

**SPEECH BY GUEST-OF-HONOUR  
DR LAM PIN MIN, MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH, SINGAPORE  
INDUCTION COMITIA 2015 OF THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE, SINGAPORE  
28 MARCH 2015, 1400 HRS, THE ACADEMIA @ SINGHEALTH, SINGAPORE**

Professor Lim Shih Hui, Master, Academy of Medicine, Singapore,

Council Members,

Distinguished Guests,

Fellow Academicians,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

**Introduction**

1 Good afternoon. I am very happy and honoured to be here today to address and bear witness to the Induction Comitia of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore and also to participate in this momentous occasion as a Fellow Academician.

2 As we mourn the passing of Mr Lee Kuan Yew, our founding Prime Minister, we remember his life and contribution to Singapore. Forty years ago, at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our nation, Mr Lee Kuan Yew was the first Singaporean to be awarded the Academy's highest honour – the

Fellowship *honoris causa*, becoming an honorary Fellow of the Academy in 1975, in recognition of his astute statesmanship and wisdom, his leadership as then Prime Minister and his full support for our Health services including postgraduate medical education. At that time the government was already rebuilding SGH and planning NUH.

3 I am also saddened by the sudden unexpected passing of Dr Vijayan Appasamy, President-Elect of the College of Surgeons, a notable leader in the Academy, and a pioneer Programme Director for the Surgical Residency Programme. Their deaths leave a deep void in our hearts.

### **Induction of the Fellows of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore**

4 Today, a total of **101** specialists will be officially inducted as Fellows of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore. I offer you my heartiest congratulations. We are members of an academic fellowship of medical and dental specialists, and our pledge is to advance the art and science of medicine.

5 The Induction Comitia ceremony is in recognition of your hard work, dedication and clinical maturity, and it marks a milestone in your careers. Amidst the complexity of medical practice today and the rising expectations of society, we will be challenged to lead through wisdom, understanding, and the ability to innovate and transform the practice of medicine. Our professional obligation is to uphold the code of conduct, maintain our clinical and professional competence, and nurture the next generation of specialists.

### **The Roles of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore**

6 A total of 212 new Fellows joined the Academy last year; the highest enrolment in the history of the Academy. With 11 Colleges and five Chapters, the Academy's membership has now surpassed a landmark 3,000 Fellows.

7 The Ministry of Health welcomes a flourishing, progressive Academy to strengthen its role in shaping the healthcare of Singapore, and will continue to seek professional advice and expert opinions from the Academy to guide national thinking and health policies. We are pleased to note that the Academy remains committed to engaging and partnering stakeholders in influencing and constructively shaping healthcare for the good of Singapore.

8 The Ministry commends the Academy for its commitment to learning, especially from the expertise of experts in the field. When Mr Lee Kuan Yew was awarded the Fellowship *honoris causa* in 1975, he spoke about seizing opportunities which the jet travel age has opened to us, specifically, to bring in international experts in medicine to train local doctors in their skills and experience. The Healthcare Manpower Development Plan (HMDP) Visiting Experts Scheme has brought many notable experts to Singapore to share their skills and knowledge in their field. Last year, Prof Brian Hodges was brought in by the Academy as a Visiting HMDP Expert funded by MOH. His expertise on medical and health professional education was very important as we look to improving the quality of training of our doctors, which will have an important effect on the quality of healthcare they are able to provide to Singaporeans. We hope that AMS will continue to bring in academia to build up the expertise of fellow academicians in key areas like clinical education.

9 The Ministry appreciates the important role of the Academy as a partner in the training of specialists to cater to the needs of Singaporeans. The Academy, as an important partner to MOH and the Specialists Accreditation Board for postgraduate specialist training programmes, provides and houses the administrative staff for the Joint

Committee on Specialist Training or JCST. The Master of the Academy, together with the Director of Graduate Medical Studies NUS, chairs the JCST which manages all the Residency Advisory Committees and Specialist Training Committees for the Specialists Accreditation Board. The Academy also administers the annual in-training examinations for specialist training and conducts modular training workshops for the formative training of residents. It remains steadfast and committed in supporting maintenance of competency (MOC) and lifelong learning.

10 I wish to especially commend the Academy on its advocacy initiatives for Family Medicine. They are one of the most important groups, if not the most important, for the care and the management of healthcare in the community and in the intermediate and long term care sector. Last year, the Academy formed the Chapter of Family Physicians, integrating Family Physicians into its membership of specialists. This is an important development as we seek to heighten the awareness and importance of Family Medicine and to integrate community and institutional care in our Regional Health Systems.

11 With foresight in training clinical educators, the Academy has set up a Chapter of Clinician Educators, which recently collaborated with the Maastricht University to offer a two-year part-time Master of Health Professions Education programme in Singapore, set to commence this July. The in-campus part of the programme will be delivered in Singapore and taught by the Academy's teaching faculty. The programme focuses on knowledge and skills in medical education in Singapore and education research for the health profession. I would like to applaud your effort to enable those who train healthcare professionals to be even more effective in passing their skills and knowledge on to the next generation.

### **Staff Registrar Scheme (SRS) Diploma Programme Graduation**

12 I am pleased to see the Academy keenly supporting postgraduate training and education through its publications and other educational activities such as the staff registrar training programme, to supplement the services in our public hospitals. I note that 11 graduates of the Academy's Staff Registrar Scheme (SRS) Diploma programmes will be receiving their graduation certificates. To-date, the Academy has produced a total of 123 graduates from the 25 SRS Diploma programmes.

13 To the graduates who are present this afternoon, let me offer you my congratulations once again. Your hard work and persistence have enabled you to achieve this significant accomplishment in your career.

14 As newly inducted Fellows and SRS graduates, you can contribute to future generations of medical professionals through the injection of fresh skills and competencies to improve the quality of patient care. We look forward to excellent research and equally excellent education and training. With the continuing tradition of diligence, perseverance and commitment of the Academy's Fellows in the Academy's endeavours, they will be role models for future generations of doctors to uphold the standards of the medical profession and work together towards a healthier and stronger Singapore.

### **Conclusion**

15 In conclusion, let me end my speech with an excerpt from Mr Lee Kuan Yew's speech to the Academy forty years ago. He said "*The Academy of Medicine stands for 'Standards of Excellence'. This is not an aspiration easy to achieve.*" I believe in the last 40 years the Academy has upheld such high standards though the road has not been easy. We look forward to the continued commitment of the next

generation of Academicians to justly reward the effort of our current generation of Academicians.

16 Thank you.