

Dean's Message

Dear Colleagues and Friends

In December 2006, the Biomedical Sciences International Advisory Council (IAC) chaired by Sir Richard Sykes, Rector of the Imperial College London, and Dr John Mendolsohn, President of the MD Anderson Cancer Centre, recommended the formation of Academic Medical Centres (AMC) to support Singapore's continued efforts in the Biomedical Sciences Initiative.

In conjunction with this recommendation, Permanent Secretary of Health Ms Yong Ying-I and NUS Provost Tan Chorh Chuan have been leading the NUS-NUH Study Team to look at the feasibility of developing an AMC on the Kent Ridge Campus. The key feature of the AMC is its equal emphasis on clinical, research and teaching excellence. The interdependence of these missions is critical: excellent medical education occurs only in settings where teachers and learners participate in the discovery of new knowledge and apply that knowledge to patient care. At the same time, the explosion of medical knowledge means that educational content becomes rapidly outdated. This underscores the importance of life-long learning -- a skill best instilled in environments in which research occurs alongside education.

While policy makers decide on the feasibility of a Kent Ridge AMC, our School will continue to strive to improve the healthcare of our communities and of the larger society in which we reside.

Sincerely yours

John

CONGRATULATIONS!

Promotions

COFM and CME

Dr Tai Bee Choo was promoted to Associate Professor with effect from 1 Feb 2007.

Dr Tan Say Beng was promoted to Adjunct Associate Professor with effect from 1 Dec 2006.

Physiology

Prof Alirio Jose Melendez Romero was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure with effect from 1 Jan 2007.

Awards

COFM and CME

Dr Koh Woon Puay was awarded the Best Poster Award for her paper entitled, "Divide and Conquer: Breaking a Big Class into Small Teams for Tutorials" in the 4th Asia Pacific Medical Education Conference (APMEC), 10 - 11th February 2007, NUS, Singapore.

Dr Helena Verkooijen's poster entitled "Multiparity and the risk of pre-menopausal breast cancer: different effects across ethnic groups in Singapore" was selected for presentation at this year's Lancet Asia Medical Forum. Furthermore, the poster was rated "Highly Commended" by the editorial team. She will receive a free 12-month online subscription to The Lancet Oncology.

Ms Sim Xueling won the 3rd prize (\$200) at the recent OLS conference for her poster titled "Ethnic Differences in the Time Trend of Female Breast Cancer Incidence: Singapore, 1968 - 2002".

Surgery and Diagnostic Radiology

Dr Rajesh Babu Dharmaraj, Assoc Prof Peter Ashley Robless and Emeritus Consultant Prof Lenny Tan won the first prize and Young Investigators Award at the 16th SingLIVE 2007 held in Jan 2007.

The title of their poster was "Our initial experience with Fenestrated Branched Endovascular Stent Grafts for Complex Aortic Aneurysms". This poster was one of the 28 international posters that was accepted and selected for oral presentation.

The SingLIVE Young Investigators Award was donated by the Chien Foundation. This was the first time a Young Investigators Award has been given with SingLIVE hosting the award.

Achievements

Pharmacology

Prof Phil Moore was invited as a speaker for the 2008 Oxygen Radicals in Biology Gordon Conference, in Ventura, California, on the topic, "Hydrogen sulfide in health and disease" in Feb 2008. The Gordon Conference is one of the world's most prestigious meetings that brings together scientists at the forefront of research, as well as younger scientists and students.

Grant Results Inside!

In this Issue

Page

1	Promotions, Awards, Achievements
2	Achievements, Appointment
	New Staff Appointments
	New Biochemistry Lounge!

Page

3	Grant Results
4	Forthcoming Grant Calls
5	Tier 1 Journal Publications
6	Upcoming Events, Courses & Workshops
7	Q&A During Meet The Faculty - 28 Nov 2006

SoM Update

Achievements

ALCNS

Prof David Arthur has been invited as a plenary speaker at the 10th East Asian Forum of Nursing Scholars (EAFONS). The Conference was held from 22 to 23 Feb at Dumaguete City, Philippines. This is the first time that Prof Arthur will be representing ALCNS and NUS at the EAFONS since his appointment as the Convenor and Treasurer of EAFONS in 1997. Dr Anthony O'Brien and Dr He Hong-Gu will also be attending as participants.

The Asian Journal of Nursing (AJN) will be producing a special Supplement to mark the 10th EAFONS. Prof David Arthur represents NUS as Editor in Chief of AJN, the first peer reviewed nursing journal in Asia and Dr Anthony O'Brien is a member of the international advisory board.

Microbiology

Prof Chan Soh Ha was appointed as a Research Integrity Officer of NUS.

Prof Chan Soh Ha was invited by the Singapore Science Centre to be Chairman of the Virus Exhibition Expert Advisory committee in 2007. Other members of this committee from the department are Assoc Prof Vincent Chow, Assoc Prof Mary Ng and Dr Ooi Eng Ong (Adjunct staff).

NUMI

Assoc Prof Li Guodong was invited to speak at the 46th annual meeting of American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB)'s "Stem Cell" minisymposium in San Diego, CA, USA in Dec 2006, on "Deriving insulin-producing cells from the embryonic progenitor for treatment of type 1 diabetes". His earlier work in this field was also awarded by ASCB as one of the "Novel & Newsworthy Top Ten" in cell biology in 2005 and featured in its yearly Press Book "Cell Biology 2005".

Physiology

Prof Shazib Pervaiz was invited as a keynote speaker at the conference, "Genes and Nutrition", Korean Food Research Institute, Seoul, South Korea, on 14 Feb 2007.

Prof Shazib Pervaiz was invited as a speaker at the Division of Biochemistry, School of Pharmacy, Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea on 13 Feb 2007.

Assoc Prof Sanjay Khanna published an article in the book titled "Encyclopedia of Pain".
Khanna, S. Nociceptive Processing in the Hippocampus and Entorhinal Cortex, Neurophysiology and Pharmacology. In 'Encyclopedia of Pain' eds. RF Schmidt and WD Willis. Publisher Springer Berlin Heidelberg, Copyright 2007, ISBN 978-3-540-43957-8 (Print) 978-3-540-29805-2 (Online).

Appointment

Biochemistry

Assoc Prof Tan Tin Wee assumed duty as the new Deputy Head on 1 Feb 2007. The Department expresses its thanks and appreciation to Prof Sit Kim Ping for her hard work and dedication during her term as Deputy Head.

NEW STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Physiology	Dr Lim Chin Leong, Fabian	Adjunct Assoc Prof
	Dr Ang Eng Tat	Research Fellow

Correction from Jan 2007 Edition:
Ms Liaw Sok Ying is a Lecturer with ALCNS and not Medicine.

New Biochemistry Lounge!

On 29 Jan 2007, the Department held an official opening of the Biochemistry Lounge for the Dept's staff and students.

GRANT RESULTS

Singapore Immunology Network (SIgN)

Two SoM projects (out of six nationally) were awarded from the last submission to the Singapore Immunology Network (SIgN) in May 2006. These projects are funded for up to three years:

PI	Department	Title
Dr Paul MacAry	Microbiology	Targeting Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) associated malignancies using humanised HLA/LMP1 specific monoclonal antibodies
Assoc Prof Wang De Yun	Otolaryngology	A Genome-Wide Association Study on Atopy and Allergic Diseases in Singapore

MOE Academic Research Fund (AcRF) Tier 2

SoM received approximately \$3.2M in approved funding from the revamped MOE Academic Research Fund (AcRF) Tier 2 call (August 2006 exercise). The following five projects were awarded for up to a duration of three years:

PI	Department	Title
Dr Chua Kim Lee	Biochemistry	Small non-coding regulatory RNAs of Burkholderia pseudomallei
Assoc Prof Caroline Lee	Biochemistry	Genetic analyses of the architecture of polymorphisms at chromosome 7q21/22 locus and the SXR gene locus in different ethnic populations
Dr Deng Lih Wen	Biochemistry	Investigation of the molecular mechanism of MLL5 in response to UV irradiation
Assoc Prof Prakash Hande	Physiology	Mechanism-based combination telomerase inhibition in human tumour cells: Implications for cancer therapy
Prof Shazib Pervaiz	Physiology	Program to study the involvement of intracellular reactive oxygen species in genome instability, unfolded protein response, cell survival and death signaling in cancer cells

AcRF Tier 1 (URC-level)

The AcRF Tier 1 (URC-level) funding was also released recently which saw SoM bagging five awards to the tune of \$1M:

PI	Department	Title
Dr Shen Han Ming	COFM	Modulation of Death Receptors-Mediated Programmed Cell Death by Reactive Nitrogen Species
Assoc Prof Poh Chit Laa	Microbiology	Detection and Genogrouping of Enterovirus 71 by TaqMan Real-Time PCR and Multiplex Suspension Array System
Assoc Prof Mary Ng Mah Lee	Microbiology	Role of Human Sec3 Protein (hSec3p), a known Exocyst Component in Flavivirus Replication Cycle
Dr Gong Yinhan	O&G	Origin and Effect of Sex Hormone Disrupting Chemical in Singapore Seawater
Dr Lynette Shek	Paediatrics	Five-Year Follow-Up Study of a Cohort Participating from Birth in a Randomized, Double-Blinded, Placebo-Controlled Study on the Influence of Probiotics on Atopy, Immunological Responses and Gut Microflora

Established researchers are encouraged to apply for the AcRF Tier 1 (URC-level) and Tier 2 funding.

National Institutes of Health (NIH), USA

The following grant was awarded by NIH via Johns Hopkins University:

PI	Department	Title
Assoc Prof Tan Tin Wee	Biochemistry	Dengue Epitope Vaccine, Tetravalent and MHC II- Targeted: Computational Identification Of Dengue Virus T-Cell Epitopes

MFRC

The following Start-up Grants were awarded by MFRC on 6 Feb 2007:

PI	Department	Title
Prof Uwe Klima	Surgery	Full Thickness Myocardial Tissue Construct with Anastomosable Core Vessel Based on Cardiomyocyte and Endothelial Cell Coculture
Dr Theodoros Kofidis	Surgery	Large Scale Myocardial Restoration using in Vivo Prevascularize, Tissue-Engineered Grafts

Singapore Bio Imaging Consortium (SBIC) Grant C-011/2006

PI	Department	Title
Assoc Prof Wong Tien Yin	Ophthalmology	Singapore Retinal Image Archival and Analysis Network (SiRIAN) for Disease Prediction

Paediatrics

The recipient for the AACC International Travel Grant winner for 2007 is awarded to our staff, Ms Sze Yen Tay. She will receive a grant of US\$2500, sponsored by Becton Dickenson (BD) at the AACC Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, July 15-19 2007.

The abstract was "NPHS2 Mutations are Less Common in Singapore Chinese Patients with Nonfamilial Steroid-Resistant Nephrotic Syndrome. KH NG1, SY TAY1, JL NG1, LK TAN1, SS CHONG1, PH TAN2, GSC CHIANG2, HK YAP1.1 Paediatrics, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore; 2Pathology, Singapore General Hospital, Singapore."

FORTHCOMING GRANT CALLS

Dean's Office - Division of Research

Forthcoming Grant Details	Deadlines
URC Meeting 2/2007 (Feb 2007 - Aug 2007): Grant Call for Research Proposals	12 Mar 2007
4th Call for ICT-Asia Regional Programme	15 Mar 2007
Call for Proposals - Interactive Digital Media (NRF)	30 Mar 2007

URC Meeting 2/2007 (Feb 2007 - Aug 2007): Grant Call for Research Proposals

Deadline: 12 March 2007

1. Academic Research Fund (ARF)

Tier 1 - URC, NUS	\$180,000 ≤ Total Project Value <\$500,000
Tier 2 - ARC, MOE	Total Project Value ≥ \$500,000 for all Sciences Clusters Total Project Value > \$250,000 for Humanities Cluster (new)

- This is a special fund set up to support cutting-edge research in strategic areas in the Humanities & Social Sciences, focusing on the Asia region. RIC staff are encouraged to participate in joint applications with NUS Faculty. Please refer to Deputy President (Research & Technology) Circular for more information (available on ORE's website at <http://www.nus.edu.sg/ore/>).
- Further details on the **Application Procedures, Guidelines and Documents** are provided in the Circular (http://www.nus.edu.sg/ore/URC_Mtg_2_07/URC_MTG_2_2007_CALL_Feb_07.pdf). Please note that MOE has made some changes to the application forms and procedures and the Faculties/RICs are requested to ensure that the Application Procedures & Guidelines are observed.
- All applications (1 original, 3 hard copies and a soft copy) must be submitted through respective Heads of Department to Ms Poonam Rai (medprai, tel: 6516 4235) or Ms Masrinie (medmmr, tel: 6516 5292), Dean's Office, by **Monday, 12 March 2007**.
- Please ensure that all sections of the forms are duly completed.

4th Call for ICT-Asia Regional Programme

Deadline: 15 March 2007

- Details on the call and the timeline are available at the following website: <http://www.ict-asia-france.org/cfp>.
- Please note that co-funding part of the required criteria for application and interested staff would need to seek their own co-funding.
- Softcopies of completed submissions should be sent via email by 15 March 2007 to the following contacts:
 - Arnaud Lalo: Arnaud.LALO@diplomatie.gouv.fr and
 - Jean-Philippe Thouard: thouard@ait.ac.thwith copies to:
 - Faculty (Ms Poonam Rai or Ms Masrinie) and ORE (attn. Ms Sng Qiu Mei, oresqm@nus.edu.sg).

For more information please contact Ms Sng Qiu Mei (oresqm@nus.edu.sg).

Call for Proposals - Interactive Digital Media (NRF)

Deadline: 30 March 2007

The call for proposals for the Interactive Digital Media (IDM) program is now open.

The IDM program supports innovative research in digital animation, electronic games & special effects, "on-the-move" technologies, and mediary services that integrate physical devices and components with computational intelligence and networks. The goal is to design, develop and implement new tools and solutions for creating high quality interactive digital content for a variety of applications in digital filming and electronic games, as well as to explore new modes of interaction and delivery of media-rich content and information to a population that is increasingly on the move. IDM also supports mediary technologies that target the protection, organization, mining, analysis, processing, and packaging of digital content. The program is intended to spur visionary IDM activities in Singapore. The IDM R&D program will continue to offer new challenges to address future business and societal needs.

Areas of current interest include, but are not limited to:

- Animation, Games & Effects: game design, game aesthetics, game spaces & worlds, knowledge reuse, learning in games, modelling, process management, rendering, simulation.
- "On-the-Move" Technologies: ambient intelligence, human-computer interaction, immersive environments, location-aware computing, mobile computing, personalization, pervasive/ubiquitous computing.
- Media Services: accessibility, coding, transcoding & compression, digital rights management, saliency algorithms, search & retrieval, multilingual translation & understanding.

Proposals for the IDM program may involve collaborative research to capture the breadth of expertise needed for such multidisciplinary integrative activities. More details are available at the following weblink:

<https://rita.nrf.gov.sg/IDM/program/default.aspx>

Deadline: Please submit 1 original and 1 photocopy of your proposal to Ms Poonam Rai (medprai, tel: 6516 4235) or Ms Masrinie (medmmr, tel: 6516 5292) by 30th March 2007, 12 noon.

Biochemistry

Lim S and Clement MV. "Phosphorylation of the survival kinase AKT by superoxide is dependent on an ascorbate reversible oxidation of PTEN" 2007 Free Radical Biology and Medicine. (in press)

Tong JC, Tan TW and Ranganathan S. In silico grouping of peptide/HLA class I complexes using structural interaction characteristics. *Bioinformatics*. 2007 Jan 15;23(2):177-183. Epub 2006 Nov 7.

Biochemistry and Pharmacology

Jenner A, Ren M, Rajendran R, Ning P, Tan B K-H, Watt F, and Halliwell B. (2007) Zinc supplementation inhibits lipid peroxidation and the development of atherosclerosis in rabbits fed a high cholesterol diet. *Free Rad. Biol. Med.* 42:559-566.

COFM and CME

Mitchell P, Cheung N, de Haseth K, Taylor B, Rochtchina E, Islam FMA, JJ Wang, Saw S M. Blood pressure and retinal arteriolar narrowing in children. *Hypertension* 2007. (United States) (in press)

Saw S M, Ooi PL, Tan DT, Khor WB, Fong CW, Lim J, Cajucom-Uy HY, Heng D, Chew SK, Aung T, Tan AL, Chan CL, Ting S, Tambyah PA, Wong TY. Risk Factors for Contact Lens Related Fusarium Keratitis: A Case-Control Study in Singapore. *Archives of Ophthalmology* 2007. (United States) (in press)

Cheung N, Islam A, Saw SM, Shankar A, de Haseth K, Mitchell P, Wong TY. Distribution and Associations of Retinal Vascular Caliber With Ethnicity, Gender and Birth Parameters in Young Children. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci.* (in press)

Mohamed Q, McIntosh RL, Saw SM, Wong TY. Interventions for Central Retinal Vein Occlusion: An Evidence-Based Systematic Review. *Ophthalmology.* (in press)

McIntosh RL, Mohamad Q, Saw SM, Wong TY. Interventions for Branch Retinal Vein Occlusion: An Evidence-Based Systematic Review. *Ophthalmology.* (in press)

Zhang S Y, Lin Y, Kim YS, Hande MP, Liu ZG and Shen HM. C-Jun N-terminal Kinase Mediates Hydrogen Peroxide-Induced Cell Death via Sustained Poly(ADP-ribose) Polymerase-1 Activation. *Cell Death and Differentiation* 2006. (United States) [Accepted for publication, in press]

Li HH and Tai BC. RNASEL gene polymorphisms and the risk of prostate cancer: a meta-analysis. *Clinical Cancer Research* 2006; 12(19): 5713-5719. (United States). Publication no. 0330437.

Microbiology

Stensvold CR, Suresh GK, Tan KSW, Thompson RCA, Traub RJ, Viscogliosi E, Yoshikawa H and Clark CG (2007) Terminology for Blastocystis subtypes – a consensus. *Trends Parasitol.* 23 : 93 – 96 (doi.10.1016/j.pt.2007.01.009)

O&G

Koh S C L and Singh K. The effect of levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine system use on menstrual blood loss and haemostatic, fibrinolytic / inhibitor systems in women with menorrhagia. *Thrombosis and Haemostasis.* Volume 5 No 1 Jan 2007 pp 133-138.

Ho SY, Chong SS, Koay SC,3,4 Chan YH, Sukumar P,1 Chiu L-L, Wen W, Roy A, Rauff M, Su LL, Biswas A, and Choolani M. Microsatellite Markers within –SEA Breakpoints for Prenatal Diagnosis of HbBarts Hydrops Fetalis. *Clinical Chemistry.* 2007; 173-179.

Ophthalmology

Baskaran M, Oen FT, Chan YH, Hoh ST, Ho CL, Kashiwagi K, Foster PJ, Aung T. Comparison of the Scanning Peripheral Anterior Chamber Depth Analyzer and the Modified van Herick Grading System in the Assessment of Angle Closure. *Ophthalmology.* 2006 Nov 29; [Epub ahead of print]

Tikellis G, Sun C, Gorin MB, Klein R, Klein BE, Larsen EK, Siscovick DS, Hubbard LD, Wong TY. Apolipoprotein e gene and age-related maculopathy in older individuals: the cardiovascular health study. *Archives of Ophthalmology.* 2007 Jan;125(1):68-73.

Cheung N, Rogers S, Couper DJ, Klein R, Sharrett AR, Wong TY. Is diabetic retinopathy an independent risk factor for ischemic stroke? *Stroke.* 2007 Feb; 38 (2):398-401. Epub 2006 Dec 28.

Wong TY, Mitchell P. The eye in hypertension. *Lancet* 2007; 369: 425-435.

Chee SP, Bacsal K, Jap A, Se-Thoe SY, Cheng CL, Tan BH. Corneal Endotheliitis associated with Evidence of Cytomegalovirus Infection. *Ophthalmology.* 2007 Jan 2. [Epub ahead of print]

Pharmacology

Li L, Rossoni G, Sparatore A, Lee LC, Del Soldato P, P Moore PK. Anti-inflammatory and gastrointestinal effects of a novel diclofenac derivative. *Free Radic Biol Med.* 2007 42, 706-719.

Hu LF, Wong PT, Moore PK, Bian JS. Hydrogen sulfide attenuates lipopolysaccharide-induced inflammation by inhibition of p38 mitogen-activated protein kinase in microglia. *J Neurochem.* 2007 Feb;100(4):1121-8. Epub 2006 Dec 22.

Physiology

Senatorov V, Malyukova I, Fariss R, Wawrousek E, Swaminathan S, Sharan SK, Tomarev S (2006) Expression of mutated mouse myocilin induces open-angle glaucoma in transgenic mice. *Journal of Neuroscience* 26(46):11903-14.

Goh A X, Li C, Sy M-S and Wong B-S. (2007). Altered prion protein glycosylation in the ageing mouse brain. *J Neurochem* 100(3):841-854.

UPCOMING EVENTS, COURSES & WORKSHOPS

Open House 2007!

Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies will be participating in this year's NUS Open House 2007.

Date: 10-11 Mar 2007 (Sat and Sun)

Time: 9.00 am – 6.00 pm

Venue: NUS Sports and Recreation Centre, Hall 2

Faculty Talks

Venue: NUS Sports and Recreation Centre, Hall 6

Time: 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm and 5.00 pm – 6.00 pm on both days

Tour by Deputy President Prof Tan Chorh Chuan, Prof Tan Eng Chye (Provost Designate) and Prof Lily Kong, (Vice Provost Education)

Date: 10 Mar 2007

Time: 10.00 am

For more information, please contact Mr Eric Christopher Foo of Dean's Office at medecfcm@nus.edu.sg or call him at 6516 6994.

COFM and CME

Short course on Epidemiology

Date: 14-17 May 2007

Prof Trichopoulos and Dr Lagiou from Harvard School of Public Health will be conducting a short course on Epidemiology (14-17 May 07). Interested parties may contact Ms Doris Chen at cofcpi@nus.edu.sg.

NLAM

Seminar on Promotion & Tenure

Date: 21 Mar 2007, Wednesday

Time: 5.00 pm – 8.00 pm

Venue: CRC Symposium Rooms 2 & 3, NUS

For more information, please contact Ms Jap Ren Fang, Tel: 6516 1049; Email: medjrf@nus.edu.sg.

NLAM Clinician Scientist Unit

The "Pitch for Funds: Research in Medical Education" Round was held on 29 January 2007. The winner was Dr Tay Kwang Hui, Associate Consultant, Dept of Anaesthesia, NUH, who will receive project funding of S\$10,000 to work on his research: "The Effect of Stress on Learning in Crisis Management Scenarios: A Pilot Study".

Merit Awards were also given to Dr Ooi Oon Cheong (Assoc Consultant, Cardiac, Thoracic & Vascular Surgery, NUH), Dr Roger Ho (Registrar, Psychological Medicine, NUH), Dr Siow Woei Yun (Assoc Consultant, Urology, NUH) and Dr Anthony O'Brien (Asst Prof – Undergraduate Co-ordinator, Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies, NUS).

The next round is scheduled for **27 March 2007, Tuesday** and the abstract submission closing date is **5 March 2007**.

For more information, please contact the CSU secretariat at email: cindykhoo@nus.edu.sg. Contact person is Mrs Cindy Khoo.

Proteomics Workshop

2D Proteomics & Protein Purification

Hands-on Workshop for Clinician Researchers

28 - 29 Mar 2007 (Wednesday & Thursday)

Clinical Research Centre, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NUS.

For more information, please contact the CSU secretariat at tel: 6516 5586 or email: cindykhoo@nus.edu.sg. Contact person is Mrs Cindy Khoo.

NUH-NUS Medical Publications Support Unit (PSU)

Workshop on Advanced Biostatistics Using SPSS

Date: 13 – 15 Mar 2007, (limited to 24 persons)

Registration Fee: \$400.00 (exclusive of prevailing GST)

PSU Distinguished Editor Series: Nature Masterclass on Scientific Writing

Date: 11 – 13 Apr 2007

By Dr Philip Campbell, Editor-in-Chief of the Nature

(More details coming up soon)

For more information on all above NUH-NUS Medical Publications Support Unit events, please contact the PSU Secretariat (Fax: 6872 1454; Email: psu@nus.edu.sg):

Ms Jap Ren Fang, Tel: 6516 1049

Ms Tan Shuyu, Tel: 6516 5586

Ms Lee Su Yin, Tel: 6516 3938

NUH-NUS Medical Publications Support Unit

Workshop on Advanced Biostatistics Using SPSS

Date: 13 – 15 Mar 2007, Tuesday – Thursday (limited to 24 persons)

Registration Fee: \$400.00 (exclusive of prevailing GST)

PSU Distinguished Editor Series: Nature Masterclass on Scientific Writing

Date: 10 – 12 Apr 2007, Tuesday - Thursday

By Dr Philip Campbell, Editor-in-Chief of the Nature (More details coming up soon)

UPCOMING EVENTS, COURSES & WORKSHOPS

NUH-NUS Medical Publications Support Unit

Cochrane Workshop on Systematic Reviews

Date: 19 – 20 Apr 2007, Thursday & Friday

Registration Fee: \$350.00 (exclusive of prevailing GST)

For more information, please contact the PSU Secretariat (Fax: 6872 1454; Email: psu@nus.edu.sg):
Ms Tan Shuyu (Tel: 6516 5586), Ms Lee Su Yin (Tel: 6516 3938), or Ms Jap Ren Fang (Tel: 6516 1049).

St Jude-Asia Forum in Paediatric Oncology 2007

9-11 Mar 2007, Fullerton Hotel, Singapore.

Fourteen world renowned Paediatric Oncologists will be giving talks on Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia.

Following the Forum, a Workshop on Flow Cytometry for the Diagnosis and Minimal Residual Disease Detection in Childhood will be conducted on 12-14 Mar 2007. For more information on both the Forum and the Workshop, please visit www.viva.sg.

Q&A DURING MEET THE FACULTY – 28 NOV 2006

Q1: "The redevelopment of NUH is putting a strain on research space. How can this be addressed with the BMS initiative?"

Dr Allen Yeoh, Assistant Professor, Paediatrics, YLLSoM

Answer: SoM is exploring obtaining temporary space in the building vacated by the School of Computer Science. The SoM will ensure that all faculty who have grant funding have space to do their research. Plans for the redevelopment of MD6 are being finalized, and we expect that once this building is completed, all competitive staff will have sufficient space.

Q2: "What are some strategies to bring about a more student-based medical education?"

Dr Tay Sook Muay, Consultant, Department of Anaesthesiology, Singapore General Hospital

Answer: As self directed learning is a critical competency, students are taught how to do effective literature searches. More time is also being created in the busy curriculum for such learning. Equally important is for our faculty to teach by example. This would include discussion of up-to-date reviews and landmark articles and demonstration of their relevance to the issue at hand. One of our greatest challenges is finding sufficient numbers of dedicated, expert teachers to do the small group teaching and patient contact that is so important in student based medical education, especially as our student intake is now 250 per year.

Comment by Dr Tay Sook Muay: The constraint in research facilities is also reflected in teaching facilities – the current staff-student ratio is 1:9-11.

Response by Prof John Wong: MoH and SoM provide the hospitals with approximately \$12 million dollars a year for medical education. This funding is meant to support high quality dedicated small group teaching by clinical faculty.

Q3: "Many people in the community are leaving for private practice in parallel with increases in workload."

Dr Goh Poh Sun, Assistant Professor, Diagnostic Radiology, YLLSoM

Answer: The Government is aware of the need to retain a sufficient number of the best doctors in the public sector to mentor the next generation, as well as to ensure that Singapore's Biomedical Science initiative succeeds. In a meeting on this campus, MM Lee Kuan Yew expressed the Cabinet's determination on this issue.

Q4: "The care of the elderly should be an important component of medical education. With the revised curriculum, would all medical students be required to take up "softer" skills for areas such as rehabilitation?"

Dr Peter Lim, Head and Senior Consultant, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Singapore General Hospital

Answer: Rehabilitation will be taught in all areas of medicine where it is relevant to a patient's overall management.

Comments by Dr Zubair Amin, Assistant Dean (Education): Rehabilitation is recognized as an important component of the revised curriculum. It is intended that rehabilitation will be started early in the curriculum and be progressively taught towards the final year.

Comments by Dr Peter Lim: Medical students are very quickly seduced by the glamour in areas of specialization such as cardiology.

Response by Prof John Wong: It is true that we are too hospital-centric in our approach to disease management. For students to understand the full spectrum of a patient's illness we require a substantial increase in exposing them to the issues patients face after discharge from the hospital. This then calls for us to work more closely with our colleagues in the ambulatory and community setting, and getting them more involved in medical education.

Q5: "To develop translational medicine from bench to bedside, Singapore should look into collaborations with Big Pharmaceutical companies. Pharmaceutical companies are experienced in translational research and invest significantly in R&D. However, it is difficult for Singapore to compete with China and India, as Singapore's prices are invariably higher in comparison."

Dr Sim Meng Kwoon, Associate Professorial Fellow, Pharmacology, YLLSoM

Answer: The issue lies in whether we can provide the expertise and services that the pharmaceutical companies are looking for. While Singapore cannot compete with China in terms of cost, we can compete with them in terms of high quality research governance, transparency, ethics, patient safety, and protection of intellectual property. Many companies are already exploring research collaboration with the SoM. However we have to be sensitive to potential conflict of interest issues in all such collaborations.