



*Academy of Medicine,
Singapore –
The First Twenty-Five Years
1957-1982*



*Academy of Medicine, Singapore —
The First Twenty-Five Years*

1957-1982

Chin-Hin Chew¹ FRCP (Edin, Glas, Lond), FRACP, FACP

Pin Lim¹ FRCP (Edin, Lond), Hon FRCPS (Glas), FRACP



Address for Correspondence:

Dr CH Chew
Academy of Medicine, Singapore
142 Neil Road
Runme Shaw Building
Singapore 088871.

¹ *Past Master, Academy of Medicine, Singapore*

ABSTRACT

The Academy of Medicine, Singapore celebrates its Golden Jubilee in July 2007. This paper reviews some significant milestones of the Academy from 1957 to 1982. Postgraduate medical education with specialist training and assessment was more formalised only during the challenging years when Singapore became more autonomous and politically independent. This also coincided with the establishment of the Academy of Medicine and the University's School of Postgraduate Medical Studies. The close relationship between the two bodies and the Ministry of Health continues to this day. The historical links with the British and other international Colleges and Academies are also highlighted.

Ann Acad Med Singapore 2007;36:457-476

Key words: Colleges and Academies, Postgraduate medical education, Specialist assessment

INTRODUCTION

The formation of the Singapore Academy of Medicine in the 1950s was the outcome of steady progress in medical education as well as a stimulus to further professional endeavours. The Academy's *raison d'être* and role can thus be appreciated only by reference to salient developments in the Island's medical history.

At the time of its founding as a British colony in 1819, Singapore was a swampy, unhealthy, settlement inhabited by about 150 Malays and 30 Chinese. Its growing economic prosperity as a commercial entrepôt was only gradually matched by the provision of better sanitary and medical facilities.¹ Today it is an independent, sovereign Republic within the Commonwealth, with a multi-racial population of some 4.2 million. In spite of its relatively high population density and tropical location where epidemics still occur, Singapore now has a remarkable health record, with low morbidity and mortality rates comparing favourably with the best in the world.^{2,3}

The record of health services in Singapore is really an account of the acceptance of Western Medicine by the multi-racial community. This acceptance has been secured largely through the insistence on stringent standards of medical competence and practice. At the opening of the Academy's Tenth Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine, the Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew aptly declared: "*The standard of the medical profession in Singapore has always been high*".⁴

In the inculcation of such high standards, the establishment of the Medical School (later named the King Edward VII College of Medicine) in 1905 was a very significant milestone. Several generations of doctors qualified from the College. In 1949, the facilities and the functions of the College were taken over by its successor, the Faculty of Medicine, of the University of Malaya in Singapore (from 1980, the National University of Singapore). By 1970, the Faculty was graduating approximately 120 doctors annually. These doctors, together with returning graduates from other medical schools, have rendered great service to the Community and their influence continues to be strongly felt not only in Singapore but also in neighbouring Malaysia. Many have achieved positions of international distinction. This has been possible through the strong foundations of good medical practice, which evolved over the years of tutelage based on sound British standards of Medicine.

However, as late as 1960, doctors seeking higher professional qualifications had to obtain these abroad. Little formal post-graduate education was then available. Nevertheless, to a large measure, preparation for

their post-graduate studies had been done locally with the aid of their local chiefs and registrars holding Memberships or Fellowships of the Royal Colleges and regular attendances at clinicopathological meetings. Thus, before 1960, it was not surprising that Singapore had only about 50 doctors with higher professional qualifications.⁵ Briefly, this was the scene of Singapore's medical services and education when some local specialists led by Prof Gordon Ransome felt that it was timely and proper to form a corporate body of all medical specialists.²

THE FOUNDATION

The Academy of Medicine was duly founded in 1957 as the professional Corporate Body of medical and dental specialists at Singapore. Amongst the 20 specialists who were present at the first meeting were the Professors of Medicine, Surgery and Obstetrics and Gynaecology viz Sir Gordon Ransome, Yeoh Ghim Seng and Benjamin Sheares. Dr Sheares was Singapore's second President and Dr Yeoh was in later years the Speaker of Parliament. Dr Sheares was also the Academy's first patron and Sir Gordon the Academy's first Master.^{1,2}

Shortly before its founding, the Academy was fortunate to receive a visit from Lord Brain, the President of the Royal College of Physicians, London, who gave invaluable advice and encouragement. Thus, right from its inception the Academy was patterned on the Royal Colleges in Britain and Australasia, and also charged with the same ideals and aims especially in regard to the maintenance of the highest standards of professional and ethical practice through teaching, instructing and training those who wish to learn and to specialise. However, unlike these colleges, which are responsible generally for individual disciplines, it was considered prudent that this body in a small country should embrace all specialties in Medicine. Thus, the Academy includes almost all the medical specialists and consultants in Singapore – the Government Service, the University and the private sector.^{1,2} From a modest beginning of 34 foundation academicians, the Academy now has well over 2208 Fellows including 39 Honorary Fellows of international repute.

Immediately after its inauguration, the Academy turned its attention towards the establishment of formal post-graduate training and continuing education. Thus, the Academy embarked on a programme of organised post-graduate teaching through refresher courses, teach-in seminars and symposia.

A carefully prepared memorandum in 1959 to the Government and the University led to the formation of the Committee of Post-graduate Medical Education at the University with representation from the Academy, Government and Medical Associations.^{1,2,6} Formal courses in Basic Medical Sciences and the Primary Fellowship Examinations of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons were conducted. Since the early sixties, courses in Advanced Medicine and Surgery were held regularly with the assistance of visiting lecturers from the Royal Australasian Colleges and with the active participation of our Academicians.⁵

MEMBERSHIP

In keeping with its major responsibility to maintain the highest standards of professional practice, membership of the Academy has from its inception been based on stringent requirements. In the early years when structured specialist training was not formalised, the attainments of potential candidates were first examined by the Censors prior to consideration by the Council for approval. Only then were their names submitted to the general body of members for formal acceptance and admission. In selecting candidates for membership, Censors paid special attention to the possession of higher professional qualifications, professional standing and appointments held, contributions to medical literature, and general character and conduct. Practice in

a specialty for at least five years was an essential requirement. Council may further admit to the Honorary Membership eminent members of the medical profession, scientists or other persons who have made considerable contributions to Medicine particularly in Singapore and to the Academy.^{1,2}

Members were entitled to use the qualifications AM and Honorary Members the letters Hon AM after their names. These were approved by the Singapore Medical Council as additional professional qualifications in 1987. In 1991, the qualification AM (Academician of Medicine) was replaced by FAMS (Fellow of Academy of Medicine, Singapore).

CHAPTERS

By 1965 it was felt that the Academy had more than sufficient physicians and surgeons within its membership to warrant the formation of chapters in Medicine and Surgery. Thus in 1966, the Chapter of Physicians and the Chapter of Surgeons were inaugurated by the Master, K Shanmugaratnam, followed in 1968 by the Chapter of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists by Master Y Cohen. In 1974, the Chapters of Radiologists and Anaesthetists were formed under the Mastership of Chew Chin Hin. In 1979, the Chapter of Dental Surgeons came into being with Master V K Pillay in the Chair and in 1981, the Chapter of Community and Occupational Medicine Physicians was inaugurated by Master Lim Pin.

These Chapters have taken over in increasing measure the organisation of refresher courses, teaching seminars and symposia in their respective fields thereby enhancing this particular function of the Academy. The increasing number of scientific and social events in our already crowded calendar was a vivid token of the Chapters' contributions. Many subsequently evolved into Colleges within the Academy in 2004. To augment even further their scientific programme, they were empowered to appoint visiting academicians and visiting fellows. The first to be appointed in 1974 was Sir David Todd, now Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of Hong Kong.²

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL STUDIES

The Academy was largely responsible for initiating the formation of the University's postgraduate medical school. On 8 October 1967, Deputy Prime Minister Toh Chin Chye delivered a speech at the Annual Dinner of the University Medical Society in which he censured the Faculty of Medicine for not making any progress in the field of higher professional education. This was prominently reported in the Straits Times of October 9. The first Seah Cheng Siang lecturer and former Master, Chew Chin Hin recorded: "*Almost immediately after, I recall receiving phone calls from Professor K Shanmugaratnam, the Master, and shortly after from (Professor Seah) Cheng Siang proposing an emergency Council Meeting to respond to Dr Toh's speech. This was held on 11 October 1967 with 6 of us attending. A letter was soon drafted and sent to Dr Toh by dispatch the day after. He promptly agreed to meet us and I remember vividly the morning coffee we had with him in the Prime Minister's conference room at City Hall on 4 November 1967 at 11.30 am*".⁶⁻⁹ At this meeting, Dr Toh suggested that the Academy, the Faculty and the Singapore Medical Association (SMA) should jointly send a memorandum on postgraduate medical qualifications to the Minister for Health. He further proposed a Joint Committee comprising representatives from the Academy, the Faculty and the SMA with K Shanmugaratnam as Chairman. The Committee recommended "*that higher professional qualifications in various clinical specialities be awarded by the University of Singapore and that the School of Postgraduate Medical Studies be reconstituted to enable the Academy of Medicine to participate as equal partners in the training programmes and examinations*".^{6,10,11}

In April 1968, Deputy Prime Minister Toh Chin Chye was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University. A new statute for the School provided for it to function independently of the Faculty of Medicine under a Board comprising the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman, the Director and Deputy Director of the School, 4 teachers from the Faculty, 4 members of the Academy and the Director of Medical Services. At the first meeting on 31 March 1969, he placed on record his appreciation of the services rendered by members of the Committee on Local Specialists Qualifications under the Chairmanship of Professor K Shanmugaratnam, the Academy's Master.¹² In 1981, the Master Professor Lim Pin was appointed Vice-Chancellor and took over the Chairmanship of the School. During this period, the Master of the Academy and the Dean of Medicine were included as *Ex-Officio* Members of the Board.⁶

In addition to taking on formal teaching programmes of the former Committee, higher professional medical examinations were instituted in 1970 leading to the degree of the Master of Medicine (M Med) in Internal Medicine, Paediatrics, Surgery and Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Degrees in Anaesthesia, Occupational Medicine and Public Health and other disciplines were subsequently added. The teachers of the School are mostly Academicians and serve as Internal Examiners. To ensure that standards obtained would be equal to those of the Royal Colleges, External Examiners from these Colleges are regularly appointed. Reciprocity was often granted and since 1986 joint examinations were established in several disciplines (Table 1).¹⁰ Of equal importance, were we without these courses and examinations, doctors seeking higher professional qualifications would have to take leave to proceed abroad sometimes for many years. Thus, there is no wastage of time, manpower and money for the candidates and for the country.⁵

Table 1. Higher Professional Examinations of Singapore

Master of Medicine		Joint Examinations	
Internal Medicine	Public Health	General Surgery	MRCS (Edin)/M Med
Psychiatry	Anaesthesia	Ophthalmology	MRCS (Edin)/M Med
Paediatric Medicine	Occupational Medicine	Emergency Medicine	MRCS (Edin)/M Med
Ophthalmology	Orthopaedic Surgery	Internal Medicine	MRCP (UK)/M Med
General Surgery	Otorhinolaryngology	Paediatric Medicine	MRCPCH/M Med
Diagnostic Radiology	Family Medicine		
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Emergency Medicine		

ON SPECIALIST TRAINING, REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

In keeping with its aim to establish high and stringent standards of specialist practice in Singapore, much thought was given by Council on this topic as early as the 70s. A detailed memorandum on the Academy and its role on Vocational and Specialist Registration was sent to the Minister for Health for his consideration in 1974. The reply from the Director of Medical Services suggested that the matter be kept in abeyance but was pleased to discuss the matter further at a later date.¹³ Soon after, the Academy formed a Standing Committee on Specialist Training, Registration and Certification. This led to the establishment of the Roll of Specialists in 1980.¹³ This proved to be the forerunner of the Specialist Register following the establishment of the Specialist Accreditation Board in 1997.¹⁰

CONGRESS OF MEDICINE

On yet another aspect of continuing education, Congresses embracing all the disciplines of Medicine have been organised regularly. Indeed, the Congress of Medicine has become the most important scientific meeting in the Academy's calendar.

The first Congress was held in 1963 in the Pathology Lecture Theatre at Singapore General Hospital ([see page 598](#)). The second was held in 1965 also at the Pathology Lecture Theatre. Singapore was part of Malaysia in 1963 and became independent in 1965 when it separated from Malaysia. This led to the formation of a separate Academy of Medicine in Malaysia in 1966. The Third Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine was organised by the Malaysian Academy and held in Kuala Lumpur in 1967, and the Fourth Singapore Malaysia Congress was held in 1969.^{1,2,6,13,14} The aim was to provide a forum for Academicians and colleagues in Singapore and Malaysia to present the results of their research and to invite fruitful discussion. By 1969, success had so attended these Congresses that they had to be held annually alternating in venue between Singapore and Malaysia with the Singapore Master as the President in Malaysia and vice versa (Table 2). These Congresses continue to flourish and it has been most gratifying to watch these meetings grow from strength to strength. Although they provide an important link of kinship and close ties between Academicians in both countries, we are glad to see these meetings finding acceptance in increasing measure well beyond our national borders. We shall always value the participation of our special guests and colleagues from abroad.

It is note worthy that the Ninth Congress held in Kuala Lumpur in 1974 was declared open by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Abdul Razak and the tenth Congress in 1975 which coincided with the Republic's tenth anniversary by the Singapore Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew. He became the first Singaporean to be awarded the Academy's highest honor – the Fellowship *honoris causa* ([see page 601](#)). Our Patron Dr Benjamin Sheares, President of the Republic of Singapore and Mrs Sheares were the Guests of Honor at the Congress Banquet.

Table 2. Presidents of the Congress of Medicine

Year	Name	Congress Venue	Congress
1963	Dr Gordon Arthur Ransome	Singapore	1st
1965	Dr H.M. McGladdery	Singapore	2nd
1967	Dr Gwee Ah Leng	Malaysia	3rd
1969	Tan Sri Dr Mohammed Din b. Ahmad	Singapore	4th
1970	Dr Yahya Cohen	Malaysia	5th
1971	Datuk Dr SMA Alhady	Singapore	6th
1972	Dr Seah Cheng Siang	Malaysia	7th
1973	Datuk Dr RP Pillay	Singapore	8th
1974	Dr Chew Chin Hin	Malaysia	9th
1975	Datuk Dr GA Sreenevasan	Singapore	10th
1976	Dr Robert Loh Choo Kiat	Malaysia	11th
1977	Dato' Dr Mahmood Merican	Singapore	12th
1978	Dr VK Pillay	Malaysia	13th
1979	Dato' Dr Mahmood Merican	Singapore	14th
1980	Dr Lim Pin	Malaysia	15th
1982	Dr Ng Chuan Wai	Singapore	16th
1983	Dr Chow Khuen Wai	Malaysia	17th
1984	Dr V Thuraisingham	Singapore	18th
1985	Dr Lawrence KC Chan	Malaysia	19th
1986	Dr Lim Say Wan	Singapore	20th
1987	Dr Lawrence KC Chan	Malaysia	21st
1988	Dr Lim Say Wan	Singapore	22nd

Year	Name	Congress Venue	Congress
1989	Dr Tan Ngoh Chuan	Malaysia	23rd
1990	Dr Lim Say Wan	Singapore	24th
1991	Dr Raj Nambiar	Malaysia	25th
1992	Dato Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman	Singapore	26th
1993	Dr Chao Tzee Cheng	Malaysia	27th
1994	Dato Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman	Singapore	28th
1995	Dr Chao Tzee Cheng	Malaysia	29th
1996	Dato Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman	Singapore	30th
1997	Dr Tan Ser Kiat	Malaysia	31st
1998	Dr Yeoh Poh Hong	Singapore	32nd
1999	Dr Chee Yam Cheng	Malaysia	33rd
2000	Dr Yeoh Poh Hong	Singapore	34th
2001	Dr Walter TL Tan	Malaysia	35th
2002	Dato Dr Yeoh Poh Hong	Singapore	36th
2003	Dr K Satku	Malaysia	37th
2004	Dato Dr Mrs ST Kew	Singapore	38th
2005	Dato Dr Mrs ST Kew	Singapore	39th
2006	Dr Ho Lai Yun	Malaysia	40th

ON SPONSORING INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

Besides organising its own Congresses of Medicine, the Academy, in keeping with its objective, undertook a new function in 1972 of sponsoring and supporting international and regional congresses and scientific meetings in specific disciplines. The first major congress was the highly successful Fifth Asian-Pacific Congress of Cardiology. The proceeds from this Congress have been invested for the advancement of this specialty.

In 1975, the Academy was a co-sponsor of a Workshop in Cardiology and the main sponsor for the Second International Symposium on Orthopaedic Training in Developing Countries. The Academy organised a highly successful SEAPAL Congress of Rheumatology in February 1976. In March of the same year, yet another rewarding meeting – a Seminar on Hypertension – was organised with many international authorities participating. In May 1976, the Academy sponsored the Fifth Asian-Pacific Congress of Gastroenterology in conjunction with the Second Asian-Pacific Congress of Endoscopy.

Because of the large number of applications from various medical societies for sponsorship, the Academy has set up a Standing Committee on Congresses. This Committee is charged with the responsibility of vetting the various applications and recommending them to the Council accordingly.²

AWARDS AND LECTURES OF THE ACADEMY (TABLE 3)²

Gordon Arthur Ransome Oration

In 1970, a sum of over S\$5000 was donated to the Academy by friends and colleagues of Sir Gordon Ransome, the founder Master, for this Oration which is to be delivered biennially at the Academy's Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine. The scope covers any subject related to Medicine be it academic, philosophical, political, ethical or educational. The orator is appointed by the Council from among nominations by Members of the Academy. Nominees must be distinguished members of the medical profession or of the community. The first oration was delivered in 1971 by Past Master Seah Cheng Siang.

Galloway Memorial Lecture

In 1959, following a gift of S\$2000 from Lady Galloway, the Academy instituted this lecture in memory of Sir David Galloway, who was an eminent physician and clinical teacher in the early years of the Singapore Medical School. Applications are invited annually for the lectureship from all medical practitioners in Singapore and Malaysia. The subject of the lecture must be pertaining to any branch of Medicine or its allied Sciences and must be of original work. The lecturer is appointed by the Council on the recommendation of the Censors.

Young Investigator's Award

In order to encourage young investigators in Singapore and Malaysia to participate in the proceedings of the Academy's Congresses, this award was instituted by the Council in 1975 on the recommendation of the Organising Committee of the Tenth Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Medicine. The subject of the paper must be of original work and not previously published or delivered at scientific meetings. The prize is awarded at the Congresses held in Singapore. The first was awarded in 1977.

Runme Shaw Lecture

In May 1981, the Organising Committee of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations recommended to the Council the establishment of a Runme Shaw Lecture to be inaugurated at the Silver Jubilee Congress. Tan Sri Dr Runme Shaw graciously took on the idea and contributed S\$120,000. Tan Sri Shaw had been closely associated with the activities of the Academy and was an ardent financier of many of the Academy's projects. The subject offered for the lecture must be scientific in content and relevant to the medical or related profession. The lecture is open to distinguished members of the medical and related professions by invitation. It is held biennially in conjunction with the Congress of Medicine in Singapore. The first lecturer was Dr John Baxter, Professor of Medicine, University of California ([see page 604](#)).

Visiting the Academicians and Visiting Fellows

In addition, to augment the educational and training programmes of the Academy and its Chapters, *Visiting Academicians* and *Visiting Fellows* holding high appointments abroad are appointed from time to time to visit Singapore.

The Council of the Academy on the recommendation of its Chapters may appoint one distinguished overseas visitor per year as a Visiting Academician for the year. The Visiting Academician stays for at least a week and undertakes educational duties in the hospitals as well as lecture to Members of the Academy.

Each Chapter of the Academy may recommend to Council the appointment of up to 2 Visiting Fellows a year. The Visiting Fellow stays at least 2 days and delivers at least 1 talk to Members of the host Chapter.

Table 3. Lectures and Awards

Galloway Memorial Lecture

List of Galloway Memorial Lecturers

Year	Lecturer	Subject of Lecture
1960	Dr JW Scharff	Life and Times of Sir David Galloway
1962	Dr DWC Gawne	Miasma
1963	Dr VK Pillay	Congenital Anomalies of the Elbow Joint
1964	Dr TA Sinnathuray	Amniotomy in the Treatment of Placental Insufficiency Syndrome
1965	Dr A Ganendran	The Patho-physiological Basis for Drug Therapy in Tetanus
1966	Dr A Krishnamurti	Some Aspects of Neurological Research in the Understanding of the Functions of the Brain
1969	Dr R Kanagasuntheram	Some Unresolved Mysteries in the Anatomy of the Visual System
1972	Dr JMH Pearson	The Mechanisms of Nerve Damage in Different Types of Leprosy
1973	Dr Lim Pin	Magnesium Deficiency – Diagnosis and Clinical Significance
1974	Dr M Kannan Kutty	Current Concepts of Rhinosporidiosis
1981	Dr Lenny KA Tan	The Prevalence and Pattern of Diverticular Disease in Singapore
1983	Dr Feng Pao Hsui	Systemic Lupus Erythematosus in Singapore – A Decade of Study
1984	Dr Woo Keng Thye	Platelet Injury and Antithrombin in Clinical Nephrology
1986	Dr Goh Hak Su	DNA Analysis in Neoplasia of the Colorectum
1989	Dr JTK Wee	A Study of the Blood Supply of the Skin on the Dorsum of the Fingers and the Design of New Skin Flaps for Resurfacing the Hand
1991	Dr Cynthia Ruth Goh	Protein Engineering of Tumour Necrosis Factor-B and its Applications in Cancer, Septicaemia and Cachexia
1994	Dr Grace SL Lee	The Mesangial Cell and Glomerulosclerosis – Pathogenetic Mechanisms and Therapeutic Interventions
2005	Dr Tan Puay Hoon	Breast Phyllodes Tumours: Morphology and Beyond 40th

Gordon Arthur Ransome Oration

List of Gordon Arthur Ransome Orators

Year	Orator	Subject of Oration
1971	Dr Seah Cheng Siang	The Life and Times of Gordon Arthur Ransome
1973	Dr Goh Keng Swee	Some Problems of Manpower Development in Singapore
1975	Dr Khoo Oon Teik	The Making of A Doctor
1977	Dr Kwan Sai Kheong	The Search for Identity
1979	Mr S Rajaratnam	The 5th Gordon Arthur Ransome Oration
1982	Dr Wong Hock Boon	The Human Y Chromosome – Its Function and Impact on Modern Society
1984	Mr Tan Boon Teik	Human Rights and Economic Development
1986	Mr David Marshall	Human Values and the Medical Profession
1988	Professor Tommy Koh	Some Medico-legal Aspects of AIDS
1990	Sir Michael Pike	From Spitfire Summer to Europe Reborn: 1940-1990
1992	Sir Selman Cowen	Ethical and Legal Issues Arising from New Frontiers in Medicine
1994	Professor Leslie A Turnberg	Practising Medicine with Limited Resources: The Doctors' Dilemma
1996	YAB Dato Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad	Whether Training in Medicine Makes A Better Politician
1998	Mrs Anson Chan	Continuity and Change
2000	Dr James Petrie	A Journey of Care – Mission Impossible?
2002	Dr Lim Pin	Navigating in the Sea of Science and Technology
2004	Sir Donald Irvine	Patient-Centred Professionalism
2007	Dr Chew Chin Hin	Some Milestones: Specialist Education, Training and Assessment in Singapore

Runme Shaw Memorial Lecture

List of Runme Shaw Memorial Lecturers

Year	Lecturer	Subject of Lecture
1982	Dr John Baxter	Genetic Engineering and Its Impact on Medicine
1984	Dr Bernard McC O'Brien	State of the Art of Reconstructive Microvascular Surgery
1986	Dr Robert C Gallo	Role of Viruses and AIDS in Cancer
1988	Dr Daniel C Gajdusek	Amyloidoses of Brain: Transmissible and Non-transmissible Dementias
1990	Dr Norman E Shumway	Transplantation of the Heart, Heart-Lungs and Lung
1992	Professor R G Edwards	Wider Opportunities of Human Conception in Vitro
1994	Professor Ralph Nachman	Thrombosis and Atherogenesis – Molecular Connections
1996	Professor David A Warrell	Malaria: Past, Present and Future
1998	Sir Walter Bodmer	Somatic Evolution of Cancer
2000	Professor Lee Smith	Treating VIPs in Washington
2002	Dr Fumio Konishi	Modern Management of Colorectal Polyps – Are They all Premalignant?
2004	Dr John WD McDonald	Professionalism: An Important Concept in Need of Nurturing
2005	Professor David Weatherall	Training Doctors for the 21st Century: A Global Perspective
2007	Professor Janet Elizabeth S Husband	Strategies in Cancer Imaging for the 21 st Century – A Global Perspective

Young Investigator's Award

List of Young Investigator's Award Winners

Year	Award Winner	Subject of Lecture
1988	Dr GS Shahi	Studies on the Interaction of MPTP with the Cytochrome P-450 Enzyme System – Clues to a Possible Aetiological Factor in Parkinson's Disease
1990	Dr Pang Ah San	The Location of Valves and Competence of the Great Saphenous Vein Above the Knee
	Dr Mary Anne Tan Jin Ai	An Evaluation of the Polymerase Chain Reaction for Detection of Haemoglobin Genes in the Prenatal Diagnosis of alpha Thalassaemia
1992	Dr Lai Poh San	
1994	Dr Daniel YT Goh	An Evaluation of Local Airspora Allergens
1996	Dr Allen EJ Yeoh	An Evaluation of Minimal Residual Disease in Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia
1998	Dr Ivan Ng	Induction of Apoptosis Following Traumatic Head Injury in Humans
2000	Dr Low Yee	The Prognostic Value of Ductal Plate Malformation and Other Histological Parameters in Biliary Atresia: An Immunohistochemical Study
2002	Dr Lim Hong Huay	Predicting Significant Hyperbilirubinaemia and Early Discharge for Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase Deficient Newborns
2004	Dr Dawn Lim	Fish Allergy - The Singapore Story
2005	Dr Mazliza Mahmod	Assessment of Diastolic Function in Newly Diagnosed Hypertensives

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS AND TRAVEL ASSISTANCE²

The Lee Foundation/Shaw Foundation Fellowship in Orthopaedic Surgery

Through generous donations by the Lee and Shaw Foundations, Fellowships have been instituted by the Academy to enable young surgeons from developing countries abroad to receive advanced orthopaedic training in Singapore.

The Lee Foundation/Shaw Foundation Fellowship in Orthopaedic Surgery was established in March 1976. Eligible Surgical Registrars (Medical Officers) from developing countries come here for a period of training varying between six and twelve months. Training is conducted in the Orthopaedic Departments of the Ministry of Health or in the National University of Singapore. Each trainee undertakes a clinical research programme that may or may not lead to the publication of a paper, on a topic he may pursue on his return home.

Academy of Medicine Fellowship

In 1979, the Council of the Academy donated a sum of S\$4,500 to the School of Postgraduate Medical Studies for the initiation of an annual ASEAN postgraduate Fellowship. The first awardee was Dr Marsianto of Indonesia who came to Singapore and trained in the University Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and who subsequently sat for the M Med (Obstetrics & Gynaecology) Examinations.

In 1980, the Fellowship was re-named the Academy of Medicine Fellowship. Fellows are required to take the Master of Medicine on completion of their training.

Registrar Exchange Programme

The Academy saw the need to provide local doctors with an opportunity to train and learn in overseas centres of their specialty and together with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow embarked on a mutual exchange of Registrars. The first exchange was in 1979 in the specialty of dermatology.

The Academy is entirely responsible for the Singapore Registrar's air passage, subsistence allowance, medical registration and insurance, and other incidentals. The Royal College simultaneously bore the expenses of their Registrar. The Exchange is tenable for a period of 6 to 12 months.

The second exchange was also formulated with the same College in the specialty of Orthopaedic Surgery.

CARE MEDICO/ACADEMY Refresher Course in Indonesia

In January 1976, the Academy was approached by CARE MEDICO Indonesia on the Kaputan Doctor Training Programme in Indonesia, conducted by the RSU Solo, the Government of Central Java and CARE MEDICO Indonesia. The Academy was invited to send Singapore doctors to this programme in the fields of Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Internal Medicine.

The Academy has also established grants to promote medical research by promising workers in Singapore in their respective fields. Grants also take the form of travel assistance to members who participate in international or regional meetings and conferences. Fellows speaking at major scientific sessions, presenting a scientific paper or poster, or chairing scientific sessions are eligible for financial assistance.

THE ACADEMY'S ADVISORY ROLE

One of the functions of the Academy is to give well informed advice, particularly regarding medical problems of national interest. Thus as noted earlier, one of its first significant moves was to submit a Memorandum on Postgraduate Medical Education to the Government and the University which resulted in the formation of a Postgraduate Committee and a rewarding partnership between the University and the Academy. This was to be the precursor of the School of Postgraduate Medical Studies.

Another important document was on Medical Specialisation which was prepared in 1970 at the invitation of the Ministry of Health. In this regard, the Health Minister said: "*the Academy can take pride in having influenced significantly the recommendations of the Committee*". Many had been implemented.¹⁵ In 1974, a Memorandum on Specialist Certification and Registration was submitted to the Government as was earlier noted.¹³ This led to the formation of a Standing Committee on Specialist Training and Certification a year later. The report detailed the requirements for Specialist Certification in the disciplines of Internal Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Anaesthesia, Radiology, Pathology, Community and Occupational Medicine, Ophthalmology and Otorhinolaryngology. Later specialist certification was established in Orthopaedic Surgery, Paediatrics, Psychological Medicine, Cardiology, Dermatology, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Plastic Surgery, Rehabilitation Medicine, Renal Medicine, Gastroenterology and in the Dental disciplines, Conservative Dentistry, Oral Surgery, Orthodontics and Prosthetic Dentistry. Those certified were emplaced in the Roll of Specialists.¹³

THE ACADEMY'S PUBLICATIONS¹

The major publications are the *Annals* of the Academy of Medicine and the *Proceedings* of its Congresses. The *Annals* is a scientific medical journal that includes papers of original work in the field of medicine, reviews of important subjects of current interest and important lectures, orations and addresses delivered at the Academy's functions and meetings. This publication is distributed to all our Fellows. Since 1972 the *Annals* has been published regularly.¹⁶ To serve the different specialist disciplines in the Academy, the *Annals* has oriented its issues to cover the various topics. The contributions of guest editors has enhanced the scope thereby enabling it to serve the wide ranging interest of its members. The listing of the *Annals* in the *Index Medicus* in 1979 was an important milestone. With the appointment of full time editorial executives, the *Annals* is now on a much firmer footing to establish itself as a journal of international repute.

The *Proceedings* is a record of all papers delivered at the Academy's Congresses of Medicine in Singapore and Malaysia. These were later incorporated in special issues of the *Annals*.^{1,2,14}

The Academy's publications are also sent to well known Academic bodies including the Royal Colleges, Singapore's National Library and major medical libraries and indexing centres throughout the world. These publications have been extremely well received and the reviewer of the *Journal of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh* wrote: "*this account of the 6th Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine (1971) is a remarkable and fascinating production...the volume reflects credit on the 2 medical schools...in Singapore and Malaysia as a whole and all who contributed. The editors, contributors and sponsors can take pride in this volume.*"²

THE SISTER ACADEMY IN MALAYSIA¹⁴

Following the separation of Singapore from Malaysia on 9 August 1965, an autonomous sister Academy of Medicine was registered in Malaysia with a similar constitution in 1966. Tan Sri Mohammed Din Bin Ahmad, the Director General of Health was elected the first Master.

The Malaysian Academy also embraces all specialities in Medicine. It biennially hosts the Congress of Medicine, which not only enables colleagues in Singapore and Malaysia to keep a close link but provides an opportunity for them to meet their professional counterparts in the ASEAN region and further afield.

The Academy inaugurated the Tun Dr Ismail Oration in 1974, in memory of the late Deputy Prime Minister. This Oration is delivered at the Congress of Medicine held in Malaysia. The first Orator was Tun Mohammed Suffian B Hashim, Lord President of Malaysia. In 1982, the Tun Abdul Razak Research Award was established in honour of the second Prime Minister of Malaysia.

The Academy has played its part in encouraging young doctors to present their work and upgrade the standards of professional practice and initiating the Young Investigator's Award in 1976.

LINKS WITH INTERNATIONAL COLLEGES^{1,2,13}

The Academy enjoys harmonious relationships with numerous Colleges abroad. As noted earlier, it was patterned after the older Royal Colleges in Britain and Australasia and charged with the same ideals. Indeed, from the very beginning, it has received a vast measure of goodwill from many of the sister Colleges in the Commonwealth. Shortly before its foundation much encouragement and invaluable advice was given by Lord Brain, President of the Royal College of Physicians of London, and several past Presidents of these Colleges have honoured the Academy by accepting its Fellowship. The late Lord Brain was amongst the first Honorary Academicians. Other Honorary Fellows included Sir Stanley Davidson and Sir John Crofton of Edinburgh and Sir Kenneth Noad, Sir Douglas Miller and Sir John Frew of Australia (Table 4). Our sister Colleges have further honoured the Academy by sending their Presidents to participate in the Academy's Congress of Medicine. In 1975, the oldest College in the Commonwealth namely the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh invited the Academy to discuss matters of mutual interest and the Australasian Colleges have invited the Master to participate in its Scientific meetings and to receive their honorary Fellowship.

In 1978, the President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow invited the Academy to participate in the Conference of Presidents of the Royal Colleges of Physicians. Drs Robert CK Loh and Chew Chin Hin represented the Academy as the incumbent Master and Immediate Past Master, respectively. They presented a paper on Postgraduate Medical Education, Specialist Training and Certification in Singapore. This was to be the forerunner of the International Association of College and Academy Presidents (IACAP). In 1981, Past Master Chew Chin Hin represented the Academy at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh Tercentenary Celebrations.

PROSPECT

The great advantage of our Academy is that it embraces all specialties. We have within our Fellowship almost all the medical specialists and consultants in Singapore – the government service, the University's Division of Graduate Medical Studies and the private sector. The Academy represents the highest professional ideals. Although we are autonomous, we shall continue to meet our responsibilities in continuing medical education and specialists training in close collaboration with the Government whose hospitals and medical departments provide the training appointments, and also the Division of Graduate Medical Studies through the aegis of the Joint Committee on Specialist Training (JCST) on which the Academy and the University Division are equally represented. Thus, we may well assume with confidence that the Academy will continue to discharge its responsibilities in regard to the maintenance of health of all our fellow men through upholding the highest standards of medical practice.

Some 30 years ago Sir Thomas Holmes Sellors and his colleagues, many of whom were Presidents of the British Royal Colleges, called for the creation of an Academy of Medicine in Britain. They wrote as follows: "*The generality of Medicine cries out for a unifying coordinating force and the strength of the Colleges and Faculties as free, progressive and independent bodies could achieve this.*"¹ This expresses the spirit and essence of Academy of Medicine wherein is achieved the unity of our medical specialists.

Acknowledgements

Dr Ernest Chew, former Head of History and Dean of Arts, National University of Singapore for his advice on the early history of Singapore.

Emeritus Professor K Shanmugaratnam and Dr Robert CK Loh, Past Masters for their contributions to the early years and during the years of their Mastership.

Ms Yong Bee Choon, Senior Editorial Executive, Annals of the Academy of Medicine Singapore for access to the Academy Archives and Annual Reports.

Staff, Division of Graduate Medical Studies, National University of Singapore for secretarial assistance.

Table 4. List of Honorary Fellows

	Name	Year of Conferment
1.	Lord Brain	1967
2.	Sir Alexander Oppenheim	1969
3.	Sir Douglas Miller	1969
4.	Sir John Lewthas Frew	1970
5.	Sir Kenneth Beeson Noad	1970
6.	Sir Derrick Dunlop	1973
7.	Sir Stanley Davidson	1974
8.	Sir John Bruce	1974
9.	R H Hickling	1975
10.	Mr Lee Kuan Yew	1975
11.	Tan Sri Dr Runme Shaw	1975
12.	Prof Sir Ian Hill	1975
13.	Prof Robert Emil Steiner	1975
14.	Dr Yeoh Ghim Seng	1977
15.	Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome	1977
16.	Dr Toh Chin Chye	1979
17.	Sir John Crofton	1979
18.	Emeritus Prof Robert Roaf	1981
19.	Dr Michael A Gilmour	1982
20.	Prof G B Ong	1982
21.	Dr Stanley JM Goulston	1982
22.	Dr C Elaine Field	1982
23.	Sir James Fraser	1984
24.	Prof David Todd	1986
25.	Mr Howe Yoon Chong	1986
26.	Dr RF Robertson	1988
27.	Mr Shaw Vee Meng	1988
28.	Mr Goh Chok Tong	1990
29.	Dr Eugene M Hildreth	1992
30.	Mr Wee Kim Wee	1994
31.	Tun Dr Mahathir Mohd	1996
32.	Dr Kwa Soon Bee	1996
33.	Mr Lee Seng Gee	2000
34.	Mr Ong Teng Cheong	2000
35.	Mr Shaw Vee King	2002
36.	Mr SR Nathan	2003
37.	Dr Andrew Chew Guan Khuan	2004
38.	Dr Tony Tan	2006
39.	Mr Lee Hsien Loong	2007

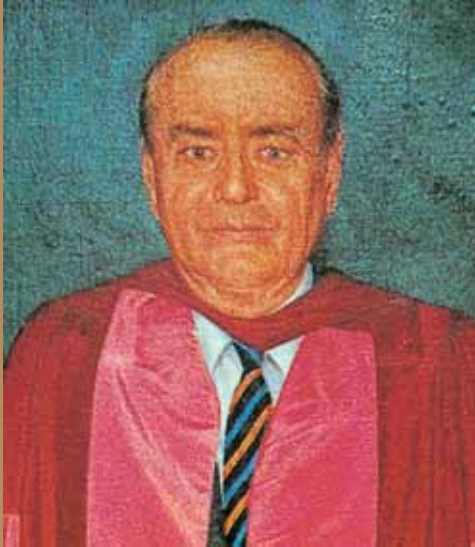
References

1. Chew CH. Academy of Medicine. Singapore: Academy of Medicine, 1976.
2. Academy of Medicine. The first 25 years 1957-1982. Singapore: Academy of Medicine, 1982.
3. Chew CH. Medical education, training and health care services in the Republic of Singapore. *West J Med* 1991;155:186-8.
4. Lee KY. Prime Minister's Address. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 1975;4:363-4.
5. Wong HB. Postgraduate medical education in Singapore. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 1982;11:473-7.
6. Shanmugaratnam K. Evolution of postgraduate medical education in Singapore. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 2005;34:678-83.
7. Chew CH. The inaugural First Seah Cheng Siang Memorial Lecture: life and times of Seah Cheng Siang. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 1992;21:(2Suppl)10-24.
8. Academy of Medicine Council Minutes 11 October 1967.
9. Academy of Medicine Notes of Meeting in Deputy Prime Minister's Office 4 November 1967.
10. Chew CH, Chee YC. Postgraduate medical education and specialist training in Singapore. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 2005;34:182C-189C.
11. Koh EK. Report of the Joint Committee on Postgraduate Medical Qualifications in Singapore. 1968.
12. School of Postgraduate Medical Studies Board Minutes 31 March 1969.
13. Academy of Medicine Annual Reports 1972-1982. Singapore: Academy of Medicine, 2004.
14. The Academy of Medicine of Malaysia Silver Jubilee 1966-1991. Malaysia: Academy of Medicine of Malaysia, 1991.
15. Chua SC. Minister's Address. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 1972;1:65-6.
16. Editorial. *Ann Acad Med Singapore* 1972;1:1.



Masters
The First Twenty-Five Years
1957-1982





Founder Master, 1957-1959

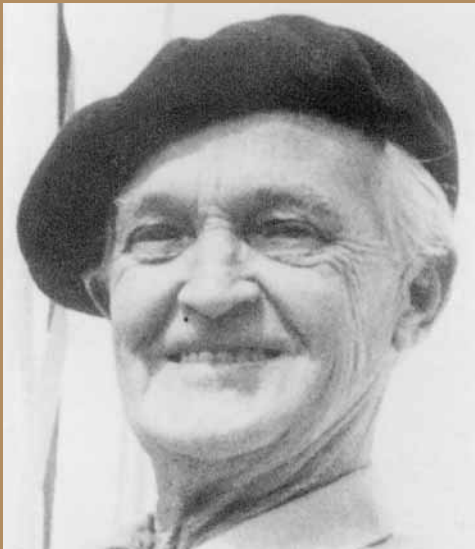
Sir Gordon Arthur Ransome

Sir Gordon came to Singapore in 1938 to serve as Associate Professor of Medicine and later as Professor. Over the next 37 years he served as doctor, educator, researcher, soldier and academician. A special issue of the Annals of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore was published in January 1979 to commemorate him.



Second Master 1959-1960

Dr Constance Elaine Field



Third Master 1960-1961

Dr DWC Gawne

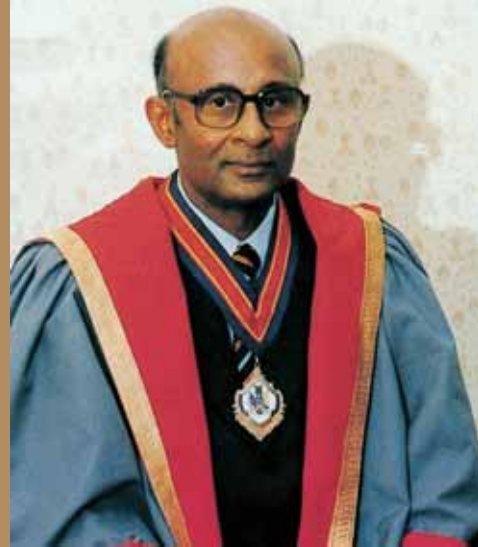


Fourth Master 1961-1964

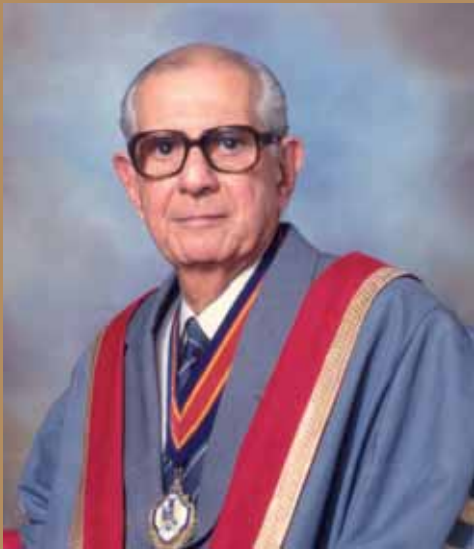
Dr Gwee Ah Leng



Fifth Master 1964-1966
Dr Khoo Oon Teik



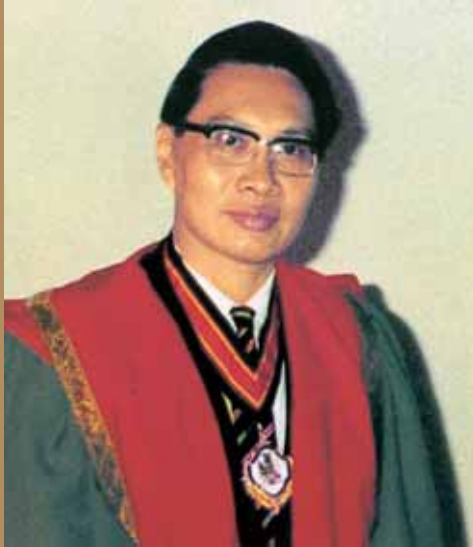
Sixth Master 1966-1968
Dr K Shanmugaratnam



Seventh Master 1968-1970
Dr Yahya Cohen



Eighth Master 1970-1973
Dr Seah Cheng Siang



Ninth Master 1973-1975
Dr Chew Chin Hin



Tenth Master 1975-1978
Dr Robert KC Loh



Eleventh Master 1978-1980
Dr VK Pillay



Twelfth Master 1980-1982
Dr Lim Pin