

CPHOP

Welcomes the New Council of 2014-2015

President

Dr Benjamin Ng

Vice President

Dr Vernon Lee

Honorary Secretary

Dr Jason Yap

Honorary Treasurer

Dr Matthias Toh

Council Members

Dr Kenneth Choy

Dr Fereen Liew

Dr Mona Toh

Editor

Dr Mona Toh



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President's Message

Dear Fellows of the College of Public Health and Occupational Physicians,

I am honoured to be elected the 1st President of the College for the term 2014-2016 at the recently held AGM. I look forward to be able to serve alongside the newly elected Council, namely :

- 1) Dr Kenneth CHOY
- 2) Dr Vernon LEE
- 3) Dr Fereen LIEW
- 4) Dr Matthias TOH
- 5) Dr Mona TOH
- 6) Dr Jason YAP

The Council and I would like to thank the Interim President, Dr Eugene Shum, for bringing the Public Health and Occupational Medicine community to greater heights with him at the helm during transition of the Chapter to the College. We would also like to thank Dr Jeremy Lim and Dr Jeffery Cutter for their dedication and contribution to the Chapter and then College as the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer respectively.

The year started with the College organising its get-together dinner in conjunction with the Preventive Medicine Residency's annual retreat. This event provided an excellent opportunity for the College to reach out to our future generations of Fellows. Interactions were very good between Fellows and Residents, with Fellows sharing their life experiences and Residents sharing their career aspirations.

The Academy of Medicine, Singapore, (AMS) has approached the College to develop a modular course on critical appraisal and research study methodology as an alternative to the requirement of first author publication for exit from specialist training in response to a request by Specialists Accreditation Board (SAB). The College will develop the course details if the course proposal is approved by SAB. As a follow-up to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between AMS and the Bruneian Ministry of Health, the College will be developing the advanced specialty training programmes for Public Health and Occupational Medicine for the training of the Bruneian doctors in these respective specialties in Singapore.

In 2 months' time, we will be having our annual Public Health and Occupational Medicine Conference. It will be held on 28-29 August 2014. We would like to invite all to sign up and attend this signature event of ours. The theme that the conference organizing committee had chosen is "Embracing Challenges in Building Healthy Communities". It encapsulates the role of public health and occupational physicians in influencing healthcare policies, shaping our healthcare system of tomorrow, and ensuring the health of the working population in Singapore.

Health is a complex issue, and avenues such as this conference are an essential platform for discussions that will lead the way forward for the healthcare community and all stakeholders to innovate and collaborate to make healthcare safe, reliable and seamless for Singapore's rapidly ageing population to manage chronic diseases well, and to deal with the many environmental, workplace and human factors that impact on the health of every individuals.

We look forward to meeting with you at the conference as it will also be an opportunity for sharing, learning, networking and catching up with friends.

The Council looks forward to your continuing support and participations in the activities organised by the College.

Thank you.

Dr Benjamin Ng



Get-Together with Residents 2014

There was a total of 30 residents and fellows who came together for a time of networking

The get-together was held on 6 March 2014 at the Scholar, a restaurant in NUSS Guild House Kent Ridge. Residents were invited to the dinner, which was held in conjunction with the Preventive Medicine Retreat 2014. The event provided a time for the 15 fellows and 15 residents who attended the event to network, socialize, and get to know each other better.





9th SINGAPORE PUBLIC HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE CONFERENCE



Embracing Challenges in Building Healthy Communities

28-29 AUGUST 2014

SHERATON TOWERS SINGAPORE

Pre-Conference Workshop on 27 August 2014

www.phconference.org

Schedule	Wednesday 27 August 2014	Thursday 28 August 2014			Friday 29 August 2014		
8.00am—9.00am		Registration					
9.00am—1.00pm	Pre-Conference Workshops	Plenary Session			Free Paper Session		
		Scientific Session			Scientific Session		
		Health Systems	Environments	Communities	Health Systems	Environments	Communities
1.00pm—2.00pm	LUNCH						
2.00pm—5.30pm	Pre-Conference Workshops	Plenary Session			Panel Discussion & Debate		
		Scientific Session			Scientific Session		
		Health Systems	Environments	Communities	Health Systems	Environments	Communities
		End of Day 1			End of Day 2		

Pre-Conference Workshop 27 August 2014

- Behavioral Economics
- Introduction to Health Technology Assessment
- Toolkit For Healthcare Professionals: How To Read Epidemiology Papers

**Abstract Submission is
Now Closed**

**Early Bird Registration Ends
30 June 2014**

Supported By :



Saw Swee Hock
School of Public Health



9th Singapore PHOM Conference

Building on last year's conference theme, "Advancing the Health of Populations" which reflects our one-year-old College's motto 'Populi Salus Summa', this year's theme will focus on "Embracing Challenges in Building Healthy Communities".

More than ever before, we are faced with rapid changes in the climate, population, society and the workplace, and with the ever-present threat of novel infectious diseases. We hope to embrace these challenges and turn threats into opportunities as we create innovative systems, policies, strategies, and technologies to meet the healthcare needs of our communities.

We look forward to meeting you at the 9th Singapore Public Health and Occupational Medicine Conference, and hope that the conference will not only provide you with updates on current issues in public health and occupational medicine, but also present opportunities for you to network with colleagues, as we work together to embrace the challenges in building healthy communities.

~ by Dr Angela Chow
Organizing Chairperson 2014

Requirements of the Modern Preventive Medicine Specialist: Reflections of a Practitioner in Training

by Dr Raymond Lim

Preventive Medicine Residency
Senior Resident

My 4-year experience through Preventive Medicine (PM) Residency and rotations through various postings such as the Ministry of Health has given me a broad national perspective of the healthcare system and health policy. I am truly excited by the dynamic challenges and practice of public health after having worked in areas such as clinical PM care at the polyclinics, infectious disease care at the Communicable Disease Centre, clinical standards and improvement at a tertiary hospital, as well as my current research posting at the School of Public Health.

Preventive Medicine is at the cross-roads, both in the international and local context, with many challenges continuing to confront the specialty in a rapidly changing, unstable and unpredictable world.

Faced with the modern public health challenges, I am constantly reflecting on the skills required by a PM specialist, and striving to acquire these skills during my Residency training journey.

The PM specialist should seek to be collaborative. Unlike our clinical medicine counterparts, where patients take the initiative to consult a doctor, the PM specialist often has to actively seek collaboration with others. Tackling public health issues requires the collective and organised efforts of the society. As such, the PM specialist should not hesitate to exhibit leadership skill when necessary. Public health leadership is about building a common sense of mission through collaboration with others, so as to influence organisational behavior and to cultivate inter-organisational relationships for the improvement of the health and well-being of communities. This involves wisdom, insight, compassion and respect.

The PM specialist needs to adopt an ecological and systems-based approach when tackling any public or occupational health issue, which is often complex in nature and influenced by a wide range of determinants. A systems-based perspective is needed to gain insight into the many natural and man-made complex adaptive systems that influence health and well-being. There is also a pressing need to expand awareness of cultural, social and human ecologies.

The PM specialist will also benefit from a dose of creativity. Sometimes old patterns of thinking can get in the way of radical solutions needed for the most pressing public health issues, which can no longer be addressed by conventional forms of thinking, tools and approaches. Short-termism and reductionist thinking are the enemies of creativity and insight that can potentially hinder the PM specialist from seeing the big picture, and from developing broad and long-term strategies for the most common public health problems.

The PM specialist needs to be inquisitive and reflective. There is a need to constantly reflect and learn about the inter-dependencies of the various elements within the healthcare system and the ever-changing needs of the population to improve its health and well-being. This requires patience, humility and a willingness to be open to learning and new ideas.

In short, the PM specialist of the present and the future needs to set his sight on creating and sustaining the conditions for health and well-being, and to foster a change in mindset or worldview in his community towards promoting a positive, transformational change and transition for a healthier social and cultural environment.



Preventive Medicine Residency study trip to Hong Kong in 2012- Visit to the Cathay Pacific Airline

"The doctor of the future will give no medication, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, diet and in the cause and prevention of disease."

- Thomas A Edison -



Preventive Medicine Residency gathering in 2013

My Journey in Public Health

by Dr Gary Ang

Preventive Medicine Residency

Senior Resident

Let me start by sharing a story of a Chinese doctor renowned for his knowledge of medicines and his ability to heal even the most deadly disease. He was asked why he was so much better than his two brothers, who were also doctors. His answer:

“My first brother heals sickness before it even develops, so his methods appear hidden, his science an art and he is known only within our village. My second brother deals with illnesses while they are minor, preventing sickness from getting worse and returning the body to health. I deal with sicknesses when they have reached the level of disease and this requires numerous medicines, and skill and knowledge in their use. For this reason my name has become famous throughout the kingdom and I was asked to be physician to the king, despite the fact that my first brother has the knowledge to deal with sicknesses before they arise and my second brother is able to treat them at an early stage and prevent them from getting worse. Though my fame has spread throughout the land, their knowledge is greater.”

I chose the specialty of Public Health because unlike clinical medicine, the focus of public health is on populations and the emphasis is on disease prevention and health promotion for the whole community. Similar to the first brother in the story, I seek knowledge on how to deal with sicknesses before they arise. Fortunately, in this day and age, we can publish our findings in international journals and we won't be “known only within our village”.

Public health is very broad and I had chosen to do health services research as my advanced specialist training (equivalent of senior residency). As part of my Masters in Public Health, I completed a practicum on the rate of progression of subjects with impaired fasting glycaemia to Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus using the NHG Diabetes Registry. This study has been accepted for publication by Journal of Diabetes. An oral presentation based on the study delivered at the 45th Annual



Singapore Malaysia Congress of Medicine 2011 won a merit award.

Subsequently, I applied for a grant under the NHG-KTPH Clinician Leadership in Research for a study to find out what the predictors of rapid progression in patients with chronic kidney disease were. The results were presented in the Singapore Health and Biomedical Congress 2012 and were published in the December 2013 issue of Annals Academy of Medicine Singapore.

I sat for the exit exam twice and managed to clear at the second attempt. Currently, I am now an Associate Consultant in National Healthcare Group Health Services and Outcomes Research where I am currently working on population health. It has been a long journey and at many times in this journey, I had wanted to give up. Luckily my mentor, Dr Heng Bee Hoon has been very encouraging and she had arranged for several sessions on journal critique to polish up my critique skills. Now that I have exited, I looked forward to publishing more manuscripts and contributing to public health research.



Upcoming Events

9th Singapore Public Health and Occupational Medicine Conference

- ◆ Do sign up before the early bird rate closes on 30 June 2014.
- ◆ Do join us for Fellows Lunch at the conference and hear the testimony of the Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.
- ◆ Do join us for the opening ceremony of the conference. A/Prof Benjamin Ong, Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health will grace the occasion.

Feedback & Comments

- ◆ Do give us feedback on how this newsletter could be further improved .
- ◆ Do write to us at phom@ams.edu.sg of how we could better engage fellows. Your opinion and suggestions matter to us.



College of Public Health and Occupational
Physicians

c/o Academy of Medicine, Singapore

81 Kim Keat Road

#11-00 NKF Centre

Singapore 328836

Tel : 6593 7808

Fax : 6593 7880

Email : phom@ams.edu.sg

www.ams.edu.sg/colleges/cphop/home