

March 2018 Column

by Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee, President, 26th Council, College of Family Physicians Singapore

Medical fee benchmarking, the Healthcare Services Act (HCSA) and regulation changes to submissions to the National Electronic Health Record (NEHR), enhancement to the Graduate Diploma of Family Medicine (GDFM), Primary Care Networks (PCNs), Family Medicine as a clinical specialty.... These are just some of the many agenda items that the College has been addressing in the past few months. Each one has their own demands, and like every child, each is unique and very important in its own right.

Yet, with so many individual projects calling out for our undivided attention, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are doing all this for one singular reason: to better serve our patients, who have entrusted their health needs to us, their family doctors, their family physicians. It could be in the heartland GP clinics, town practices, the polyclinics, community hospitals, nursing homes... All of us are unified in one purpose, to provide the best care for those we serve.

This was brought home to me when I had the privilege to visit the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians (HKCFP) in December last year, to attend their HKCFP/FRACP Conjoint Fellowship conferment and 40th Anniversary commemoration dinner, which was held at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine. It was a grand affair, with many of the senior stalwarts of the Hong Kong Family Medicine fraternity intermingling freely with the many proud young doctors who had successfully completed family medicine training in Hong Kong. What impressed me was the bright

eyed enthusiasm and camaraderie amongst all who attended. The atmosphere was electric, and there was a real buzz to the festivities. Yet, this was a formal affair, with all the regalia fitting for the occasion. I recall an email to our Secretariat, gently reminding me to bring my academic gown for the occasion!

When I entered the main hall, I was most impressed to see the coats of arms for the various colleges of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, with that of the HKCFP right in the centre. Seated on the podium with the other invited guests, I could see the many expectant, radiant faces of the graduands who had made the grade. After the conferment, we were regaled by Past President, Dr Stephen KS Foo, who shared his personal reflection of the 40 year history of the HKCFP.

I had the privilege to meet with the HKCFP Young doctors committee and their head Dr Loretta Chan, together with Prof Doris Young, as well as the Censor in Chief of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Dr Mark Miller. We had the most enjoyable discussion on their hopes and aspirations for Family Medicine in Hong Kong, and it was a great inspiration to see their energy and verve! This is something we should take note of and emulate.

The commemorative dinner that evening was most memorable, with the Hong Kong SAR Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan as Guest of Honour.



(continued on Page 13)

(continued from Page 11: March 2018 Column)

In the first part of the evening, past president Dr Stephen Foo shared more of the HKCFP's 40-year history, this time in Cantonese. Without doubt, the memories shared were more intimate and heartfelt, and revealed much about how the college had grown, with the networks and friendships between fellow family physicians. I was struck by the warmth between the various sectors, public and private; they were all unified by a common goal, of improving the standards and stature of family medicine in Hong Kong. And always, with the aim of providing best care for patients. All through the evening, we were entertained by a very talented band, whose members were made up of Fellows of the College!



Our Assistant Honorary Secretary Dr Lim Hui Ling is the College representative on the Medical Fee Benchmark Committee, and she is our advocate for the primary care sector. We will be sending out a survey to poll our GP members on the costs of their services in order to better represent you. Please keep a sharp lookout for it, and a reply would be a great plus for our fraternity!

Our College programme directors have all been working very hard, upgrading the courses to meet the needs of our members and young doctors. In this issue Dr Surajkumar will share with us the revamp of the College's MMed programme.

This month's issue of the Mirror focuses on the newly formed National University Polyclinics (NUP), with interviews of Dr David Tan on the newly opened Pioneer Polyclinic and their new models of care, and Dr Lew Yii Jen on the journey of the newly formed NUP. Professor Soo Khee Chee shares on cancer survivorship in patients in the National Cancer Centre, and how family medicine principles are key to cancer management and survival in the community.

Last, but not least, Dr Rose Fok interviews the inaugural head of the newly formed Department of Family Medicine, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. Read on to find out who it is and the new direction and initiatives for the new Family Medicine Department! Let's hope that such developments allow us to continue working towards enhancing the standing of family medicine, and earn the right to be finally recognised as a specialty in our fair nation.



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