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Dr S R E Sayampanathan

CFPS Commencement Ceremony 2019

Dr S R E Sayampanathan, Master of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore, was invited as the Guest-of-Honour for the CFPS Commencement Ceremony 2019 on 27th July 2019. Dr Sayampanathan gave the following address

Adj Asst Professor Tan Tze Lee, President of the College of Family Physicians Singapore;

Council Members of the College;

Fellow Colleagues and Friends;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good afternoon. I am honoured to join you today on this joyous occasion of the Commencement Ceremony of the College of Family Physicians Singapore.

First and foremost, let me congratulate the College on all its achievements since 1971. Since its beginning, the College has focused on advancing the art and science of medicine, and conducting post-graduate courses, examination and accreditation. By the end of 1972, the first examination for diplomate membership, M.C.G.P., was held. This was the first post-graduate examination for family medicine to be conducted in Singapore. And over the years, many more courses, examinations and accreditation of Family Medicine were conducted.

Today, it is good to note that this has not stopped, but conversely, it is accelerating exponentially.

The number of doctors who are commencing on courses is a testament to this phenomenon. I congratulate all of you on your commitment and drive to improve your practice of the art and science of medicine.

With aging population, the role of Family Physicians has become even more important. We need many more well-trained doctors to provide better holistic, less fragmented and more integrated care at the community level. If the provision of such care by our Family Physicians is rock solid, the burden and strain on more specialized or acute hospital care would be markedly reduced, allowing specialists to provide more focused care and get our patients back to the community care earlier and faster.

In order for specialists to optimize our finite resources to provide better downstream intervention at acute care hospitals or tertiary outpatient clinics, we have to work very closely with our Family Physicians colleagues to enhance upstream prevention of complications in patients with chronic diseases and multiple comorbidities.

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In view of the important role of Family Physicians in the healthcare setting, the Academy of Medicine, Singapore chartered a new milestone in 2014 by inaugurating the formation of the Chapter of Family Medicine Physicians. Membership to this Chapter is open to registered medical practitioners who are registered in the Family Physicians Register and have completed the rigorous advanced family medicine training programme conducted by the College of Family Physicians Singapore and have exited with the Fellowship of the College (FCFPS).

I am pleased to share that a total of 66 Family Medicine Physicians joined the Academy the year the Chapter was formed. History was made on 25 October 2014 with the induction of the first batch of 24 Family Medicine Physicians at the Academy's second Induction Comitia 2014, with Mrs Tan Ching Yee, the then Permanent Secretary for Health, gracing the event as the Guest-of-Honour.

In her address, Mrs Tan commended on the formation of the Chapter of Family Medicine Physicians as it was timely to assist with the growing needs of the greying population in Singapore. She also mentioned that the Ministry values the holistic care provided by the Family Physicians whose practice is defined by its breadth and patient-centricity.

The Chapter of Family Medicine Physicians has been actively organizing CME programmes and conferences since its formation. Last year, it organized the 3rd Family Medicine Review Course, together with the College of Family Physicians Singapore, in conjunction with World Family Doctor Day. Next month, the Chapter will hold the 6th International Health and Care Collaboration (IHCC) 2019 with the theme 'Social Inclusion and Empowering the Population – The Value of Community, Primary Care, Equipment and Diets in Nurturing an Age-Friendly Society'.

I also wish to highlight that the Chapter plays an important role in the Advisory Committee of the upcoming 4th AMM-AMS-HKAM Tripartite Congress of Medicine cum 53rd Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine and Hong Kong Primary Care Conference 2019. A/Prof Lee Kheng Hock, Chairman of the Chapter, is leading the development of the scientific programme

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together with our counterparts from our sister academies from Malaysia and Hong Kong. I hope you will join us at this Tripartite Congress themed 'People-Centred Care: Towards Value-Based Innovations' which will be held on 6 – 8 December 2019 in Hong Kong.

The Academy of Medicine, Singapore has enjoyed a close and strong relationship with the College of Family Physicians Singapore. Together with the Singapore Medical Association, these three professional bodies often come together to discuss issues on professionalism and ethics, as well as upholding professional standards. We also actively engage the Ministry and regulatory bodies on a regular basis.

Before I end, I wish to emphasize that Family Medicine is not only an important field of medicine in Singapore but also an integral part of our healthcare system. As such, we look forward to have more Family Medicine Physicians in our Association, College and Academy families. Each Professional Body has an important role to play in the Singapore healthcare landscape.

Thank you.

■ CM

CFPS wins WONCA Asia Pacific 2023 bid

by Dr Xu Bang Yu, FCFP(S), Hon. Treasurer, 27th Council, College of Family Physicians Singapore

An introduction – What is WONCA?

To know the significance of winning such a bid, we must first know what WONCA is about. The World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA), as it is known, is a global non-profit professional organisation that represents Family Physicians from all regions of the world. But then, shouldn't the acronym be WOFD? The acronym WONCA was originally derived from the initials of the **W**orld **O**rganization of **N**ational **C**olleges, **A**cademies and **A**cademic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians. The name WONCA is therefore the short form of that very long name. WONCA's mission is to improve the quality of life of people around the world through high standards of care in Family Medicine.

Presently, WONCA has seven regions: Africa, Asia Pacific (AP), Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, Iberoamericana-CIMF, North America and South Asia. Each region is represented by a Regional President and Regional Council. The Asia Pacific region is one of the largest regions of WONCA, comprising member organisations from Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Philippines, China, Fiji and Vietnam.

Singapore bids for WONCA Asia Pacific 2023

The College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) sent a team to WONCA Asia Pacific (AP) Conference 2019 in



Support from College Elders, (from left) Dr Alfred Loh (immediate past CEO WONCA); A/Prof Goh Lee Gan (Past Asia Pacific Wonca Regional President 2001-2007), Dr Ryuki Kassai (Scientific Chair, Kyoto Conference), A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean (Past President CFPS, 2001-2007).

Image courtesy of A/Prof Goh Lee Gan

Kyoto to bid for Singapore to host WONCA AP Conference 2023. The team comprised of CFPS President, Adjunct Assistant Professor Tan Tze Lee, Honorary Secretary Dr S Suraj Kumar, Honorary Editor Dr Low Lian Leng and Council Members Dr Wong Tien Hua and myself, with support from College Secretariat's Assistant General Manager Ms Jennifer Lau. CFPS's bid was also supported by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), and they provided our team with a promotional video of Singapore which we incorporated into our bid presentation.

A bid supported by College Elders

A/Prof Goh Lee Gan, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean and Dr Alfred Loh attended the Kyoto 2019 conference with our CFPS delegation. College seniors might remember that A/Prof Goh was a past regional vice-president of WONCA Asia Pacific region and Dr Loh a past CEO of WONCA. Their presence no doubt lent weight to our bid. Besides going up to Kyoto for the bid, these seniors also gave our team valuable insights from their past experience. A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean lent his support by providing free copies of his new book "Being Human: Stories from Family Medicine". This book was very well received by various members of the WONCA Asia Pacific Council and many were left disappointed due to limited stock!

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