had two stents inserted through angioplasty.

In April 2001, he developed a hepatoma, and underwent partial hepatectomy with irradiation. However, his condition did not resolve completely. After 4 years of fighting his disease, he developed end-stage renal failure in August 2005, necessitating haemodialysis until his end came on 5 July 2006.

Dr Koh Eng Kheng was such a well-liked family physician by his patients that one died of an acute myocardial infarction on hearing of his demise, while another went into atrial fibrillation and had to be warded!

The College of Family Physicians Singapore is forever grateful for the many contributions of our Past President, Dr Koh Eng Kheng to our organization. His genuine and friendly demeanor, always ready with a smile for all patients and friends, was something most of us will remember. We will always remember him as a brave warrior, battling on despite his illness.

Some months ago, Dr Kevin Koh approached and informed the College that the Koh Family would like to make a donation to the college in memory of their late father Dr Koh Eng Kheng. We were delighted that such an honour was bestowed on the College, as the late Dr Koh was indeed one of the key figures that made the existence of the College in Singapore possible.

It is therefore our honour to establish the Dr Koh Eng Kheng Gold Medal, to be awarded to the Best Fellowship Candidate each academic year. The Fellowship of the College of Family Physicians, Singapore is the pinnacle of the academic achievement in the college. It is a rigorous programme and runs for 2 years, with exacting formative and summative components.

I present to you, the Koh Eng Kheng Gold Medal, for best candidate in the Fellowship of Family Physicians, Singapore.

■ CM



The presentation of the mock cheque from Dr Koh Eng Kheng's family to the College of Family Physicians Singapore at the Family Medicine Convocation Ceremony & Dinner on 18 November 2017. Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee (left) receiving the mock cheque of \$18,000 from Dr Kevin Koh.