

SMA Annual Dinner 2014

By Mellissa Ang

MORE THAN 450 guests gathered at Regent Hotel Singapore on 10 May 2014 to celebrate this year's SMA Annual Dinner. After the first few courses were served, emcee Dr Lim Kheng Choon took everyone by surprise when he announced that there was a new addition to the evening's programme: a dialogue with the Guest of Honour, Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen, and moderated by SMA Council Member Prof Wong Tien Yin.

Those who assumed that the discussion was going to be conducted in a strictly formal manner were proven wrong. Minister Ng kicked off the session with a short address in which he good-humouredly appealed to his many doctor friends to help make the dialogue a success.

Minister Ng proceeded to speak frankly on various issues pertaining to Singapore, including the near-absolute trust and deep regard that the international community has had for the local medical fraternity. With the silver tsunami heading rapidly towards Singapore, he commented that the health spending and budget will inevitably increase to \$12 billion by 2020. Minister Ng expressed his worries that such an enormous injection of resources might overload doctors, both in the public and private sectors. On that note, he shared three shifts he hoped to see in the near future – a shift from living long to living well; a shift to allow more scope for GPs within the healthcare system; and a shift in perception to one where healthcare providers are a more sought after profession.

During the question-and-answer portion of the dialogue, SMA Council Member Dr Chong Yeh Woei raised concerns that the medical profession would have to find ways to cope with the impending inflation and price its services optimally, so as to remain competitive and yet not overcharge. Minister Ng replied that prices for goods and services had indeed gone up, but real wages had also increased in recent years. He observed that many Singaporeans still found the cost of living here expensive as they now had higher aspirations in life.



Minister Ng Eng Hen (far left) speaking during the surprise dialogue session, which was moderated by Prof Wong Tien Yin

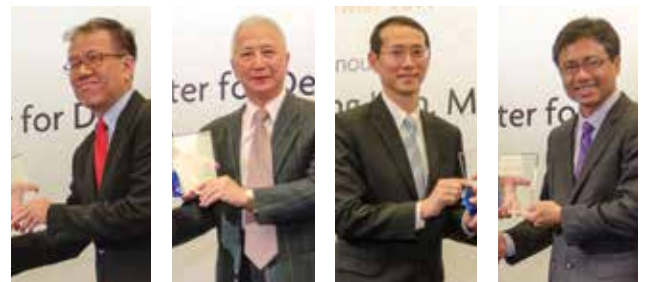
In a similar vein, SMA President A/Prof Chin Jing Jih also touched on medical topics, ranging from patients' expectations to doctors' relationships with allied healthcare workers, in a welcome address earlier (see page 10). Despite the challenges the healthcare fraternity has to face, he encouraged medical students and doctors present to adapt and recalibrate to the evolving healthcare landscape so that their work would still be relevant to patients and society. He also re-emphasised SMA's continuing role as the Voice of the Profession, noting that "the job is never done".

Conferment of SMA Honorary Membership

During the dinner, the SMA Honorary Membership was conferred on Dr Feng Pao Hsii, Dr Poh Soo Chuan and Prof Abu Rauff, who joined the esteemed ranks of revered clinicians and influential persons, who had been distinguished in public life or had rendered meritorious service to SMA or the medical profession. Dr Poh and Prof Rauff personally received the honour from Minister Ng. As Dr Feng was unable to attend the dinner, Dr Ng Swee Cheng accepted the award on his behalf.

Besides being master clinicians, teachers and role models to many practising doctors today, Dr Feng, Dr Poh and Prof Rauff are among the best in their respective fields of practice. Dr Feng, who is considered Singapore's father of Rheumatology, was an adjunct professor of Medicine at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLLSoM); and was Emeritus Consultant with the Department of Rheumatology, Immunology and Allergy at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH). Dr Poh, with many years of experience in Respiratory Medicine under his belt, is currently working in the Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine department at TTSH. Prof Rauff is now running his own private practice as a general surgeon after decades of practising and teaching Surgery in numerous public hospitals and medical institutions.

A/Prof Bernard Thong, Prof Sonny Wang and Dr Ngoi Sing Shang delivered the citations for their mentors Dr Feng, Dr Poh and Prof Rauff respectively (see pages 14, 16 and 18).



SMA Merit Award winners (from left) Dr Robert Kwok, Dr Alfred Loh, A/Prof Pang Weng Sun and Prof Teo Eng Kiong

SMA Merit Awards

The SMA Merit Awards were presented to four recipients, in recognition of their contributions to SMA and the medical profession, or social service to the community.

Dr Robert Kwok is currently the Group Medical Director of Parkway Radiology. He has been a guest editor of the *Singapore Medical Journal* (SMJ) and the *Annals of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore*. He has also contributed actively as a member of the Singapore Radiological Society, the ASEAN Association of Radiology, as well as the Specialists Accreditation Committee for the radiologists of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS).

Dr Alfred Loh currently holds the position of Senior Clinical Director at Raffles Medical Group, which he co-founded in 1980. He was President of the College of Family Physicians Singapore from 1993 to 1995, and has been active in the training of family physicians. Dr Loh was also the Chief Executive Officer of the World Organization of Family Doctors from 2001 to 2012.

A/Prof Pang Weng Sun is a senior consultant at the Department of Geriatric Medicine, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital. He is the appointed Chairman, Medical Board of the upcoming Yishun Community Hospital as well as Vice Dean (Clinical Affairs) at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. He chairs the AMS Chapter of Geriatricians, the National University Health System's Geriatric Medicine Residency Advisory Committee, and the National Strategy for Palliative Care workgroup.

Prof Teo Eng Kiong is currently the Chairman, Medical Board and a senior consultant gastroenterologist at Changi General Hospital. He is active in the training of new doctors in both Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School and YLLSoM. As former Editor-in-Chief of SMJ, he made significant progress in elevating the publication to an important scientific journal with a local touch.

SMA Long Service Awards

The SMA Long Service Awards were presented to five individuals who were actively involved in SMA's numerous committees.

10 years of service



Dr Tammy Chan
SMA Honorary Secretary and
Chairperson of Medik Awaz
Committee



Dr Pwee Keng Ho
SMJ Editorial Board

5 years of service



Ms Chin Yew Lee
Senior Executive
Finance
SMA Secretariat



Mr Lee Sze Yong
Assistant Manager
Council Support
SMA Secretariat



Mrs Sarah Lim
Senior Manager
Publications
SMA Secretariat

SMJ Best Research Paper Awards 2013

This year's top three research papers were selected from 88 original papers published in SMJ from January to December 2013. All three winning research teams received a cash prize, a commemorative trophy sponsored by SMA, and a certificate.

Dr Robert Alan Sloan received the first prize on behalf of his team for the research paper, "Cross-validation of a non-exercise measure for cardiorespiratory fitness in Singaporean adults". The award included \$5,000 cash sponsored by Pfizer Pte Ltd.

The second prize was given to the paper, "Eicosapentaenoic acid improves insulin sensitivity and blood sugar in overweight type 2 diabetic mellitus patients: a double-blind randomised clinical trial". Dr Mohammad



SMJ Best Research Paper Award winners (from left) Dr Robert Alan Sloan with Dr Setia Sajita, Medical Advisor at Pfizer Pte Ltd; Dr Mohammad Hassan Javanbakht with SMJ Editor-in-Chief A/Prof Poh Kian Keong; and Dr Chelvin CA Sng with Dr Jerry Chng, South Asia Regional Medical Director at Abbvie Singapore

Hassan Javanbakht accepted the award on behalf of his team, which included \$3,000 cash sponsored by Novartis (Singapore) Pte Ltd.

The third prize was awarded to Dr Chelvin CA Sng and her team for their paper, "A prospective comparison of chronic primary angle-closure glaucoma versus primary open-angle glaucoma in Singapore". Their cash prize of \$2,000 was sponsored by AbbVie Singapore.

Concluding an evening to remember

Lively conversations and laughter could be heard throughout the ballroom as guests, including overseas delegates in Singapore for the 16th MASEAN Conference (see page 19) and student representatives from the three local medical schools, mingled with old friends and made new ones. It was a memorable night with good company, good conversations and good food, and we hope to see you again next year!

SMA thanks the sponsors of the SMJ Best Research Paper Awards 2013: Pfizer Pte Ltd, Novartis (Singapore) Pte Ltd and AbbVie Singapore. SMA also thanks Central Equity Ltd, Maple3 Vacations and Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort & Spa, Singapore for their generous contributions to the SMA Annual Dinner 2014. The 55th SMA Council would also like to express their gratitude to all guests who attended the dinner and played a part in its success. ■

Lucky draw winners



- Dr Chia Yih Woei:** two nights' luxury accommodation in Melbourne, Australia (sponsored by Central Equity Ltd)
- Dr Leo Seo Wei:** 4D3N stay at Thailand Khaolak Laguna Resort Hotel with breakfast for two (sponsored by Maple3 Vacations)
- Mr Joshua Wong:** one night's stay at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort & Spa, Singapore (sponsored by Shangri-La)