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Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

# Medicine

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## Dean's Message



Dear Readers,

The past three months have been a busy and exciting time at the School of Medicine!

On 3 July 2012, our new flagship building for translational research and education was officially opened by Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean. The Centre for Translational Medicine (CeTM) at NUS houses over 500 researchers and is entirely dedicated to scientific inquiry and the teaching of medical and nursing students. The state-of-the-art simulation facilities in the Centre for Healthcare Simulation allow our students and junior doctors to practise their skills in a realistic and safe environment, preparing them to be safe and effective doctors.

The same evening at our annual Medical Dinner, held this year at the Swissotel Merchant Court Hotel, we welcomed our new graduates in Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing into the healthcare family. This year's Medical Dinner also held a special significance. The NUS Medical Society-Christine Chong Hui Xian Bursary, named in memory of the late Miss

Christine Chong of the Medical Class of 2012 who passed away in December 2009 after a brave battle with lymphoma, was publicly introduced. We thank every single one of you who pledged towards this cause in one way or another, in honouring the fighting spirit and memory of this determined young lady. As our newest graduates start a new chapter of your lives, we strongly encourage you to maintain the bonds that you have built with your peers over the years and we invite you back as alumni to join us in educating the next generation of doctors.

The Commencement Ceremonies for the Class of 2012 were successfully held on 7 & 8 July 2012. Our very best wishes to each and every one of our graduates; we are proud of all of you, and may you find fulfilment and much success in your careers in healthcare.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend two of our very own NUS medical students, Ultra-Marathon runners Mr Tang Jun Han and Mr Thiaghu Chandra who ran more than 100km each and raised \$26,000 for Make-A-Wish

Foundation in a bid to fulfil the wishes of children with life-threatening conditions. They were joined by approximately 500 runners during the last 43km of their run. The amount raised is the largest sum from a charity run to date and the distance they ran is the longest so far. This is further testimony that our medical undergraduates are well-rounded individuals with a caring heart. We congratulate our students on their amazing achievement!

Last but not least, I would like to thank everyone who has played a part in making the events throughout the past three months a huge success. Every effort counts and NUS is once again at the forefront. We look forward to further exciting events in the coming months with the upcoming F.A.B. (Fats and Bugs) Symposium jointly organised by NUS and Cambridge University on 2 August 2012.

Please enjoy this issue of MediCine!

**A/Prof Yeoh Khay Guan**  
Dean

Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

# Opening of Centre for Translational Medicine (CeTM)



Guest-Of-Honour, DPM Teo Chee Hean, flanked by A/Prof Yeoh Khay Guan, Dean of Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

Over 300 guests witnessed the opening of CeTM, officiated by Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs, and Chairman of the National Research Foundation on 3 July 2012.

The 41,500 square-metre building has one of the region's largest healthcare simulation training centres, offering a complete suite of facilities where students are exposed to real-life scenarios and can put their knowledge to practice. The 15-storey building also houses nine different centres, each dedicated to a specialised area of research and programme. The medical library located within the CeTM has the oldest collection of medical literature in Singapore, with 53,000 books and 2,800 journals.



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Clockwise from top left:

- 1 A/Prof Yeoh Khay Guan, Dean of Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, presenting a framed stethoscope to DPM Teo for gracing the launch.
- 2 Our medical students showcasing their musical talents on stage.
- 3 Dr Jeanette Ignacio (ALCNS) giving a demonstration on how students learn IV Cannulation using a part task trainer
- 4 DPM Teo observing Dr Nicola Ngiam imparting intubation skills to a Phase IV medical student
- 5 DPM Teo listening to heart sounds from Harvey: The Cardiopulmonary Patient Simulator



# Medical Dinner 2012

The first Medical Dinner was organised on 3 July 2004 to commemorate the day Singapore's first medical school was established as the Straits and Federated Malay States Government Medical School in 1905. This year, a total of 430 graduates had a memorable night at the Swissotel Merchant Court Hotel, all set to begin their journey in one of the world's most noble professions.



*Our impressive medical students in action!*

*Your contribution, no matter how big or small, counts in every way. We urge you to stay connected with the University and actively take part in alumni events specially created for you.*



*Our enthusiastic students volunteering for the games; and of course not forgetting our wonderful emcees for facilitating the entire event*



*Men are always found amongst elegantly dressed ladies.. :D*



## Associate Professor Hooi Shing Chuan Department of Physiology Outstanding Educator Award, University Awards 2012



Associate Professor Hooi Shing Chuan, 53, recently received the Outstanding Educator Award, University Awards 2012. He is the father of three sons, of whom the eldest is a doctor. His wife is a general practitioner.

He came to Singapore from Malaysia in 1978 to study in the medical school here. In 2010, A/Prof Hooi made an "emotional decision" to give up his Malaysian citizenship and became a Singapore citizen.

***Why did you choose to go into the medical profession?***

I was looking for something where you work with individuals and help them in a significant way.

***How is the practice of medicine different today?***

Central to the relationship between doctors and patients is the element of trust. Patients today are less trusting of their doctors. Previously patients had more confidence in doctors and trusted them more. Somehow if you have confidence in your doctor, things will work out better. This has to do with being at peace, which is an important aspect of the healing process.

Today, there are so many specialities and sub-specialities. As a result, the care of patients becomes fragmented. Instead of caring for the patients as a whole, you treat them for a certain disease or part of the body. There is no close bond between the doctors and the patients. Previously, people went to their family physicians in the neighbourhood for all their ailments and they forge a close relationship over the years.

**You earn the trust of your patients if you treat them with respect and courtesy.**

***What are the attributes that a good doctor must have?***

First of all, he must have the competence, knowledge and skills. Then, he must have compassion and be a good communicator. He must also be humble and be willing to learn from colleagues and patients to help him further develop his clinical skills.

***How important is it for a doctor to have good bedside manners?***

You earn the trust of your patients if you treat them with respect and courtesy.

***How does teaching compare to clinical practice in terms of the satisfaction that you get?***

You see patients one to one, which is more personal. And the satisfaction that you get is immediate – you treat the patient and he feels better or recovers, you feel the satisfaction for having helped him.

Although teaching is less personal, the satisfaction that you get is from nurturing potential for the future.

***What are your thoughts about winning the Outstanding Educator Award, University Awards 2012?***

It is an honour. At the same time, I feel humbled and grateful to the numerous people who contributed to my development including my students who by their feedback shaped me as a teacher.



## Commencement 2012

The Commencement for the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine Class of 2012 was held on 7 July 2012. We commend our graduates for their hard work put in during their years of studies and congratulate them for finally moving on to the next chapter of their lives! CONGRATULATIONS!



*(Above) Graduation Class 2012 – We are proud of you! • (Below) Our jubilant graduates tossing their mortarboards high up into the air in triumph!*

To our graduates,

As you move on to the next phase of your life, treasure the strong friendships that you have built throughout the years. We urge you to stay engaged with the University by actively participating in Alumni events – an avenue to stay connected with old friends and professors. Keep in touch and we wish you all the best!





# I Wish To Run 2012

Two of our very own medical students ran more than 200km to raise funds for Make-A-Wish Foundation – a charity organisation which aims to grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. This is the first charity ultramarathon organised by SOM students. Congratulations to all for making this event a HUGE SUCCESS!



Having a game of table soccer at the carnival



Always challenging yourself and never give up!



Our enthusiastic students in action



A total of \$26,000 was raised for Make-A-Wish Foundation – A/P Hooi Shing Chuan, Vice Dean of Education, presenting the cheque to Ms Debbie Seah, Chief Executive of the Foundation



The victorious pair, Ultra-Marathon runners Mr Tang Jun Han and Mr Thiaghu Chandra, covered more than 100km each in 22 hours. The run officially kicked off at 1pm at East Coast Park on 22 May and they had completed 100km upon reaching the school track at 8am the following day

## Tribute to Our Silent Mentors

### **Do you ever wonder why we still do cadaveric prosections?**

We now have a virtual dissection table which displays organs and systems in 3D, and we can slice the body in any plane to view the sectional anatomy. The view can even be changed to X-rays to learn imaging anatomy. In fact some medical schools have completely discontinued the use of cadavers.

What is missing is the element of touch which is very important for our personal development as doctors. Professor Kartik said to us at the start of M1: "Touch is very important. Doctors like to take the pulse because there is a touch, and it helps develop a relationship with the patient." Touching the cadaver is not just simply about feeling how textured and squishy the tissues are. It is about developing a relationship with the cadaver.

### **But why would anyone want to develop a relationship with a dead person?**

It seems quite strange, because a dead person cannot respond or reciprocate anything you do or feel for him. It is very easy to depersonalise the cadavers and to think of them as pieces of meat. But cadavers all began as people, and this personhood does not end even though they are dead.

In a way, they are our first patients. Admittedly the diagnosis on touching them is very easy – asystole – but cadavers were never intended for us to learn clinical signs from. As Pravin points out in his poem, our cadavers are exposed totally, for us to examine. A normal patient can only undress to the skin, but the cadavers have taken off all the skin and fascia and coverings, and are completely revealed to us. It is because of this that we are able to benefit so richly by examining them. We should take the time to touch and care for them, as we would an actual patient.

Touching the cadaver is not just simply about feeling how textured and squishy the tissues are. It is about developing a relationship with the cadaver.

But unlike patients who come and go, cadavers have stayed with us the whole year. As such, I feel that they are also a kind of family to us, and to the medical school in general. I am sure that all of us have respected elders that have volumes of wisdom to pass down to us, and this surely holds true for our cadavers as well. We are grateful to the cadavers for expanding our knowledge of anatomy.

Furthermore, most of us would have beloved elders that we love to hear experiences from. Personally, I remember how my grandmother used to tell me about her aches and pains as she grew older. Similarly, each of these elderly has a story to tell us. From the hip replacement, to the grossly shrunken left kidney, everyone had their unique life experience. We are able to get glimpses of the lives they have lived from our prosections.

Nevertheless, I think it is also important to remember that our relationship with the cadavers is very asymmetric. We can move on with our lives after this year, and will not need to come back. But the cadavers will still remain to serve the medical school. They have accompanied previous batches of students, and will continue to welcome new students each year. And so, like an honoured grandparent or a distinguished professor, we should treat them with respect. They are our silent mentors who have contributed to our medical education.

*Contributed by:*

**Daniel Lim** *Class of 2016*



### AUGUST

- 1** Engineering-Medicine Dialogue 2012  
*NUHS Tower Block, T11-03*
- 2** FAB (Fats and Bugs) Symposium  
*MD11 (Clinical Research Centre), Auditorium*
- 3** NUHS Games 2012 (Bowling)  
*West Bowl @ West Coast Recreation Centre*
- 4** Neighbourhood Health Screening  
*Taman Jurong; Bukit Merah*
- 7** NUS Flag Day  
*Around Singapore - Booth at NUHS Tower Block Level 1*
- 10** NUS RAG Day  
*NUS Sports and Recreation Centre*
- 13** White Coat Ceremony  
*University Cultural Centre*
- 14** Houses: Launch of Pilot House  
*TBC*
- 25** ActivAid 2012  
*CeTM, LT 35*
- 31** Wong Hock Boon Society Talk  
- IRB & Processes  
*CeTM, Level 1, Room 01-01A*

### SEPTEMBER

- 14** Competency Based Medical / Health Professional Education: Mini-CEX  
*MD11 (Clinical Research Centre), Symposium Room 2 & 3*
- 27** Keynote Address - Public vs Private Healthcare  
*CeTM, Peter and Mary Fu Lecture Theatre*

### OCTOBER

- 6, 7** Public Health Screening  
*Toa Payoh HDB HUB*
- 19** NUHS Bench to Bedside Cardiac and Vascular Symposium  
*NUHS Tower Block, T12-02*
- 31** Oon Chiew Seng Distinguished Lecture Series

*Details are subject to changes at the discretion of the respective departments.*

## Food Route Contest

Be one out of three lucky winners to walk away with a KopiTiam card worth up to \$100!



Are you good with directions and enjoy expressing yourself through video presentations?

If you have just said yes or even maybe, then you will be the person we are looking for!

Show us the way from NUHS Tower Block to NUH Main Building KopiTiam in the most innovative and entertaining way through your video presentation and you could be one out of three lucky winners to walk away with a KopiTiam card worth up to \$100!

Please refer to <http://medicine.nus.edu.sg> for more details!





## Laughter – The lighter pill

### White coat humour

A guy tells his psychiatrist, "I always have this weird dream at night. I am locked in a room with a door on which there is a sign. I try to push it with all my strength, but no matter how hard I try, it won't budge." The psychiatrist replies, "Hm, interesting. But tell me what does the sign on the door say?" The guy answers with "It says 'Pull'!!!!"

"Doctor, Doctor, You've got to help me – I just can't stop my hands shaking!"

"Do you drink a lot?"

"Not really - I spill most of it!"

*Remember:*

*If you can laugh at it, you can survive it.  
Look for humour and humour will find you!*

## Quote of the Day

How people treat you  
is their karma.

How you react is yours

– Dr. Wayne Dyer

## Did you know that ... ?



The Bukit Timah Nature Reserve  
in Singapore contains more  
species of trees than the entire  
North American continent.

*(Source: Uniquely Singapore)*

## Riddle

How can you tell if a bucket  
is not well?

Answer: When it is a little pole (poil)



The **Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine** was the first academic body in Singapore's history dedicated to tertiary education. Established in 1905, it has the honour of being the foundation of what has now evolved into the National University of Singapore. The School is a strong component in the University's Mission to advance knowledge and foster innovation, educate students and nurture talent in service of Singapore and society.



## Picture Quiz

Name the  
building where  
this picture  
was taken

Email your entry by **7 September 2012** to: [yllsom@nus.edu.sg](mailto:yllsom@nus.edu.sg). A lucky winner will walk away with a prize and if more than one correct entry is received, a ballot will be conducted. **The winner for last issue's Picture Quiz is Ms Salbiah from YLLSoM Dean's Office.**

# MediCine

is brought to you by the  
Yong Loo Lin School of  
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