

A Throw-Forward: Family Physicians of Tomorrow

by Emily Soh, Duke-NUS Medical School (Class of 2021),
on behalf of the Family Medicine Extravaganza 2019 Organising Committee



Distinguished guests, participants and the Organising Committee – i.e. everyone able to resist the temptation of the buffet dinner long enough to gather for a group photo



Our emcees, Adrian and Jia Xin all ready at the start of the event.

The Family Medicine Extravaganza entered its 6th run this year, anchored on the theme **Family Physicians of Tomorrow**. The objective of the Extravaganza has remained unchanged since its inception – to provide a platform for medical students and junior doctors to explore the multiple facets of Family Medicine and to engage seasoned practitioners regarding issues close to their hearts. In previous years, the Extravaganza has introduced participants to a kaleidoscopic view of what Family Medicine is about; this year, the organizing team decided to do a throw-forward and to explore the future of Family Medicine.

On 30th August 2019, close to 200 students across all 3 medical schools as well as young doctors gathered at the auditorium at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine Clinical Sciences Building for an illuminating series of keynote speeches followed by an engaging panel discussion. We were honoured to have been able to invite Dr Ruth Lim (Director, Primary and Community Care, Ministry of Health, Singapore), Dr Siaw Tung Yeng (Founder and CEO, MaNaDr) and Dr Tan Poh Kiang (President of HCA Hospice Care and Chairman of the MediFund Committee of Jurong Health). Through the sharing of our speakers, participants were treated to a buffet of vicarious experiences – from private to public healthcare, clinical practice to healthcare administration, from hospice care to entrepreneurship.

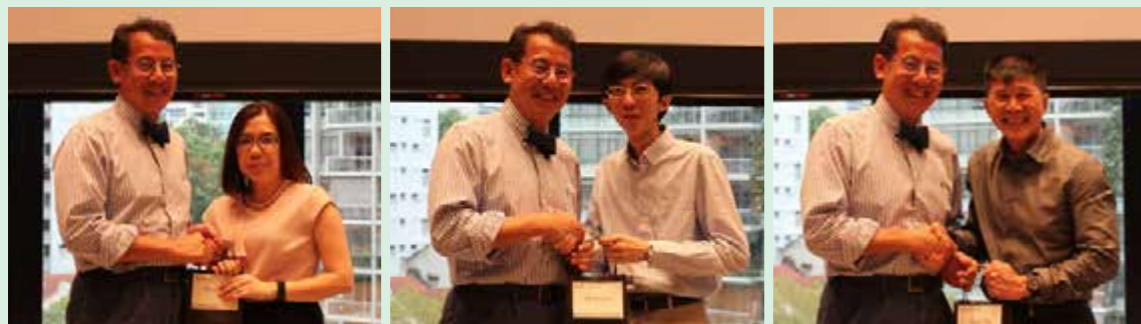
The panelists hailed from the National University Health System, SingHealth and National Healthcare Group, as well

as the College of Family Physicians Singapore, allowing the audience to hear opinions from representatives across all sponsoring institutions. In response to feedback for an extended dialogue, we allocated more time for Question and Answer, and also engaged the audience through an app that allowed questions to be fielded and voted for in real-time; apart from asking questions through the app, participants were also able to vote for questions that resonated most with them. As a result, the panelists were able to address issues that were most pertinent to majority of the audience.

The evening closed with a sumptuous buffet dinner and fruitful conversations with residents and programme directors at the information booths. We hope all participants took away a little something with them that evening, whether it is a burning question that has been answered, a prospective research opportunity, new friendships or a deeper interest in Family Medicine!

The organising team is grateful for the enduring support of Dr Loke Kam Weng as well as the administrative team. The event would not have been a success if not for their guidance, the speakers and panelists who took time out of their busy schedules to grace the event, and every participant who came through the doors!

■ CM



Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee presenting tokens of appreciation our keynote speakers - (from left) Dr Ruth Lim, Dr Siaw Tung Yeng, Dr Tan Poh Kiang

by Dr Ong Aili,
Trainee of 2018 - 2019 MMed(FM) College Programme

The 6th Family Medicine Extravaganza was held on 30th August 2019 in the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. The landscape of Family Medicine (FM) has evolved greatly in the last few decades. With the government shifting their focus to primary and preventive care, it's no surprise that we saw a great turn out of candidates who have a keen interest in exploring a career in family medicine. As the complexity of the patient increases together with the expectation of a family physician; the various post-graduate FM and residency training serve to ensure that newer generations of family physicians (FP) will acquire the necessary skills to meet the emerging needs of the ageing population.

Speakers from various FM community were invited to share their valuable experience and insight on the various aspect as a Family Physician.

Dr Ruth Lim, Director of Primary and Community Care, Ministry of Health, shared on the topic of family physician of tomorrow. She is a firm believer that a strong primary care is the foundation of our Singapore Healthcare system needs and she felt that as the profile and expectation of the patients change, so should the model of medical care. She encouraged all of us to aim to be a specialist in life.

Dr Siaw Tung Yeng, a senior consultant family physician with more than 30 years of extensive experience in healthcare and medical informatics, is passionate about integrating healthcare with technology. He feels that technology will allow a doctor to connect with his patients beyond the four walls of a clinic. As the founder and CEO of MaNaDr, he hopes to spread the brand of Singapore family physician internationally through technology.

Dr Tan Poh Kiang, the current president of HCA Hospice care, inspired us with his stories of how he raised funds and awareness for charity through running. He is glad that his ability to connect with people helped him in his work and he could marry his two passions together – to help people in their end of life care and running.

The dialogue session was chaired by representatives from various FM training Programmes: Dr Nelson Wee, Associate Programme Director for the MMed FM College Programme; Dr David Tan, Programme Director for the NUHS Family Medicine Residency Programme; Dr Wan Jinhui, Clinical Core Faculty Member, NHG; Dr Joanne Quah, Programme Director for the SingHealth Family Medicine Residency Programme, along with their respective trainees.

It was a lively session, with questions ranging from why the trainees chose to join the various FM programme to asking about the life as a family physician. A question on the average salary of a resident which initially drew laughter from everyone, eventually became a catalyst for us to explore the reasons why we wanted to be a doctor, and specifically, a family physician.

We hope that the current generation of FP can serve as good mentors and role models for future doctors by practicing quality medicine, being actively involved in teaching and having the right qualities and values.

May the Family Physicians of today and tomorrow continue to raise the standard of Family Medicine and play a leading role in Singapore's world-class healthcare system.

■ CM



Dr Loke Kam Weng presenting token of appreciation to the panelists (clockwise from top left): Dr David Tan and Dr Michelle Sim; Dr Quek Jing Sheng and Dr Wan Jinhui; Dr Nelson Wee and Dr Ong Ai Li; Dr Natalie Ong and Dr Joanne Quah

All images courtesy of Adrian Foo (Y2, LKCSOM)