

# Andre Shi-Lin Wansaicheong

*Departed 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020*

We remember Andre who was a true friend of the College and Family Medicine.

Andre was instrumental in putting up a paper in the late nineties to the then Director of Medical Services (DMS), Prof Tan Chorh Chuan, to provide funding to the College of Family Physicians Singapore to start a graduate programme to provide further training to general practitioners in preparing them to manage a host of chronic diseases as a result of our rapidly ageing population.

His foresight in working with the College and dogged determination resulted in the Ministry of Health provision of a grant of over \$400,000. With this funding, the College was able to establish the Graduate Diploma of Family Medicine and has today trained thousands of family physicians through the CMEs, seminars, webinars as well as hands on practical sessions and workshops.

We owe Andre a debt of gratitude; words cannot express adequately our profound sadness at his passing.

May he Rest In Peace.

## *The Show Must Go On!*

### Continuing the College's mission to educate during DORSCON Orange

by Dr Kenneth Tan Kian Wee, Family Physician, Kenneth Tan Medical Clinic

**N**ews of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China captured the public's attention when it was first announced in December 2019. Doctors in Singapore were thinking about the implications of this epidemic on their departments, their patients, their communities and their families. A small group of dedicated clinician educators also thought about the impact that this disease would have on the ongoing educational efforts of the College, and prepared contingency plans.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was announced by the Ministry of Health, and the country was put on DORSCON Yellow footing. The very next day, Dr Julian Lim purchased a ZOOM e-conferencing plan for



*The inaugural GDFM Module 7 via Zoom on 8th February 2020.*

100 participants to evaluate the software for possible use for the MMed(Family Medicine) programme. He had prior experience using Zoom for video-conferencing with the staff from iHeed in Ireland while working on the learning management system for the MMed(Family Medicine) programme. On 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020, Dr Darren Seah kindly arranged for the staff from the Primary Care Academy

of the National Health Group Polyclinic to share their experiences using Zoom for Continuing Medical Education (CME) with Dr Julian Lim at Nexus@one-north.

A small group of tutors, Dr Wong Tien Hua, Dr Julian Lim, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean, A/Prof Goh Lee Gan, Dr Tan Wei Beng, Dr Kenneth Tan and Dr Tan Liat Leng, was formed on

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31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to discuss the possible problems and solutions for MMed(FM) and GDFM training via videoconferencing, and the go-ahead was given to A/ Prof Cheong and Dr Lim that same day by President of the College, Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee for e-conferencing of the MMed(FM) Tutorial to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020. A trial was conducted on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 for an MMed(FM) tutorial with the lesson beamed to tutors not involved in the session to test out the audio and visual quality using the organic microphone, camera, speaker and screens of the handphones, iPads and computers.

On 6<sup>th</sup> February, the Council approved the subscription for Zoom to be used for bigger group like the GDFM. Additional equipment was bought and delivered by the same day in preparation for a trial to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> February.

That same night, Singapore raised the DORSCON level to Orange, due to the first case of local transmission. With immediate effect, organisers of large-scale events were advised to cancel or defer them. Yet, a GDFM workshop



GDFM PD, Dr Wong Tien Hua, inaugurating the first online GDFM workshop. From left is Dr Irwin Chung, the chairman for the session and Joel Woo, one of the Secretariat staff assisting.

was already scheduled to be held the very next day with up to 500 participants. Each workshop would only occur once every 2 years with external specialists. At such short notice and with untested solutions, the College educators

## Keep Calm and Carry On

### Overcoming challenges to post-graduate medical education in era of COVID-19 Pandemic

by Dr Wee Wei Chieh Nelson, MMed (FM) College Associate Programme Director

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages on both globally and in Singapore, there have been inevitable challenges to the provision of post-graduate medical education to front line healthcare workers.

With the escalation of the DORSCON levels, an array of infection control measures ranging from restrictions on cross-institutional movement to safe social distancing have been implemented progressively. These measures have resulted in significant disruption to the way that we have trained our students. This is especially so for the MMed (FM) College Programme which has a heavy emphasis on clinical and bed-side teaching. The College always prioritises the well-



Prof Cheong Pak Yean guiding the MMed (FM) College Faculty on utilisation of technology in providing distance education to students (From left to right, Dr S Suraj Kumar, Dr Nelson Wee, Prof Cheong Pak Yean, Dr Julian Lim and Ms Patricia Cheok)

being of our staff and students, and hence has adhered strictly to all measures necessary to create a safe learning environment. Even under these trying circumstances, the College strives to explore and utilise innovative technologies and creative methodologies to ensure the continuity of quality medical education for our students.

Under the guidance of our venerable Professor Cheong Pak Yean and with the aid of Dr Julian Lim and Ms Patricia Cheok, the programme has seamlessly transformed from traditional face-to-face classroom teaching to distance learning. Pilot teaching sessions using Zoom and iHEED platforms were explored

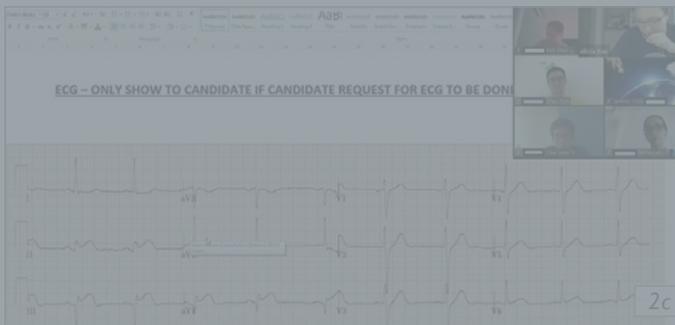


Dr Kenneth Tan (right) helping to ensure that the videoconference goes on smoothly

On 7<sup>th</sup> February, College staff and some Council members went to the office above A/Prof Cheong’s Cheong Medical Clinic in the afternoon to set up the host broadcast. The software and hardware were set up and tested on a small scale. At 2.30pm, it was showtime. A total of 477 participants logged into the ZOOM meeting, where the College staff and tutors faced a trial by fire. We had to solve technical issues faced by students using the software for the first time – guide the lecturer and presenter on how to use the software, while optimising audio and video quality, monitoring the text chat and moderating the discussion. It was a team effort that made the first video-conferencing GDFM workshop a success.

decided the show must go on with the GDFM workshop. The lecturers, presenters and students were informed about the change in venue, and a hotline was set up for students to call if they had any difficulties.

Since then, many teaching sessions were migrated to video-conferencing. MOH/CFPS webcast on PHPC activation and MMed(FM) tutorials are some notable examples. All thanks to the forward thinking and pioneering efforts of the College, there was minimal disruption to the education of our colleagues in this period of physical isolation.



Pictures 2a to 2d (clockwise from top left): Use of both iHEED and Zoom platform to deliver distance learning with spanning interactive consultation to physical examination skills.

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