

## THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE, SINGAPORE

### **Beginnings**

Founded in 1957 with a membership of thirty-four the Academy of Medicine has grown and flourished with Singapore's development from a British Colony to a Republic. There are now 351 members in the Academy of Medicine, Singapore.

### **Links with Malaysia**

Though initially the Academy of Medicine included the Malaysians there is now a separate Academy of Medicine, Malaysia. These two Academies, originating as one, share common ideals and work closely together especially by holding joint Congresses of Medicine each year alternating the venues between Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

### **Composition of Members**

This highest body of specialists in the Republic includes among its members those working in the public (Government and University) and private sectors. Moreover, as it includes all specialists irrespective of the branch of medicine practised it has been a unifying force that has allowed medicine to develop in proper perspective without the divisive factors that can undermine the progress of medicine in a small country such as ours. Nevertheless, from 1965 Chapters have been created within the Academy for Physicians, Surgeons, Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Radiologists and Anaesthetists. Further chapters will be formed when the need arises.

### **Board of Post-Graduate Medical Studies**

In 1968 at the initiation of the Academy, the School of Post-graduate Medical Studies was formed with equal representation from the Academy and the University. The higher degrees awarded in Internal Medicine, Surgery, Obstetric and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Anaesthesia, Community Medicine and Occupational Medicine are internationally recognised as equivalent to Fellowships of the various Colleges of the Commonwealth.

### **Congresses**

Besides the Academy's own Congress, each year a number of international meetings are held in Singapore under the sponsorship of the Academy. This brings the frontiers of new knowledge to our doorstep, thus enabling all our doctors to benefit from recent advances in medicine.

### **Awards and Lectures**

To recognise the contribution made by two eminent physicians the Academy has instituted the Sir David Galloway Memorial Lecture and the Professor Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome Oration. Moreover distinguished 'physicians' are invited either as Fellows or Visiting Academicians to conduct post-graduate teaching in the Republic.

### **Certification of Specialists**

Recently the Academy has instituted a certification programme in twelve disciplines of medicine (Internal Medicine, Paediatrics, Psychological Medicine, Surgery, Orthopaedic Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Anaesthesia, Radiology, Pathology, Community Medicine and Occupational Medicine, Ophthalmology and Otorhinolaryngology). Certification in a number of other disciplines will be possible in the near future.

The Academy feels that once it has certified specialists the Medical Council of Singapore should establish a specialist register. To reflect the qualifications desirable in a specialist the admission requirements have been recently altered. Anyone seeking membership must be a graduate of seven years standing; he/she must have spent five years in a speciality three of which must be experience obtained in an accredited department after obtaining a higher qualification.

### **Publication**

A quarterly journal, the Annals of the Academy of Medicine, and the Proceedings of the Academy's Congress when held in Singapore form the major publications.

### **The Future**

Faced with the loss of the Alumni Medical Centre in a few years time the Academy's Council is planning to erect a building in keeping with the dignity of the Academy of Medicine. It is proposed that in this building there will be established a medical library. When the Faculty of Medicine moves to Kent Ridge the need for a library in the present Singapore General Hospital campus will be most acute. This second library will meet the requirements of the medical profession of the Republic from that time onwards. Moreover, the Council plans to develop convention facilities for smaller congresses. In these two areas the Academy will wish to co-operate with the College

of General Practitioners and the Singapore Medical Association.

### **Conclusion:**

The medical fraternity at large in Singapore has not been made fully aware till now of the functions of the Academy of Medicine and it is hoped that the above brief account will serve to fill this gap and preserve the ties of the Academy with other professional medical and dental bodies in the Republic.

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