

CME, DOMICILIARY AND CARE OF THE ELDERLY

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The Singapore Family Physician has from the past year been given a new facelift and upgrade. Starting from this issue, it will have a new role and objective. Besides articles relevant to the theme of the issue, it will also have a distance-learning package for Category 3B CME. This issue will focus on Domiciliary and Care of the Elderly.

CME

The Singapore Medical Council (SMC) has announced that CME would be made compulsory from January 1, 2003. All doctors must achieve at least 50 CME points with at least 10 core points for the 2 years ending December 31, 2004 in order for their practicing certificates to be renewed. Achieving CME points that are core for Family Medicine is now not an issue as 10 mandatory core FM points can be achieved by reading articles in *The Singapore Family Physician*, which members receive free every quarter. The College is now working with SMC to further assist members in registering these points seamlessly.

A distance-learning component with 6 learning units, each entitled to 1 CME point, will also be part of *The Singapore Family Physician*. This issue focuses on Home Care. This has been developed jointly with the Home Care Organizations. The distance-learning forms part of the Skills course that will be launched by the College. To be able to claim this 6 core FM CME points, the reader must complete and submit the MCQ assessment sheets in *The Singapore Family Physician*.

DOMICILIARY AND CARE OF THE ELDERLY

Caring for the Elderly at home has always been the domain of the Family Physician. Many of us also volunteer our time and effort to look after patients in the nursing homes. Family doctors have been doing house calls for years for elderly patients. Many of us in many ways and on occasions even offered our services for free to our needy patients. Many Family Physicians have been able to perform such tasks competently and skills in dealing with the many Geriatric conditions. However, not long ago, many of us will remember that someone called us “dumbo GPs” who are incapable of diagnosing Dementia and managing such a condition.

It is hoped that through this issue of *The Singapore Family Physician*, learning can be enhanced and have a standard way of dealing with the many geriatric problems in line with current Geriatric thinking. The review and clinical articles in the journal will address practice issues and care of the elderly in the community. Practical tips

on caring and prescribing in the elderly are also addressed. Older people are not only physiologically different, they fall sick more often than younger people, suffer more from being in the end stage of various chronic progressive degenerative disease and are most likely to lack the capacity to make critical decisions when this needs to be made. Resources in society are also not evenly distributed towards the care of the elderly.

Many Geriatric conditions can be successfully managed at home, not all need to be hospitalized. Most Geriatric patients do not like to be moved to an unfamiliar environment such as a hospital. Often than not, they become disorientated and delirious, resulting in adverse outcomes. The Home Care distance-learning component in this issue addresses the philosophy, operational and service issues of Home Care. The Clinical issues confronting the doctor doing the house call and caring of the patient at home will be discussed in the workshop, seminar and clinical attachment component of the course. This will be announced to participants in due course.

The Publications Committee would like to thank Dr Kalaimamani Kanagasabai for co-ordinating this issue and for contributing the cover pictures.

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