

REMEMBERING

Emeritus Prof Chia Boon Lock

(1939-2017)



On 27 December 2017, Singapore and the medical fraternity lost an outstanding cardiologist, teacher, mentor, friend and much-respected member of our community with the passing of Prof Chia Boon Lock, Emeritus Professor at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (NUS Medicine).

Emeritus Professor Chia is regarded as Singapore's "Father of Cardiology", for his pioneering work in this field. He was one of the first to introduce echocardiography and the first to introduce 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring locally. He was best known for his novel electrocardiographic findings in acute inferior myocardial infarction.

Those of us who had the privilege of working with or learning from him during his illustrious career saw him bring his hopes and visions for the field to life. He led by example as the Head of the National University Hospital's (NUH) Division of Cardiology, Department of Medicine from 1986 to 1989 and the Chief of the Cardiac Department from 1996 to 1999. He was formerly President of the Singapore Hypertension Society and the Singapore Cardiac Society, from which he received the Inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014. He was named an Honorary Member of the SMA in 2008.

Beyond his professional achievements and accolades, Prof Chia will be remembered as a teacher par excellence, a favourite of NUS medical students and cardiology registrars, and someone always willing to listen and

unstinting with his advice. Every cohort from 1972 to 2016 would remember how Prof Chia brought the Introduction to Cardiac Examination lecture to life with his masterful vocal simulations of every conceivable cardiac murmur, which earned him standing ovations and lifelong fans among his innumerable students. Indeed, he once remarked that his greatest contributions were in teaching and "although many regard me as a good clinical cardiologist, people remember me best for my teaching."

A graduate from the University of Singapore medical school, his illustrious academic career began in 1972, when he joined his alma mater as a faculty member. He was appointed Professor of Medicine in 1981. Prof Chia was awarded the title of Emeritus Consultant by NUH in 2005 and was conferred the title of Emeritus Professor by the University in 2006. He continued to teach, mentor and practise until 2017 when he retired.

Prof Chia was an inspirational figure in the field of cardiology and a prolific teacher who has touched the lives of so many medical professionals in Singapore. Despite being diagnosed with Stage 4 nasopharyngeal cancer at the age of 43, his illness did not detract him from seeing his patients and continuing to impart his wealth of knowledge and experience until his passing at age 78.

Prof Chia will be remembered as a pioneering cardiologist and remarkable colleague, but above all, a generous teacher and mentor. ♦

The Chia Boon Lock Memorial Fund was established at NUS Medicine in 2018 to honour Emeritus Prof Chia and to perpetuate his passionately held beliefs about the practice of medicine and the education of Singapore's doctors.

The proceeds from the fundraising will be used to advance medical education and research. A committee at NUS Medicine will oversee the final use of the gift sums raised.

To find out more about or to support this initiative, please visit http://bit.ly/ChiaBoonLock_SMA. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the School's Development Office at giving_med@nus.edu.sg.

