

Portrait of an Era

A Social History of Medicine in Singapore from 40 Years of SMJ

E H Kua, J P H Kua

In the last four decades, the SMJ has charted medical progress and reflected the socio-economic transformation in Singapore. The published papers of local research defined these changes and have become milestones that acquired a 'sepia tone' with the march of time. The first issue of the SMJ was dated March 1960 with Dr Gwee Ah Leng as the first editor, and the contents of the Journal in the sixties mirrored the insalubrious state of public health; they were predominantly on malnutrition and infections, eg. tetanus, gonorrhoea, leprosy, cholera, syphilis, tuberculosis, malaria, etc.



In the early 1970s, reports on associated social problems included opium smoking (SMJ June 1970) and alcoholism (SMJ June 1971). The rapid industrial development in the island prompted a study on environmental health in the factory (SMJ September 1977), and other major social changes reported were national service (SMJ Vol 18, 1977), family planning and the Abortion Act (SMJ October 1971). By the end of the decade, the drug scene had changed and heroin (SMJ Vol 19, 1978) and smoking (SMJ Vol 20, 1979) became national issues. The growing interest in golf was indicated in a case report of eye injury due to the sports (SMJ March 1975) and the advent of the video technology suggested that it could be used as a valuable teaching aid (SMJ Vol 20, 1979).

Interestingly, in the 1980s, the published work on disease patterns was decidedly different. AIDS or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome in Singapore was highlighted and stress related disorders, namely anorexia nervosa (SMJ Vol 23, 1982) and work stress (SMJ Vol 30, 1989) were reported. The tragedy at the Hotel New World with doctors in the rescue team was documented (SMJ Vol 29, 1988).

In the 1990s, communicable diseases no longer dominated the contents of the Journal, but the spectre of escalating health cost prompted reviews on consultation fees (SMJ Vol 34, 1991), information technology in healthcare cost containment (SMJ Vol 36, 1995), medical audit (SMJ Vol 32, 1991) and case mix (SMJ January 1999). Significant health matters featured in the Journal were the ageing population, hepatitis vaccination, cancer, obesity, advance directive, mental health and doctor's stress. The Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) is a landmark in national development and a study on 'Decompression sickness in the MRT Project' was published (SMJ Vol 31, 1990). A paper on the international traveller

Department of Psychological
Medicine
National University Hospital
5 Lower Kent Ridge Road
Singapore 119074

E H Kua, MD, FRCPsych,
Editor, SMJ

J P H Kua
Medical Student (Year One)

Correspondence to:
Prof E H Kua

(SMJ Vol 35, 1994) reflected the growth of the tourist industry in Singapore.

For more than four decades, doctors have volunteered their services to many charitable organisations like children's homes, old people's homes, drug rehabilitation centres, day care centres, etc. An editorial on 'voluntarism' (SMJ Vol 31, 1997) acknowledged the selfless dedication of these doctors.

In research and medical technology, activities were sluggish in the sixties and seventies but burgeoned in the last two decades. Notable publications in the sixties included choriocarcinoma (SMJ September 1965); new techniques in obstetric care, eg. vacuum extractor (SMJ December 1966) and amniotomy (SMJ March 1969); corneal grafting (SMJ June 1967) and mammography (SMJ December 1968). In the 1980s, the Journal published the research on genetic association in infertility (SMJ Vol 22, 1981), rice gruel for infantile diarrhoea (SMJ August 1985) and colorectal cancer (SMJ February 1985); technological advances reported were artificial insemination (SMJ August 1982) and lithotripsy (SMJ Vol 30, 1989).

Medical technology accelerated at a ferocious pace in the 1990s and there were publications on stereotactic neurosurgery, intracoronary stent, computer enhanced health care delivery, transurethral microwave thermotherapy, Hologic QD2000 for bone mineral density measurement and minimally invasive direct coronary artery bypass. The local doctors also reported their experience in liver transplant, cancer treatment and acupuncture.

New thoughts on medical education were emphasised in two papers on 'Rethinking Medical Education' (SMJ Vol 39, 1995) and 'What Makes a Good Doctor' (SMJ Vol 39, 1998). They underscored the need to re-examine the training of our future doctors and contributed to the debate on a modern curriculum for medical students.

More openness in the political system could have encouraged candour in the evaluation of medical services and there were studies on auditing coronary angioplasty (SMJ Vol 38, 1997) and patients' complaints (SMJ Vol 38, 1997 and Vol 39, 1998). Unfortunately the results of complaints in the Emergency Department was highlighted negatively in the local press, which had misunderstood the essence of the research. It is undeniable that evaluation and audit are essential for progress in any research centre.

The published papers of local research defined these changes and have become milestones that acquired a 'sepia tone' with the march of time.

Traditionally, the theme of the annual SMA Lecture underscores topical medical matters, both current and controversial, reflecting the zeitgeist. In 1963, Dr Gwee Ah Leng gave a scholarly lecture with prophetic overtones on advertisement (SMJ March 1963) and in 1971, Dr Yahya Cohen eloquently exhorted, "... values such as pride but not arrogance; of discipline but not servility; of respect but not fear; of loyalty but not subservience." (SMJ Vol 12, 1971). Professor S S Ratnam echoed the doctor's dilemma in the 1977 SMA lecture and suggested, "... more opportunities should also be developed for friendly and open dialogues between government and

"... we must be firmly committed to the philosophy that service to the patient, medical education and research are inseparable if we are to continue to excel as a regional hub." professional bodies to resolve both basic as well as minor difficulties and requirements and work together in bettering professional and national interests." (SMJ Vol 18, 1977).

In his inimitable style and appealing to our superego, Professor Arthur Lim in the 1981 SMA Lecture cautioned, "We must revolutionise our way of thinking: monetary gains should assume secondary importance. Professional status must be earned through hard work and not ruthlessly attained." (SMJ August 1981). For the future of Singapore Medicine, Dr Charles Toh in the 1997 Lecture counselled, "... we must be firmly committed to the philosophy that service to the patient, medical education and research are inseparable if we are to continue to excel as a regional hub." (SMJ Vol 38, 1977).

The SMJ has in the last 40 years chronicled the social history of public health and medical advances in Singapore. As you scan through the catalogue of papers culled from the archives, it is amazing that some of the diseases in the 1960s are now rarely encountered. In reminiscence there is always a sense of nostalgia when you personally know some of the doctors who published the early research, albeit encumbered by heavy clinical duties and provided with impecunious resources.

Among doctors, parsimony with compliments is the rule and compliments are usually rationed; it was with delight that the Editorial Board received a note from Professor Arthur Lim, written with economy of words, "Congratulations, the SMJ has improved." Thanks, Art.

1960 – 1969



Tetanus: A Review of One Hundred and Thirty Cases Seen and Treated in the Surgical Professorial Unit, General Hospital, Singapore
G S Yeoh. SMJ Vol 1, June 1960.

Maternal Mortality in Singapore – 1955 to 1959
T H Lean. SMJ Vol 1, September 1960.

A Survey of Tetanus in Singapore
Gwee Ah Leng and I Nadarajah. SMJ Vol 1, December 1960.

Gonorrhoea in School Children
Chew Pin Kee. SMJ Vol 2, March 1961.

Severe Whipworm Infestation in Children
Wong Hock Boon and Tan Kwang Hoh. SMJ Vol 2, March 1961.

Ocular Complications of Leprosy in Singapore
Loh Choo Kiat and Arthur Lim Siew Ming. SMJ Vol 2, September 1961.

The Incidence of Intestinal Parasites in Various Communities of Singapore Island
R S Desowitz, V Zaman and W K Ng. SMJ Vol 2, September 1961.

Investigation into the Groups and Virulence of Corynebacterium Diphtheriae Strains Isolated in Singapore
Jacob Stein, Bella Stein and Yeo Eng Kee. SMJ Vol 3, June 1962.

Japanese Encephalitis in Singapore Children
W O Phoon and K A Lim. SMJ Vol 4, March 1963.

SMA Lecture
ADVERTISEMENT AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION
Gwee Ah Leng. SMJ Vol 4, March 1963.

As far as medicine is concerned, advertisement may be used to spread information of true facts as of exceptional individual qualities, superlative skill and facilities, and of general health information topics such as immunisation, and disease. It may also publicise untrue stories which are self-laudatory or deprecatory to others, or acclamations of merits and facilities of persons or skills or therapeutic agents quite unjustifiably. In other words, advertisement itself is capable of truth and falsehood, of good and evil; and unqualified support or condemnation of such an instrument can be both valuable and harmful.

Cataract Surgery: An Analysis of One Hundred Cases
Arthur Lim Siew Ming. SMJ Vol 4, March 1963.

Cholera Outbreak
Gwee Ah Leng. SMJ Vol 4, June 1963.

Syphilitic Hydrarthrosis
Yeoh Kean Hong. SMJ Vol 4, September 1963.

The Uses and Abuses of Contact Lenses

Robert Loh Choo Kiat, Arthur Lim Siew Ming. SMJ Vol 5, March 1964.

The Poliomyelitis Immunization Programme in Singapore

L H Lee, K A Lim, K Kanagaratnam. SMJ Vol 6, June 1965.

Choriocarcinoma: A Review of Current Concepts Based on the Singapore Experience

S H Tow. SMJ Vol 6, September 1965.

Re-housing and Infections by Soil-transmitted Helminths in Singapore

Jan W L Kleevens. SMJ Vol 7, March 1966.

Diets of Urban Chinese Households in Singapore in Relation to Income

Jan W L Kleevens. SMJ Vol 7, September 1966.

Trachoma in Singapore

Arthur Lim Siew Ming. SMJ Vol 7, September 1966.

A Clinical Study of an Oral Contraceptive in Singapore

S C Hu and S M Yung. SMJ Vol 7, December 1966.

Some Early Experience in the Use of Vacuum Extractor in Kandang Kerbau Hospital, Singapore: A Review of 193 Cases

Cheng Wei Chen. SMJ Vol 7, December 1966.

Tuberculous Meningitis in Children in the Department of Paediatrics Over a Ten-Year Period

Freda M Paul. SMJ Vol 8, June 1967.

Corneal Grafting in Classical Corneal Dystrophy

Arthur S M Lim, Tan Kheng Khoo. SMJ Vol 8, June 1967.

The Outbreak of Malaria at Fuyong Estate in Singapore

Chew Pin Kee. SMJ Vol 9, June 1968.

The Changing Trends in the Surgical Management of Pulmonary Tuberculosis

N C Tan. SMJ Vol 9, December 1968.

The Problem of Chronic Sick in Singapore

Based on Report of a Select Committee*. SMJ Vol 9, December 1968.

*Members of the Committee were – Chairman: Gwee Ah Leng; Members: Tan Kwang Hoh, E Hanam, W Fung, W K Ng, N Balachandran, Vaithilingam, Y F Chen, J Horsley.

Some Experiences with Mammography with a Brief Review on Recent Trends and New Techniques of Examination of the Breast

F Y Khoo, Chia Kim Boon, K Vaithilingam, Lim Hock Huay. SMJ Vol 9, December 1968.

Amniotomy in Labour

S S Ratnam, S H Tow. SMJ Vol 10, March 1969.

Leprosy in Singapore: A Survey of this Disease Between the Years 1962 – 1967

Khong Kit Yew. SMJ Vol 10, September 1969.

Durian and Alcohol – A Preliminary Report

C W Ogle and Y F The. SMJ Vol 10, December 1969.

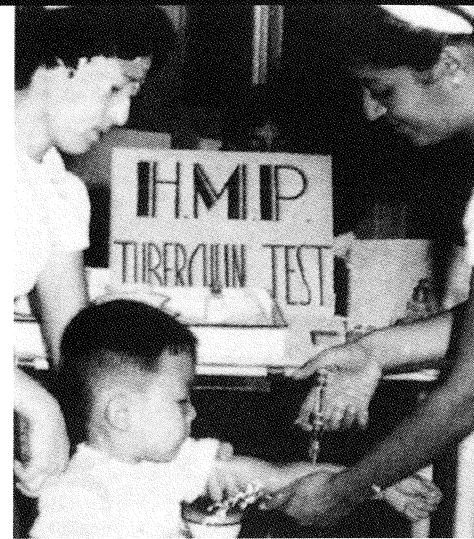
The Koro "Epidemic" in Singapore

By Koro Study Team*

*Gwee Ah Leng, Lee Yong Kiat, Tham Ngiap Boo, Chee Kim Hoe and William Chee P Ngui, Wong Yip Chong, Lau Chi Who and Chee Kuan Tsee, J M Colbourne. SMJ Vol 10, December 1969.



1970 – 1979



Intake of Foods Containing Proteins of High Biological Value in Families of Low Income Groups in Singapore

Nalla Tan. SMJ Vol 11, June 1970.

Ventilatory Capacity in a Group of Opium Smokers

Leong Hon Koon, Poh Soo Chuan, Bryan Gandevia. SMJ Vol 11, June 1970.

Porencephaly, Nasofrontal Mucocoeles, Hypertelorism and Segmental Vitiligo Report of a New Neurocutaneous Disorder

C H Tay. SMJ Vol 11, December 1970.

The Problem of Alcoholism in Singapore

O T Khoo, P Fernandez. SMJ Vol 12, June 1971.

An Epidemic of Conjunctivitis in Singapore in 1970

K H Lim, M Yin-Murphy. SMJ Vol 12, October 1971.

Changing Trends in Mortality and Morbidity from Abortion in Singapore (1964 to 1970)

C E Cheng, H T Choo, D Vengadasdam, M Sidhu Singh. SMJ Vol 12, October 1971.

Malaria Outbreak at Pulau Tekong in Singapore

K L Chan, P K Chew, T S Koh. SMJ Vol 12, October 1971.

SMA Lecture

ASSOCIATION, PROFESSION, ADAPTATION – SMA EARLY YEARS

Yahya Cohen. SMJ Vol 12, 1971

Association can take pride of place in assisting the profession to adapt itself to changing circumstances. In the material, to rectify, to organise and to implement. In the intangible, to overcome a prevailing atmosphere of reticence which stifles expression and a reserve that stultifies honest communication. And to instill among its adherents a sense of values so necessary to dignified survival – of values such as pride but not arrogance; of discipline but not servility; of respect but not fear; of loyalty but not subservience; and in so doing to imbue the coming generations with a deportment that is both discriminating and courageous.

A Study of 136 Cases of General Paralysis of the Insane (Dementia Paralytica) in a Mental Hospital

B H Chia and W F Tsoi. SMJ Vol 12, October 1971.

The Abortion Act, 1969 – A Review of The First Year's Experience

S B Kwa, S T Quah, M C E Cheng. SMJ Vol 12, October 1971.

Regional Insulinisation in the Treatment of Schizophrenia

A L Gwee, P Ngui, T S Yeoh, Y F Tay. SMJ Vol 13, April 1972.

Suicide in Singapore

B H Chia and W F Tsoi. SMJ Vol 13, April 1972.

**Lead Poisoning as an Occupational Hazard in Chinese Opera Actors
– A Case Report**

C S Lai. SMJ Vol 13, April 1972.

SMA Lecture

PRIORITIES IN MEDICINE

W O Phoon. SMJ Vol 13, June 1972.

All the world over, there is a movement in the medical schools to bring the medical curriculum up-to-date and make it more relevant to medical needs. There is a need to teach medical students about the sick in the community and not only about the 3% or so which enter the portals of hospitals. If training is done exclusively or mainly on hospital patients, the students may get distorted ideas about the natural history and distribution of diseases.

A priority for medical men and women must be to show greater sacrifice and service in the practice of their professions – to resist being swept away by the mercenary spirit of the age, to recapture the spirit of humility, loving-kindness, patience, devotion to duty and self-discipline; to practise a code of ethics above the minimum demanded by the Singapore Medical Council or the Singapore Medical Association.

Nutritional Anaemia in Infancy and Childhood

C L Tan and Y W Ong. SMJ Vol 13, 1972.

Neonatal Tetanus in Singapore, 1960 – 1970

A J Chen. SMJ Vol 14, June 1973.

Outbreak of 'Hand-Foot-and Mouth' Disease in Singapore

C H Tay, C Y N Gaw, T Low, C Ong, K W Chia, H Yeo and K A Lim. SMJ Vol 15, September 1974.

Ethics of Transplantation and Human Experimentation

O T Khoo. SMJ Vol 15, September 1974.

Eye Injury From an Exploding Golf-Ball: A Case Report in Singapore

K H Lim. SMJ Vol 16, March 1975.

**Treatment of Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma in Singapore: A Study of
545 Cases Treated Between 1960 – 1964**

B C Tan and K B Chia. SMJ Vol 16, June 1975.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning in Singapore

Seah Han Cheow and Chao Tzee Cheng. SMJ Vol 16, September 1975.

Environmental and Health Conditions in Small Factories in Singapore

W O Phoon and S B Tan. SMJ Vol 16, September 1975.

Enteric Fever Surveillance in Singapore

T S Koh and K T Goh. SMJ Vol 17, March 1976.

The Whampoa-Kallang Malaria Outbreak, 1974-5

K L Chan, K T Goh and T S Koh. SMJ Vol 17, September 1976.

Physique of School Boys and School Leavers who are NS Registrants

J How, C C Leong. SMJ Vol 18, 1977.

**The 1973 Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever Outbreak in Singapore and
Its Control**

K L Chan, S K Ng, L M Chew. SMJ Vol 18, 1977.

SMA Lecture
THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

S S Ratnam. SMJ Vol 18, 1977.

In a subject of this nature, I think the time has come when we critically review our own position in relation to society and its needs and to rededicate ourselves to our first and only cause as doctors in making our only role that of helping the sick. It is dangerous if we join the rat race of survival and success. It is important for us to go back to our original objectives in taking to this profession and to sustain our dedication as that of one for a lifetime. I do not see any alternatives to this requirement in the best interest of our health and humour, let alone in serving the real needs of the people for whom we are trained to serve. ... Insecurity in any form is disconcerting to professionals in employment, especially when the welfare of their futures and families is at stake. More opportunities should also be developed for friendly and open dialogues between government and professional bodies to resolve both basic as well as minor difficulties and requirements and work together in bettering professional and national interests.

Heroin Abuse in Singapore – A Profile and Characteristics Study

Teo S H, Chee K T, Tan C T et al. SMJ Vol 19, June 1978.

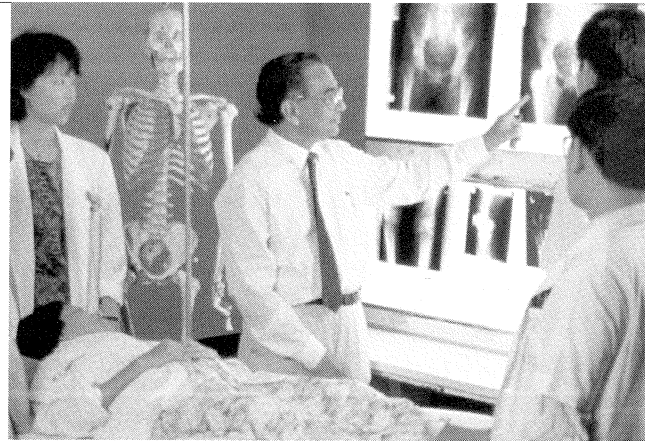
Smoking in a Local Community in Singapore

K S Ng, K H Chan, H L Liang. SMJ Vol 20, June 1979.

The Use of Video in a Teaching Unit

S M Lim, S S Ratnam. SMJ Vol 20, 1979.

1980 – 1989



Genetic Association in Infertility: ABO, Rh (Subtypes), Le^a Blood Groups, G6PD Deficiency and Haemoglobin Types

N Saha, S S Ratnam. SMJ Vol 22, 1981.

Acute Viral Hepatitis in Singapore

S H Chan, T S Chew, C J Oon, K T Ho, C S Seah. SMJ Vol 23, 1982.

A Clinical and Psychosocial Study of Seven Cases of Anorexia Nervosa in Singapore

Y L Ong, W F Tsoi, J S Cheah. SMJ Vol 23, October 1982.

Artificial Insemination with Donor Semen: An Analysis of 53 Recorded Pregnancies in 50 Patients

C Lim, C M Chia, S S Ratnam. SMJ Vol 23, August 1982.

Self-Medication in Singapore

S R Quah. SMJ Vol 26, April 1985.

Utilization and Expenditure on Medical Services in a Local Community

N P Fong, K H Phua. SMJ Vol 26, April 1985.

SMA LECTURE

ETHICS, THE PROFESSION AND THE NATION

Arthur S M Lim. SMJ Vol 22, August 1981

We must revolutionise our way of thinking: monetary gains should assume secondary importance. Professional status must be earned through hard work and not ruthlessly attained. Younger rivals should be encouraged to be just as good, if not better. Senior doctors must take pride in that they have helped to develop their younger colleagues and inversely, the younger colleagues should respect the talents of and opportunity given to them by the senior members. These changes are essential for progress.

As we march towards the end of the twentieth century, we must constantly remember that the world is rapidly changing. No nation is static. It changes with time. So must the profession. Knowing that these changes will come allows us time to create an effective organisation through which doctors can sway government thoughts through logical, acceptable and determined arguments.

Rice Gruel in Management of Infantile Diarrhoea

H B Wong. SMJ Vol 26, September 1985

Colorectal Cancer in Singapore: Preliminary Report of the Colorectal Cancer Project from the University Department of Surgery, NUS

H S Goh, T K Ti, A Rauff, W C Foong, Y S Lee. SMJ Vol 26, February 1985.

Health Hazards of Work on Visual Display Units (VDUs)

S F Ho, K T Tan. SMJ Vol 27, August 1986.

Terminal Care – What the Carers Think

A Merriman, C Lau-Ting, M Thompson. SMJ Vol 27, August 1986.

Alcohol-Related Hospitalisation in Singapore

E H Kua. SMJ Vol 27, October 1986.

AIDS – The Facts

P H Feng. SMJ Vol 27, 1986.

The Ethics of Medical Progress: In-vitro Fertilisation – The Singapore Experience

S S Ratnam, S C Ng. SMJ Vol 28, October 1987.

SMA Lecture

TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN MEDICINE

V K Pillay. SMJ Vol 27, October 1986

I must stress that we must however resist the concept that medicine is merely an industry, that doctors are providers of services (products) and that patients are consumers and that we should resort fully to business practices of competition, marketing and advertising.

Ours is not a profession in which we can reap rich financial rewards nor should this be our aim. Yet in our search for excellence, the tangibles and intangibles come into play but ultimately, the performance of the profession, as a whole will determine the progress medicine will make in the next few decades.

Myopia in Ten Year Old Children – A Case Control Study

S L Ling, A J Chen, U Rajan, W M Cheah. SMJ Vol 28, August 1987.

Medical Support at the Hotel New World Disaster

M K Lim, Y H Fong, E H Tan and K H Lee. SMJ Vol 29, 1988.

Trends in Coronary Heart Disease Mortality in Singapore

S C Emmanuel. SMJ Vol 30, February 1989.

Work Stress and Mental Distress

E H Kua, C S Tian, L Lai, S M Ko. SMJ Vol 30, 1989.

A Comparative Study of New Cases Seen at the Child Psychiatric Clinic in 1975 and 1985

S M Ko, C W Goh, S K Tan, C Chan. SMJ Vol 30, 1989.

The Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome in Singapore - Epidemiological Perspectives

S K Chew, E H A Monteiro. SMJ Vol 30, 1989.

Percutaneous Ultrasonic Lithotripsy- Its Role in the Management of Renal and Upper Ureteric Stones

E C Tan, K H Tung, R Kwok, K T Foo. SMJ Vol 30, 1989.

The Patient's Right to Know: Some Sociological Considerations

S R Quah. SMJ Vol 30, 1989.

1990 - 1999

Decompression Sickness in the Singapore Mass Rapid Transit Project

J How, A Vijayan, T M Wong. SMJ Vol 31, 1990.

Hepatitis B Vaccination - The Present Status

I Yap, R Guan. SMJ Vol 31, 1990.

Cigarette Smoking Among School Children in Singapore Part I - Smoking Prevalence

S C Emmanuel, C K Ho, A J Chen. SMJ Vol 31, 1990.

The Health of Elderly Chinese Living in the Community

E H Kua. SMJ Vol 31, 1990.

Medical Audit

Y C Chee. SMJ Vol 32, 1991

CT-Directed BRW Stereotactic Neurosurgery: Local Experience with 42 Cases

T T Yeo, W T Seow, K H Lee, K K Tan, P L Ong. SMJ Vol 32, 1991.

The Current Status of Intracoronary Stent: An Overview.

K W Lau, U Sigwart. SMJ Vol 33, 1992.

Computer Enhanced Health Care Delivery in Singapore

Y C Chee. SMJ Vol 33, 1992.

Cancer: To Tell or Not to Tell

T K S Tan, F C P Teo, K Wong, H L Lim. SMJ Vol 34, June 1993.

Calculating the Consultation Fee in Singapore: Towards a Rational Costing Approach

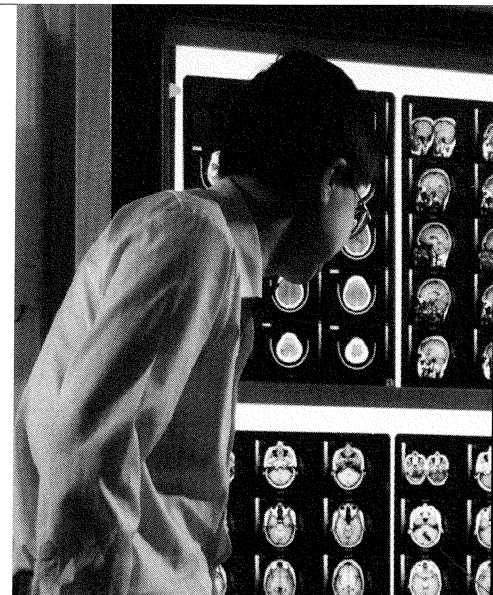
L G Goh, P Y Cheong, K H Phua. SMJ Vol 34, December 1993.

Education and Myopia in 110,236 Young Singaporean Males

K G Au Eong, T H Tay, M K Lim. SMJ Vol 34, 1993.

Rapid Desktop Method for the Measurement of Glycated Haemoglobin HbA1c

A C Thai, W Y Ng, K F Lui, J S Cheah. SMJ Vol 34, 1993.



SMA Lecture

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

N K Yong. SMJ Vol 34, August 1993

We can practise with honesty and integrity, with commitment and sincerity, with compassion and humanity. We can practise with our patient as our primary responsibility, without fear or favour, regardless of race or creed, regardless of sexuality, regardless of financial considerations. If we steadfastly maintain this, we will play our part in keeping healthcare costs from escalating unjustifiably. Good doctoring keeps costs down. We can do this, and still earn a good living. Our wealth will not necessarily be measured by our bank accounts, our stocks and shares, our property, and all other mundane measures of affluence. We will have pride in ourselves.

Advice for the International Traveller

H M L Oh, D M Allen. SMJ Vol 35, 1994.

The Role of Information Technology in Healthcare Cost Containment

K C Lun. SMJ Vol 36, 1995.

Transurethral Microwave Thermotherapy (TUMT) for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) – Our First 100 Cases

K T Lee, H H Tan, M K Li, W S Cheng, I R Rekhraj, K T Foo. SMJ Vol 36, 1995.

Current Management of Obesity

J S Cheah. SMJ Vol 37, 1996.

Incidence of Chromosomal Abnormalities in 153 Pregnancies with Ultrasound Detected Fetal Abnormalities.

S Chew, C Anandakumar, V Jayanthi, Y C Wong, D Chia, S Arulkumaran, S S Ratnam. SMJ Vol 37, 1996.

Bone Mineral Density Measurements Using The Hologic QD2000 In 175 Singaporean Women Aged 20 – 80

K H Leong, P H Feng. SMJ Vol 38, 1997

Advanced Directive: A Study on the Knowledge and Attitudes Among General Practitioners in Singapore

K H Teo, L T Seet, W C Tan, H W Choo. SMJ Vol 38, 1997.

Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary Angioplasty In Singapore General Hospital in 1995: A Medical Audit

C N S Chan, I Pratanu, S T Lim, L L Sim, N Bromwich, A Johan. SMJ Vol 38, 1997.

Emergency Department Complaints: A Ten-year Review

S B S Ooi. SMJ Vol 38, 1997.

Designer Drugs – The Ecstasy and The Agony

E H Kua. SMJ Vol 38, 1997.

Voluntarism

K Lyen. SMJ Vol 38, 1997.

SMA Lecture

IMPACT OF A FREE MARKET SYSTEM ON MEDICINE IN SINGAPORE

C Toh. SMJ Vol 38, 1997

- (1) That economic growth driven by a free market does not necessarily translate into better health care for all.
- (2) Government needs to have in place a comprehensive and regulated system of health care financing so that all sectors of community will be taken care of.
- (3) A free market system tends to encourage the growth of social insurance and managed care but evidences show that they cannot address the issue of providing cost worthy health care at a national level. The less affluent and aged will suffer under this system, and medical practice will be controlled by business organisations.
- (4) Restructuring of our public hospitals has enabled them to exercise greater initiative to upgrade and to be more efficient. It is here to stay, but requires fine tuning constantly.
- (5) The free market system operating within our health services is not conducive to medical research. Hence, new means of funding research are being introduced to enhance a better balance of clinical service, teaching and research.
- (6) If our economic growth does not falter, our present model of health provision and financing should continue to serve us well.

Liver Transplant in Singapore – Coming of Age

K H Lee, S K Lo, S H Quak, K Prabhakaran, K C Tan. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

Medicine and The Pharmaceutical Industry: What's Right, What's Wrong, and What's to Come

S Y Tan. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

Studying the Mental Health of a Nation: A Preliminary Report on a Population Survey in Singapore

C S L Fones, E H Kua, T P Ng, S M Ko. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

Rethinking Medical Education

C C Tan. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

Issues in Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Transplantation

H L Lim, S H Lee. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

Why do Patients Complain? A Primary Health Care Study

H C Lim, C B Tan, L G Goh, S L Ling. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

Doctor Under Stress

E H Kua. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

'What Makes a Good Doctor?' – Views of the Medical Profession and the Public in Setting Priorities for Medical Education

C S L Fones, E H Kua, L G Goh. SMJ Vol 39, 1998.

SMA Lecture

"NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER"

C H Chew. SMJ Vol 40, January 1999.

"Not to be Ministered unto, but to Minister" - is a rock regarding our profession. It provides precious reminders of our governing principles that ours is a calling and not a trade.

As long as we hold true to the mission and spirit of ministering to the sick and to our fellow men, we shall be able to overcome all the challenges to our calling with confidence.

Minimally Invasive Direct Coronary Artery Bypass

E K W Sim, J J Goh, A Cheng, H C Tan, Y T Lim. SMJ Vol 40, February 1999.

Cancer Therapeutics Beyond 2000 – More Rationality, Less Empiricism

H L Kong. SMJ, Vol 40, March 1999.

Acupuncture Treatment at Ang Mo Kio Community Hospital – A Report on Our Initial Experience

D Yong, S H Lim, C X Zhao, S L Cui, L Zhang, T L Lee. SMJ, April 1999.



2000 —

SMJ in the New Era and the Ethics of a Journal

The focus and contents of the SMJ have evolved gradually in the last 40 years. A new format of the Journal has also evolved through self-transformation and renewal to give it a new identity and persona. The readership has expanded and the SMJ has now taken a regional stance. There has been an enormous increase in the number of scientific papers from the Asean countries, and also from Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom. The Malay abstracts were published in June 1998 for doctors in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Any scientific journal which discusses the responsibilities of authors but ignores the ethics of refereeing loses faith and credibility. The refereeing process must guard against prejudice and the SMJ should not ignore papers from countries where English is not the forte of the authors. Having an international vision means there is no cerebral space for parochialism and we should repudiate any pettifoggery in refereeing. The market place for ideas should not merely be sacrosanct to the research institutes and reject the rich experience of clinicians working in less privileged hospitals. The SMJ will continue to publish high calibre scientific papers subjected to peer review because it has a commitment to education and information for all the readers and contributors in the region.

As the years unfold, the SMJ will attain a venerable age and will continue to grow with a sense of verve and cachet.

SMJ Editors

1960 – 1999

Dr Gwee Ah Leng	1960 – 1971
Dr Tan Keng Kwee	1971 – 1975
Professor Lim Pin	1975 – 1978
Clin A/Prof Feng Pao Hsii	1978 – 1987
Clin A/Prof Chee Yam Cheng	1987 – 1995
A/Prof Tan Choon Kim	1995 – 1996
Professor Kua Ee Heok	1996 – 1999