

About the Certificate in Community Hospital Practice (CCHP)

by A/Prof Lee Kheng Hock, Immediate Past President, College of Family Physicians Singapore



The Certificate in Community Hospital Practice (CCHP) is a new training programme organised by College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS). It is a structured programme designed to train family physicians to be competent in managing patients with complex conditions.

Responding to the needs of our community and the challenges posed by a rapidly ageing population, our College deliberated and decided to create this new training program. A GDFM graduate with this additional training (CCHP) can embark on a career as a family physician working in the community hospitals. The CCHP is recognised by all the major community hospitals in Singapore and is supported by the Ministry of Health which provides for 50% subsidy of course fees for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents.

The planning of this programme started almost 2 years ago. After extensive consultation with all the community hospitals and the Ministry of Health, a workgroup chaired by A/Prof Tan Boon Yeow, CEO of St Luke’s Hospital, was formed and tasked to develop this programme. Our Past President and Medical Director of Bright Vision Hospital, A/Prof Lee Kheng Hock was the Advisor to this work group. Work group members come from all the major community hospitals. They are:

Dr Jeffrey Jiang	St Luke’s Hospital
Dr Kalaimamani Kanagasabai	Ren Ci Hospital
Dr Colin Ngeow	Yishun Community Hospital
Dr Farhad Fakhrudin Vasanwala	Sengkang Hospital
Dr Alvin Ong	Jurong Community Hospital
Dr Kelvin Phua	Ang Mo Kio Thye Hwa Kuan Hospital
Dr Fatima Reyaz Singaporewalla	Bright Vision Hospital
Dr Low Lian Leng	Bright Vision Hospital

The team created a rigorous and pragmatic programme. It provides opportunities for trainees to see the spectrum of cases commonly encountered in community hospitals. They will go through 80 hours of clinical training where they are attached to community hospitals and supervised by family physician faculty working as senior doctors there. The timing of the sessions are flexible. It is quite feasible even for busy and family doctors working in GP clinics and polyclinics to take up this course. At the community hospitals, they will learn and acquire critical competencies such as running family conferences and multidisciplinary meetings (MDM). They will also be coached on developing good comprehensive care plans on admission and at discharge from the community hospital. The team have successfully recruited an impressive faculty of highly qualified and experienced family physicians who will guide the trainees throughout their 2-year learning journey.

In the pipeline is an expedited 1-year programme for candidates who have completed their GDFM. Family physicians with higher family medicine qualifications can also enrol if they wish to polish up their competencies that are relevant to community hospital practice.

It is envisaged that this programme will contribute significantly to meet the increasing demand for family physicians as more community hospitals open in the next few years. Presently family physicians with MMed (FM) and FCFP are recognised for employment as registrars and consultants at community hospitals. The GDFM plus CCHP training route will allow family physicians who prefer to work in community hospitals and follow the Resident Physician career track. The bottom line is a win-win situation for family physicians and the community hospitals. Ultimately the patients in the community hospitals will benefit from the hallmark effective and holistic care that is provided by our well-trained family physicians.

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