

Your Letters

## GPs manage broad spectrum of conditions

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Some people may feel that too many general practitioners deal with coughs and colds rather than more serious problems, and may not be up to caring for a stroke patient, for example ("First aid for healthcare"; last Sunday).

This is not the case.

Singapore's medical schools are of international standard and accept the creme de la creme of each cohort of students.

The College of Family Physicians Singapore was formed in 1971 and, since then, has been conducting courses to update all practising GPs on the latest developments in the medical world.

Those who attend these courses are granted Continuing Medical Education points, which are needed by GPs to renew their licence to practise.

Postgraduate training in family medicine was formalised about 25 years ago. Since then, many GPs have earned their postgraduate qualifications.

— ADVERTISEMENT —



The GP fellowship awarded by the college is recognised internationally and is offered reciprocity with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in Australia.

There is now even a Chapter of Family Medicine Physicians in the Academy of Medicine Singapore, an organisation of specialists in Singapore.

GPs look after a broad spectrum of conditions ranging from prevention, curative to palliative care across all ages, from cradle to grave. Many chronic conditions are prevented, diagnosed and managed by neighbourhood GPs.

Managing stroke patients or those with dementia takes team effort, and GPs are part of that team.

In addition, a network of facilities is required here to look after patients with various medical conditions.

The framework is well structured and it is well coordinated by the Agency for Integrated Care.

Many aspects of this are managed and run by GPs, for instance, community hospitals and home-care services.

GPs are well positioned to manage chronic conditions efficiently and effectively - beyond coughs and colds.

Current funding schemes such as the Community Health Assist Scheme and the Pioneer Generation Package have reached out to many with the help of GPs.

## **Leong Choon Kit (Dr)**

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