

# Family Medicine CONVOCATION CEREMONY 2021

The Family Medicine Convocation Ceremony was held virtually via Zoom on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

Gracing the event as the Guest-of-Honour was Permanent Secretary (Health) Mr Chan Yeng Kit.

Mr Chan addressed the guests and graduands with the following speech.



Mr Chan Yeng Kit  
Photo credit: Ministry of Health

Professor Tan Tze Lee  
President, College of Family  
Physicians Singapore  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we celebrate the  
Family Medicine Convocation  
Ceremony. Because of the  
COVID-19 pandemic, last year's  
ceremony had to be postponed  
to this year. Hence, today's  
ceremony is for both the 2020

and 2021 batches. Even though COVID-19 has not gone  
away, it is important for us to adapt and learn to live with  
the virus. I am delighted to be here with you, even if only  
virtually, to mark this momentous event, especially for the  
2020 batch of graduates who have waited a year for this  
ceremony.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of  
you in our primary care and community frontline. You have  
worked tirelessly over the past year battling the pandemic,  
as you juggle work, exams, and family commitments.

Today, there are 27 graduates from the Fellowship, and 35  
from the Collegiate Membership (MCFPS) by Assessment.  
My heartiest congratulations to each and every one of you.

This is a significant milestone in your career. One that you  
have invested time and effort in reaching. You have acquired  
the knowledge and skills to be a Family Physician.

Many of you would know of MOH's Healthcare 2020 plan  
that was launched in 2012. And our "Three Beyonds"  
– Beyond Healthcare to Health; Beyond Hospital to  
Community; Beyond Quality to Value. Going forward, MOH  
will be taking a "Population Health" approach to right-site  
care and emphasize preventive care and health promotion.

Primary Care will be at the forefront of Population Health,  
and all of you will be key partners as our healthcare system  
evolves to tackle the challenges ahead.

I think many of you are familiar with these challenges. First,  
Singaporeans are living longer. This is of course a good

thing, not a bad thing. Singapore has one of the highest  
life expectancies in the world. Last year, life expectancy at  
birth for men was 81.5 years, and for women, 86.1 years.  
Second, our population is getting older. Last year, more than  
614,000 Singaporeans were aged 65 and above. That number  
has grown since. By 2030, it is projected to hit 900,000, an  
almost 50% increase in less than 10 years.

Considering these statistics, it becomes apparent that the  
disease burden will grow. Managing this will be a significant  
part of the many challenges our healthcare system will face  
in the coming years.

Primary care will play an increasingly greater role in  
anchoring the care of our patients across all life stages,  
regardless whether young or old. Over the next few years,  
Family Physicians will be increasingly involved across various  
domains, such as disease prevention, rehabilitation, mental  
health, and patient empowerment – how we can provide  
patients with information and knowledge, to enable them  
to be responsible for their own health.

Ongoing professional education, including postgraduate  
training in Family Medicine, is a huge enabler towards  
nurturing family doctors with the professional  
competencies in this broad-based discipline. I would like  
to thank the CFPS for working with the Family Medicine  
Training Advisory Committee and the Family Medicine  
Examination Committee, to align the GDFM curriculum and  
assessment, including the introduction of clinical postings  
to the curriculum.

I would like to commend the College for your active  
involvement in Family Medicine education over the years,  
and for continuing to proactively shape professional training  
to meet our care needs.

The College of Family Physicians Singapore is the voice  
representing the Family Medicine community. In addition to  
running three core postgraduate Family Medicine training  
courses, CFPS has also worked closely with various divisions  
in MOH. Just over the past year, this has included the focus  
group discussion on the upcoming implementation of the  
Healthcare Services Act, the MOH-AIC-CFPS Primary  
Care seminar on Testing strategies for COVID-19, as well

as the MCCY-MOH Conversation on Singapore Women's  
development.

One of the College's aims has been to present and establish  
the Family Medicine discipline as a specialty on its own. This  
is commendable and supported by MOH. Family Medicine  
covers a wide range of treatments and patients, requiring a  
breadth of knowledge and practice that can be considered  
equivalent to other specialists' body of organ-specific  
knowledge. Family Physicians are an integral part of our  
healthcare landscape, providing first-contact, comprehensive  
and continuing care for individuals and their families in the  
community. As we develop our Population Health Strategy,  
Family Physicians will play an increasingly important role.

Finally, allow me to congratulate the College on its 50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary this year. This is a very significant milestone.  
The College has done magnificent work over the past 50  
years.

To commemorate this anniversary, a second edition of Being  
Human: Stories from Family Medicine has been published,  
detailing numerous anecdotes by Family Physicians. These  
bite-sized stories run the gamut of experiences that Family  
Physicians have been through, and serve as a reminder that,  
perhaps, the most important skills a Family Physician can  
have, are those to do with the human connection.

Let me conclude by, once again, expressing my heartiest  
congratulations to all the graduates. Thank you very much.

■ CM

## Congratulations to our new 2021 Fellowship Graduands

Interviewed by Dr Chan Hian-lui Vincent, FCFP(S), Editorial Team Member (Team C)

College Mirror is delighted to congratulate the 12 successful  
candidates for the Family Medicine Fellowship Programme exit  
exams for the year 2021. This is a key milestone, and we  
celebrate with the successful candidates. For candidates who  
did not succeed, we would like to offer words of encouragement.  
Do not be discouraged, go ahead, and try again next year. After  
all, not all current Fellows passed on their first try.

For this edition, we interviewed **Dr Jeremy Koh Zhong Wei** and **Dr Wong Ann Mei**, and asked them to share their  
reflections on the course. Graduating top of his cohort, Jeremy  
is also the winner of the prestigious Dr Koh Eng Kheng Gold  
Medal Award, an award given to the best Fellowship candidate  
of each academic year.

### College Mirror (CM):

Do tell readers a bit about yourself.

### Dr Jeremy Koh Zhong Wei (JK):

I currently work as family physician  
at Hougang Polyclinic and am also  
involved with National Healthcare  
Group's family medicine residency  
training. Outside of daily work, I enjoy  
cycling to different parts of the island  
to explore new eateries. I actually  
got married last year at the height of  
COVID-19, so 2020 was definitely a  
memorable year (in more ways than  
one)!

### CM:

Why did you pursue Family Medicine  
as a career?

### JK:

My interest in family medicine started during medical  
school days, when I was posted to a general practice in  
a small Irish town. The general practitioner was the only  
source of medical care in the town and he even seemed



Dr Jeremy Koh Zhong Wei  
Graduand, Family Medicine  
Fellowship Programme  
Winner of the Dr Koh Eng Kheng  
Gold Medal Award

to know most of his patients by their first  
name! It was that personal, continuing and  
comprehensive care provided that first  
attracted me to family medicine. During  
my early days of hospital practice, I  
further realised the unique role of  
family medicine in the healthcare of  
Singapore, and hence decided to train  
as a family physician.

### CM:

What made you sign up for the Fellowship  
Training Programme?

### JK:

After the MMed(FM), I was involved in  
teaching both undergraduate students and  
postgraduate residents. This entailed writing  
case scenarios for discussion and creating

assessments for evaluation of learning. These medical  
pedagogy skills were a main component of the Fellowship  
training programme that appealed to me. Furthermore,  
the fellowship training programme also provided the

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