

Citation on Dr Chew Chin Hin for Admission to Honorary Fellowship, College of Physicians Singapore on 2 July 2005

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Dr Chew Chin Hin, 74 years young this year, is a man for all seasons. His father, the late Dr Benjamin Chew, had himself a distinguished career and contributed much to medicine in Singapore. Anna, his wife, too is a medical doctor, courted from the days in Hong Kong University where he graduated MBBS in 1955, did his surgical house job at Queen Mary's, then returned to Singapore as house physician under Professor Gordon Ransome before proceeding to physician training. Fifty years on in this centennial year of the Medical School, he remains closely associated with the University Department of Medicine. In 1961, he passed the membership exam, climbed the local ranks through Senior Registrar to Consultant and was made foundation Head of Medical Unit IV, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) (which, upon restructuring in 1992, became the present Department of Rheumatology, Allergy and Immunology).

In 1979, he was appointed as Medical Superintendent of TTSH and, 3 years later, moved to the Ministry of Health Headquarters as the Deputy Director of Medical Services, a post he held till retirement in 1991 at age 60 years. For his illustrious and dedicated government service, he was conferred, on National Day in 1982, the Public Administration Gold Medal for his contributions to medicine, research and medical education and, again in 1991, the Long Service Medal.

As a clinician, Cecil, as he is also known as to some childhood friends, his interests were in chest diseases – very much aligned to what TTSH was all about in those years. Tuberculosis (TB) was a threat and he contributed much to TB research conducted in Singapore in his capacity as the Chairman, TB Research Committee, which collaborated with the British Medical Research Council to produce landmark papers on short course chemotherapy regimes which are used as standard therapy today. Publishing first in the *Bulletin of the Union Against TB*, then *Tubercle* and finally the *American Review of Respiratory Diseases*, he detailed the clinical trials and long-term follow-up of Singapore patients given 4- or 6-month continuous regimens or intermittent regimens with 2 or more drugs. His great stature as a result made him most suited to being elected the President of the 26th World Congress on TB and Respiratory Diseases in 1986, and President and Chairman

of the organising committee for the 19th Eastern Region Conference of the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease held in Singapore in 1997. He was also once the President of the Singapore Thoracic Society.

As a physician, he was elected Fellow of the Academy of Medicine in 1963, and climbed through the Council ranks to become Master in 1973; it was he who conferred the Honorary Fellowship on Mr Lee Kuan Yew, then Prime Minister of Singapore. Respected then as he still is today, he served on the Singapore Medical Council from 1972 for 21 years. From 1994 till 2000, he was Chairman of the National Medical Ethics Committee and initiated the Advanced Medical Directive. He also served on the Civil Aviation Medical Board, as member, chairman and advisor from 1982 to 1993. Sought after as an orator, he has delivered the 1st Seah Cheng Siang Lecture in 1991, the 1st TTSH Oration in 1997 and in 1998, the SMA Lecture and was given the SMA Gold Medal.

A roving medical ambassador for Singapore, he has built strong medical relations with physicians in the UK (especially Edinburgh), and with the Australasian, American and Hong Kong Colleges. He was aptly conferred the College Gold Medal by both the Australians and Scots who love him dearly, and also by the Hong Kong College recently – a timely remembrance of his medical roots. Further in 2001, he was awarded Honorary Fellowship of the Hong Kong College of Physicians. In 2002, he was the 1st Gerald Choa Memorial Lecturer at his alma mater in Hong Kong.

Now some 14 years post-retirement, Chin Hin is by no means calling it quits. His contributions to medical education, for which he was already recognised 22 years ago with the Gold Public Administration Medal, have actually increased manifold. He was examiner for BDS, MBBS, M Med, MRCP (Ireland) and the new PACES examinations. At the Division of Graduate Medical Studies, National University of Singapore, he is today its Honorary Postgraduate Advisor, having been the Deputy Director till 2002. His appointments to the Specialist Accreditation Board (Ministry of Health), Specialist Training Committee in Internal Medicine and the Joint Committee on Specialist Training, run until today. He remains Honorary Consultant to the National University Hospital and the Singapore Anti-Tuberculosis Association, and Emeritus Consultant to TTSH. Without his tremendous

efforts in medical education these last 10 years, it is unlikely that the joint physician and paediatrician exams with the UK colleges would have materialised. Earlier this year, he was conferred the 2005 Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Arthritis Foundation for being one of its longstanding Vice-Presidents.

Last but not least, with his vast experience in and extensive networks with local and overseas medical professional and academic organisations, he has played a

pivotal role in guiding the formation of, and contributed to the setting of directions for the College of Physicians, Singapore. Without his valuable advice, the College could have taken a longer route to achieve its goals and objectives.

He is today a happy grandfather and golfer.

I have given you a picture of a doctor par excellence worthy of the Honorary Fellowship of the College of Physicians. Mr President, I present you, Dr Cecil Chew Chin Hin, for conferment of this prestigious award.