



College of Obstetricians and
Gynaecologists, Singapore

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Academy of Medicine
Singapore

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NEWSLETTER

Dear Fellows of the College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists

Time certainly flies and I feel it is an appropriate time again for me to update Fellows on the College activities. Much has happened since I last wrote. I want to thank you all for supporting our young college. I do hope in the coming years more of you would volunteer for the many activities that the College plans for.

All the Colleges including COGS are going through a transition period in which the roles of the Colleges and the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (FAMS) are being reviewed. Prof Fock Kwong Ming, Assistant Master is being tasked by our Master, Prof Low Cheng Hock with the job of looking at this. On our part we want to remain strongly linked with our parent body, the Academy as we see many benefits from this association. The College in Hong Kong has a similar type of arrangement.

However we do see a much greater role for Colleges when it comes to issues regarding the specialty. There is a general agreement on this in the Council of the FAMS. We need to forge forward if we want to remain relevant. Whilst the speed and pace is not entirely within COGS control, we nevertheless need to remain visionary to our cause and work towards our objectives that we set for ourselves.

I want to engage all Fellows in the activities of the College, both public and private as I see much strength in these arrangements. I want to thank everyone in supporting me in this endeavor. There have been several issues that need to be addressed.

Maintenance of Certification (MOC)

The issue that was left over from last year was the issue of the MOC. As you are aware, the Education Subcommittee of the Academy Medicine reconstituted the members to address this issue after its last AGM. The committee met and submitted its new proposal to the Singapore Medical Council for deliberation. The outcome is pending as there were submissions from the College of Family Physicians and Singapore Medical Association still being awaited. In this respect I like to thank Fellows again for their matured and balanced views on this very thorny subject.

I will certainly give you further update when they come available.

Launch of Distance Learning Programme (DLP)

Some of you may have heard about the DLP by the Academy.

The Distance Learning Programme has been officially launched on 1 November 2005. Fellows may access the DLP through the Member Login secured area via the Academy's website at www.ams.edu.sg using your MCR number and password. If you have forgotten your password you can email your request to Daniel_goh@ams.edu.sg or contact Mr Daniel Goh at 63244597. If you need further help, please get in touch with Ms Pamela Hwee (COGS Secretary) at the Academy 62238968.

Circulation of Clinical Practice Guidelines

You would have received the first few guidelines by now. I would urge that you look through and give your comments and input on the guidelines that have been developed by Fellows of the College. Dr TC Chang is overseeing the collation and development of these practice guidelines for the College. The council feels that these guidelines will enhance the high standards of practice that our Fellows are already currently providing to our patients. It is also customized to our local practice.

I would welcome any suggestions on the topics and also ask for volunteers interested to write these guidelines. This I feel is an important function of the College, as our own practitioners should guide the practice of our specialty. Please contact Dr TC Chang or Dr Lai Fon Min if you like to contribute your ideas.

These guidelines may also be used as distance learning tools to accumulate CME points. Questions would be set to achieve the goals. In this respect, I would like to thank our secretary, Dr Jeffrey Low who has been working hard on this activity.

Election of Council Members of the College of O&G, Singapore

Under the Constitution, College had asked for nominations to fill up the 3 vacancies of retiring members of the council (namely Dr TC Chang, Dr Suresh Nair and Dr Ann Tan). Only 3 nominations were received by the deadline and the three, namely Dr TC Chang, Dr Suresh Nair and Dr Kelvin Tan KH were elected. The College welcomes the re-election of TC Chang and Suresh and welcomed a new council member Kelvin Tan to the College council.

The College would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Ann Tan for her sterling service to the College. Fellows would recall that Ann organized a very successful workshop at the 39th Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine in Singapore last year. Ann also provided much active debate and advice during her term. Ann remains a member of the MF Section of the College and we trust that she will continue to contribute to the affairs of the College through the MF Section.

2nd Certificate Course in Obstetrics Ultrasound, 7 - 9 January 2006

Through the good work of Dr TC Chang, the course was successfully organized by Thomson Medical Centre and College of O&G, Singapore. There was very good response and the course also contributed to increasing the College funds. The College is looking at ways where we can collaborate and co-organize activities for the mutual benefit of all. That will also help increase the profile of the College. I do hope that Fellows can follow Dr Chang's example and help College seek for new initiatives. I have similarly asked the various Chairperson of the subspecialty section to look at new opportunities to organize College courses with or without the collaboration of others.

6th Regional MRCOG Part II Examination Course, 20 - 22 January 2006

The course was successfully conducted with an overwhelming response from candidates locally and the region. The course was over subscribed for the last three years. This is due to the comprehensiveness and high quality of the course as pointed out in the feedback by the candidates themselves. This is the first time that the College has taken over as a major player in the organization of the course, which was previously organized by the Singapore Representative Committee of the RCOG. The profit has enabled the College to increase its funds.

More of such course that can enhance the training of trainees or even courses that enrich the knowledge and skills of Fellows will be organized.

Second ISUOG Obstetric Ultrasound Outreach Course, 12 – 14 May 2006

A/Prof SH Yeo and his team is organizing the second ISUOG Obstetric Ultrasound Outreach Course from 12 - 14 May 2006 to be held at the Training Centre, KK Women's and Children's Hospital. This follows the very successful Symposium on Medical Litigation and Labour Ward Emergencies (25 - 27 November 2005), which was organized by the Section of Maternal Fetal Medicine, COGS and KKH. I do hope Fellows would continue to support and continue to update themselves by registering for the course. Please contact Ms Cindy Liew at Cindy.Liew.SY@kkh.com.sg for further details.

1st Singapore Menopause Congress, 28 – 30 July 2006

Fellows would like to register themselves for the 1st Singapore Menopause Congress organized by the Menopause Research Society Singapore from 28 – 30 July 2006. COGS is the nominal sponsor of this event and I would encouraged all Fellows to support this event. For further details, please logon to the congress website www.menopauseresearchsociety.org.sg or contact Ms Pam Wong at 63214491.

Medico Legal Course on “Anatomy of Medical Legal Cases in Obstetrics and Gynaecology”

As the medical legal climate is getting increasingly uncomfortable, the College wishes to take a focused view on this area. It is important that we look closely at the anatomy of medical suits in O&G in Singapore as well as training ourselves to respond either as a defendant or as an expert witness. There are valuable lessons to learn from each of the cases both in terms of the O&G / medical / surgical content as well as the legal perspective.

This is an important aspect of risk management to keep us alive. Dr KY Seetho has been asked to spearhead the organization of this workshop/symposium.

Addenda to General Consent forms

There are variations to different consent forms for surgery depending which hospital we come from. After a series of JCI accreditation in the various hospitals recently the general consent forms at least in the restructured hospitals followed a very similar pattern. This probably is the result of JCI requirements plus a bit of copying from one another (Why re-invent the wheels!). However many of these general consent forms do not give enough specific risk of complications for the procedures we do. Not all of us are meticulous enough to include all the common complications in our notes consistently all the time. How many of us would counsel the risk of DVT and pulmonary embolism when we do a case of hysterectomy for a large fibroid consistently all the time! But that can be the starting point of a case against anyone of us should there be a case.

The point is there are addenda that hospitals and centres have developed which Fellows of the College can make use of if they want. These can be posted on secured sites on the AMS website that can only be accessed by logon password.

I like to hear your views on what you think about addendum. I see this as another example of us keeping ourselves alive by ensuring that we cover all the possible risk and complications in a procedure we do.

40th Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine, 24 – 27 August 2006

The Congress is to be held from 24 - 27 August 2006 at the Sunway Pyramid Convention Centre, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. The President of the College of O&G, Malaysia has invited COGS to participate. The theme is “Coming to Terms with Acute Care Medicine”. More details of the congress are posted at www.acadmed.org.my/html/index.htm. I do hope that many of you would go up and support our Malaysian colleagues.

41st Singapore–Malaysia Congress of Medicine - Commemorating the Golden Jubilee of the Academy (2007)

This is an important date that Fellows would like to make themselves available as it celebrates an important milestone for the Academy. COGS will be participating in the Congress and I have asked Dr Suresh Nair to form a committee to organize the O&G portion. Suresh is going about in his usual enthusiastic manner to ask Fellows for help, input and contributions in the organization. The Congress is scheduled from the 19 - 22 July 2007. More details will be made available as they come in. Suresh may also like to brief Fellows at the AGM.

Updating Personal Particulars

I would like to ask all Fellows to update the COGS secretariat regarding any change of addresses and place of practice so that we could reach you with any news and information coming out of the Academy and COGS. Please email your particulars to pgd.pamela@ams.edu.sg.

This is also important to ensure that everyone who is Fellows of COGS received on time the various correspondences, documents including postal ballots in the case of an election of council members and the Presidency of the College.

Arrears on AM Subscription

I like to gently remind Fellows of COGS to settle their subscription dues with the Academy of Medicine.

The council of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore met recently and has decided that "Fellows who are in arrears of FAMS subscription will need to settle the arrears by the coming AGM of the Academy on 27 May 2006, failing which your membership with FAMS will cease. In addition, you would not be eligible to use the title "FAMS" after your name after that date.

According the M&A of the Constitution, Fellows need to settle the arrears pledged previously before they can be Fellows of the College. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to our Fellows who are in arrears of the building pledge to settle them as soon as possible as well. My understanding is that the Academy will consider arrangements for the outstanding amount to be paid in several installments. If you need any clarifications, you can get in touch with the secretariat, our treasurer Dr CW Fong or myself.

Executive Director

Dr Tan Kim Ping has been appointed the Executive Director of the Academy on a part-time basis with effect from 1 March 2006. Dr Tan takes over the duties from Ms Sophia Wong.

Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation (LVR) and Designer Laser Vaginoplasty (DLV)

Fellows are aware of the issues surrounding the above surgeries. Several articles relating to the two procedures have been published in the print media (newspapers and magazines), both English and Chinese.

The council have called for a meeting and deliberated on the issues and had met with OGSS represented by its Vice President on 9 November 2005. COGS after a very elaborate discussion accepted the following 5 points :

1. College is in full agreement to support the functions of the Aesthetic Gynaecological Work Group proposed by OGSS to look at the various aspects of this emerging new field including new procedures, which have limited data in published literature.
2. A working party report from this group be made available to both COGS and OGSS for deliberation and discussion.
3. COGS would continue to provide continuing professional development (CPD) programmes and promote collegial discussions on topics of interest among Fellows.
4. The issue of any breach of the Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act (Chapter 248) and the Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics (Publicity) Regulations 2004 is the purview of the Singapore Medical Council.
5. The College would like to remind our Fellows on the need to be familiar with the contents mentioned in the above Act and Regulations.

The College has adopted a very measured and responsible approach during the past months hearing views from every angle. It was also trying to get more views and information on the two procedures. This has not been a knee jerk reaction. After much thoughts and discussions and in view of the widespread publicity and the concerns echoed privately and publicly as recent as the OGSS meeting, COGS and OGSS have decided that it is appropriate that we will issue a response jointly to educate and inform the public as had been suggested by many Fellows. The basis should be factual and not personal.

Annual Oration - 7 October 2006

Following a tradition of the College, Council has decided that we would invite the President of the College of Hong Kong, Dr Lawrence Tang to be our orator for the 3rd Annual College of O&G Dinner and Lecture on 7 October 2006. As in my earlier communications with Fellows, our young College needs to reach out to our fellow sister Colleges overseas to enhance collaboration and exchanges of ideas and scientific knowledge. We should continue to seek out opportunities to work closely with the overseas colleges.

The annual oration is a highlight of the College calendar and I would like to appeal to all Fellows to support this event by marking this date on your calendar. Your support of the event is a very importance endorsement of the College.

Dr Lai Fon Min, our VP is chairing the organizing committee and we will wait for more details from Fon Min. Meanwhile, you may contact Ms Pamela Hwee at 62238968 or email her at pgd.pamela@ams.edu.sg for reservation of table/seats.

MOU with DGMS, NUS, Royal College of O&G and COGS, Academy of Medicine, Singapore

A Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Examinations in Obstetrics And Gynaecology was signed on 3 September 2005 between the Division of Graduate Medical Studies, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore, College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, Singapore, Academy of Medicine and the Royal College of Obstetricians& Gynaecologists, UK.

This is an important milestone for Obstetrics & Gynaecology in Singapore. Hong Kong is the only other Centre in the world outside the United Kingdom that the Part II Oral Examinations are conducted.

With the signing of the MOU, the first conjoined Part II MRCOG / M.Med (O&G) Oral Examinations in Singapore will be conducted on 8 May 2006. Local candidates who are successful in the examinations will be conferred both the MRCOG (UK) and the M.Med (O&G), Singapore.

Eight Hong Kong candidates will also be in Singapore for the examinations. The College is also exploring the possibilities of Malaysians taking the conjoined examinations in Singapore.

Committee on Review of Table of Surgical Procedures

The Master of the Academy has received a letter on the subject from MOH inviting either the College / Chapter Chairperson or the STC Chairperson from each of the specialties to form part of this committee that would be chaired by Prof Chee Yam Cheng.

I have suggested that the college form a workgroup to work on this before MOH formally ask for our input. It is interesting that I chaired a similar work group for O&G exactly 10 years ago to review the table of charges for the MOH. A comprehensive proposal was submitted to MOH together with the other specialties then.

But for some reasons the proposal remained at MOH together with that of other specialties. The proposals for the surgical tables that were proposed then are more reflective of the efforts put in by surgeons than today's table of surgical charges.

Council discussed the matter briefly and has tasked Dr TC Chang to chair the College committee. If you are interested in joining the committee, you can get in touch with TC. Those of you who wish to give your input or pass TC any proposal are welcomed to do so.

2nd Annual General Meeting of the College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Singapore, 21 April 2006

I like to remind all Fellows that the 2nd AGM of the College will be on **Friday, 21 April 2006, 6.30 pm at the Lecture Theatre**, Training Centre, KK Women's & Children's Hospital.

I do hope and trust that Fellows will turn up for the AGM to contribute their ideas and help move the College forward.

In conclusion, the College is only as vibrant as the fraternity would make it up to be. Ideas from Fellows for the College to move on to greater heights are most welcomed and desired. All Fellows are stakeholders of the College and how the history of the College is shaped would depend on everyone's input. It does not matter where we practice, public or private. Everyone's contributions, small or big would make a difference.

Together we will move ahead.

Yours sincerely



Tew-Hong, Ho
President
College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, Singapore