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Editor's Words

by Dr Fok Wai Yee Rose, FCFP(S), Editor (Team A)

2021 marks a monumental milestone for the College of Family Physicians as we commemorate this momentous event, our 50th anniversary, with our inaugural stamps, depicting the roles of Family Physicians caring for patients in different settings from cradle to grave. In this issue, we have the privilege of our past presidents to share with us the history of the College and memorable moments. Fifty years ago, a group of farsighted family doctors got together to form the College of General Practitioners, Singapore with the assistance of more mature colleges overseas in the UK and Australia. Despite obstacles and challenges, our pioneers pursued the policy of continuing medical education and practice upgrading for its members. Subsequently, we changed our College's name to the College of Family Physicians to stress the medical care of Family ethos and patient-centred care, in the context of family and society.

In the early years, the College organised training in the evenings after work, to pursue higher learning despite all odds. The passion to teach and pursue excellence attracted even trained specialists to embrace Family Medicine as their speciality. With increasing recognition of the holistic care provided by the family doctor, there was a need to teach family medicine to incorporate the biopsychosocial aspects of care. Beyond mental health, we now appreciate the heart and science of family medicine as medical humanities. Our pioneers have impressed on us to inculcate and impart values unique to family medicine, to care for the entire family unit and to delve deeper into how we can promote health and prevent diseases. This same priority is reflected by our current government's goal to go "beyond healthcare to health".

In these fifty years, the College plays a important role in professional development of the family physician by conducting postgraduate courses such as the Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine, Master of Medicine in Family Medicine, Collegiate and Fellowship in Family Medicine. Our College

also supports the training of young doctors and medical students and congratulates the winning essays of the CFPS prize on the topic of the "GP's role in achieving herd immunity against COVID-19". Dr Terence Tan interviews Dr Gyles Morrison to apply medical knowledge and problem-solving skills to improve the design of healthcare technology and services. As we accelerate digital health, we need to preserve the sacrosanct doctor-patient relationship by maintaining medical confidentiality and respect for patient's autonomy. In the midst of the pandemic, GPs continue to collaborate and innovate as a community in their 1st PCN GP Annual Grand Conference 2020 and Primary Care Grand Conference 2021. This gathering allows GPs to continue to foster online friendships and supports distress and loneliness, while maintain safe distancing measures.

Our next step is to advance family medicine beyond our shores as we look forward to host the WONCA in the near future. We are in a good position as we have garnered experience, having hosted two WONCA World Conferences by the Singapore College in 1983 and 2007. Beyond education, we can collaborate with family physicians in other countries in research, sharing of best practices, and grooming our next generation of family physicians.

Even as we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we are reminded that COVID-19 is still with us and Dr Lawrence Ng shared ethical dilemmas of the duty-to-care, duty to promote equity and equality in society and public health services. Despite our commitments, we are not Super-Heroes, but human and experience the same mental stress, uncertainty, self-isolation and increased work demands of this pandemic. We must not neglect self-care which may result in burnt-out physicians who are unable to care for our patients. As a fraternity, we need to look put for one another and show support and help in times of need. Only then, can we show resilience and find meaning to be a family doctor to our patients.