

PATH TALK



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

December 2016 Issue

Dear members,

The Golden Jubilee Celebration, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia



The Academy of Medicine celebrated its 50th year in existence this year. The grand celebration was held on 19th-21st August, 2016, at the Shangri-la Hotel Kuala Lumpur. His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, our Royal Patron, officiated the celebration and delivered the Golden Jubilee Oration, on 19th August 2016. The scientific meeting included 50th Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine, 3rd AMM-AMS-HKAM Tripartite Congress of Medicine and 1st Emergency Medicine Annual Scientific (EMAS) Meeting. The theme of the Meeting was “A Multidisciplinary Approach in Strengthening the Chain of Survival”. There were a total of 773 registrants. The Meeting comprised 8 plenaries and 30 concurrent symposia. Dato’ Seri Dr. T.P. Devaraj delivered the 3rd T.J. Danaraj Oration, entitled “Caring – The Continuing Journey”. In this oration, Dr. Devaraj shared his life-long charitable work with cancer patients. The highlight of the social event, Golden Jubilee Gala Dinner, was held on Saturday, 20th August 2016. Past Academy Masters were guests of honour for that night. We thanked them for their contributions in shaping the Academy to its present form. A video montage was presented, to showcase the progress and achievements of the Academy for the past 50 years, with eleven colleges under its umbrella. A commemorative issue that documents past events was also launched during the occasion. The Meeting received tremendous support from the medical and health industry and 57 exhibition booths were taken up.



The Stage Party



The Royal Patron on the stage



Dr. Devaraj after the oration



The launching of the book

(Cont. next page)



Compulsory Acquisition of Academies Land and Building

The celebration to mark the historic 50 years of existence of the Academy has unfortunately been marred by a notice issued under the “Akta Pengambilan Tanah, 1960” to compulsorily acquire the Academies land and building to make way for the construction of the MRT line 2. The Academies have been asked to vacate the site by December 2016. An appeal was made by the Board of Management [BOM] to the high-ups.

Unfortunately, the BOM did not to date receive any positive response. An appeal was made to the Land Office to extend the deadline to vacate the land and the BOM was granted an extension until July 2017. Meanwhile, the BOM has appointed a subcommittee to identify new premises to temporarily house the secretariats of Academy of Medicine of Malaysia, the Academy of Family Practitioners of Malaysia, the specialty colleges of the AMM and the specialty societies. At the same time, the BOM is actively looking for a piece of land for the erection of a permanent purpose-built new Academies Building. The vision is to have a self-sustaining medical hub for the medical specialists.



The Academies Building that will be demolished by July 2017.

Postgraduate Medical Education under the Revised Medical Act

MQA under the **MQA Act** is responsible for accreditation of qualifications. Malaysian Medical Council under the **Revised Medical Act**, to be implemented in July 2017, is responsible for overseeing training of medical undergraduates and postgraduates, as well as accreditation of medical qualifications. In order to harmonise the 2 Acts, a **Joint Technical Committee** which comprises a representative from the MMC, a representative from the MQA and other members recommended by MMC, as provided in the MQA Act, Bab2, Item 51 (1). The MMC will be responsible for the granting and refusal of accreditation of providers of higher medical education (MOH, universities, private professional bodies) [Bab2, item 52. (1)]. The MQA will be responsible for giving the certificate of accreditation which has to be displayed in the premise of the provider. [Bab2, item 52. (2) and item 53. (1)]. The MMC will be responsible for the accreditation for the specialists under the National Specialist Register (NSR). The MMC will be harmonising the training of postgraduate medical training under a **National Postgraduate Committee**, bringing together all providers of higher medical education.

The MMC will be involving the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia in committees to be formed for the implementation of the Revised Medical Act (such as NSR, National Postgraduate Committee, etc.). There will be much work ahead. We call upon all members of CPathAMM to come forward to serve in various committees that are going to be formed in the coming years. The outputs from these committees are going to shape the future landscape of postgraduate medical education in Malaysia.

*With best wishes,
Emeritus Professor Dr. SK Cheong,
President,
18th December 2016.*

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**In the Spotlight: Distinguished Professor Datuk Dr. Looi Lai Meng
Recipient of the 2016 Merdeka Award**

Distinguished Professor Datuk Dr. Looi Lai Meng was recently awarded the 2016 Merdeka Award in the Health, Science and Technology category for outstanding contribution in pioneering research in amyloidosis, renal pathology and cancer pathology and for her significant contributions and role in promoting the field of Pathology in Malaysia and the region. The award ceremony took place on the 8th December 2016 at the Dewan Filharmonik PETRONAS.

Path Talk, on behalf of the College, congratulates Distinguished Professor Datuk Dr. Looi on her outstanding achievement.



Prof. Looi receiving the award from HRH Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, the Sultan of Perak & the Royal Patron of the Merdeka Award Trust.



Prof. Looi (second from right) with other recipients of the 2016 Merdeka Award.



International Pathology Day Celebration
Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, UTAR
15th November 2016

International Pathology Day was first established by the Royal College of Pathologists and the inaugural celebration took place on 5th November 2014. The aims of the International Pathology Day are: (1) To recognise and celebrate the role of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine services in addressing global health challenges and improving health outcomes of communities, and (2) To create wider public awareness on the important role of Pathology in their daily lives. The College of Pathologists, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (CPathAMM) is one of the participating organisations in this yearly event.

This year, the College celebrated the International Pathology Day on 15th November with a seminar on **“Diabetes and Heart Failure”**. This seminar was jointly organised by the **Centre for Research on Non-Communicable Disease, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (CRNCD UTAR)**. The seminar started with opening remarks by the Chairperson of CRNCD, Prof. Dr. Shelly Soo. This was followed by a lecture entitled **“Diabetes and Heart Failure: Can I Help, Sweet Heart?”** by **Prof. Dr. Chim C. Lang**, distinguished speaker of the seminar from Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, Dundee, United Kingdom. In his lecture, Prof. Chim updated the participants on recent advances in the treatment of diabetes and heart failure. In addition, he also shared with the participants his research on the pathophysiology and pharmacogenetics of cardiovascular diseases for the development of treatment strategies in patients with cardiovascular diseases.

Dr. Chin Sze Piaw, consultant cardiologist from Cytopeutics Sdn. Bhd., was also invited to deliver a lecture entitled **“Mesenchymal Stem Cells for Intractable Heart Failure and Critical Limb Ischaemia”**. In his lecture, he presented the results and on-going efforts on the use of mesenchymal stem cells in clinical research and therapy of patients with end-stage cardiomyopathy and critical limb ischaemia in Malaysia. The seminar ended with closing remarks from the President of the CPathAMM and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, UTAR, Emeritus Prof. Dr. Cheong Soon Keng. He also shared with participants a video highlighting the International Pathology Day celebration around the world.

Path Talk, on behalf of the College, would like to thank **Prof. Dr. Shelly Soo**, the Organising Chairperson of the event, and her team of dedicated committee members for their hard work in ensuring the success of this seminar. We would also like to record our appreciation to all the speakers, participants and volunteers for their generous support. Lastly, the College would like to thank the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) for kindly providing the promotional materials for the International Pathology Day 2016.



JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

#IPD2016 #PathologyMatters



@RCPATH_Global



/globalpathology

For further information, please visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/jp8mg6r>

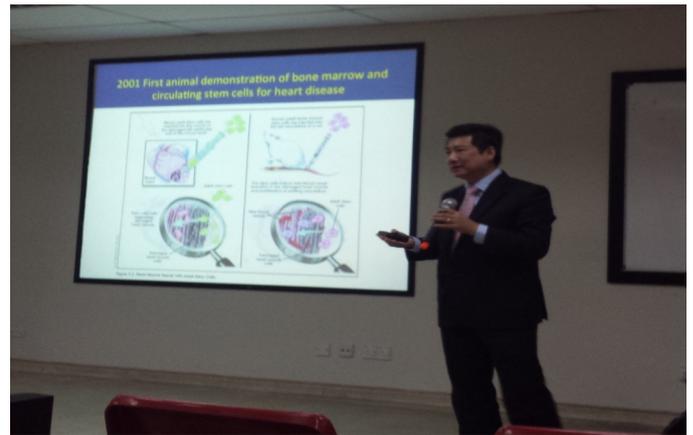
CPathAMM Booth



Opening remarks by Prof. Shelly



Prof. Chim (centre) with Prof. Shelly (left) & Prof. Cheong (right).



Dr. Chin Sze Piaw (Cytopeutics Sdn. Bhd.)



Group photograph



NEWS & EVENTS

The 2016 Dr. Wu-Lien Teh Commemorative Global Symposium & Public Lecture

23rd July 2016

Penang Institute, George Town

Distinguished Professor Datuk Dr. Looi Lai Meng was invited to deliver the 3rd Dr. Wu-Lien Teh Memorial Lecture on **“Science and the Wider Society”**. In her lecture, Prof. Datuk Dr. Looi highlighted the work of the Academies of Sciences and Medicine with a focus on the Inter-Academy Partnership of Health.

5th Malaysia Lymphoma Network Meeting

24th September 2016

Le Meridien Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

The CPathAMM and the Malaysian Society of Haematology jointly organised this meeting with the support of Roche (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd. This one day educational meeting, as part of the Continuing Medical Education (CME), included lectures and case discussions on various types of lymphoma cases. This also provided opportunities for lively interaction and discussion on challenging clinical scenario in the diagnosis and treatment of lymphomas. Two overseas experts were invited for this meeting:

- Prof. Dr. Miles Prince (Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tan Soo Yong (National University of Singapore)

Prof. Miles delivered two lectures on **“DLBCL - New Insights and Approach”** and **“Follicular Lymphoma”**. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tan delivered lectures on **“Research on DLBCL”**, **“Updated WHO Classification of B-cell and T-cell Lymphoma”** and **“FISH Strategies and Application in Lymphoma Diagnosis”**. The meeting also included 6 case studies from various hospitals from around Malaysia.

MINDRAY Diagnostic Update 2016: Congenital Anaemia

13th October 2016

Royal Chulan Damansara Hotel, Petaling Jaya

The CPathAMM, Histocenter (M) Sdn. Bhd. and Mindray Medical (M) Sdn. Bhd. jointly organised this seminar. The objective of this seminar is to introduce the screening methods and expert experience sharing on congenital anaemia such as thalassemia and G6PD deficiency. Thalassemia expert, Prof. Dr. Suthat Fuchearon (Thailand) was the key speaker and delivered two lectures on **“Anaemia Screening Using Full Blood Count Platform: Thalassemia Screening”** and **“Workflow Overview in Diagnosing Thalassemia”**. In addition, local expert Senior Consultant Pathologist, Prof. Datuk Dr. Ainoon Othman also delivered a lecture on **“Overview of G6PD Deficiency Diagnosis in Malaysia”**. The seminar also highlighted a quantification method for the screening of G6PD and sharing of local evaluation studies.

UPCOMING EVENT



MEDLAB Asia Pacific Congress
Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre
6th - 9th February, 2017

This Congress features 11 CME accredited multi-disciplinary conference tracks, offering a holistic approach to the laboratory's role nowadays, in bridging the gap between test utilisation and test interpretation. For further information on the programmes and registration, please visit the following website: <http://www.medlabasia.com/> or email medlabcongress@informa.com for assistance in booking.



**KK Women's and
Children's Hospital**
SingHealth

Inaugural KKH Gynaepath Conference: Concepts and Controversies

The Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, KK Women's & Children's Hospital will be organising the inaugural KKH Gynaepath Conference: Concepts & Controversies from **25th - 26th February 2017** at the KKH Auditorium, KK Women's & Children's Hospital. For further information, please visit www.kkh.com.sg/events.

The 29th World Congress of World Association of Societies of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine WASPALM2017

The 29th World Congress of WASPaLM will be held from 15th - 18th November 2017 at Kyoto International Convention Centre. The Congress is organised in conjunction with the 64th Annual Meeting of Japanese Society of Laboratory Medicine. In Kyoto, recent advances and future directions in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine will be discussed under the theme of the Congress: Contribution to Medical Innovation of the Next-Generation. Registration and abstract submission will be opening by **mid-January 2017** with abstract submission deadline on **mid-May 2017** and early bird registration deadline on **13th September 2017**.

For further information, please visit <http://www.congre.co.jp/waspalm2017/> or email jslm-waspalm2017@congre.co.jp.



CPathAMM membership subscription fee is essential to ensure various education and community outreach activities can be carried for continuous professional development of all members. The College would like to remind all current members to keep up to date in terms of subscription fee payment as action will be taken against the defaulters. To check payment status, kindly email to pathtalk@gmail.com.

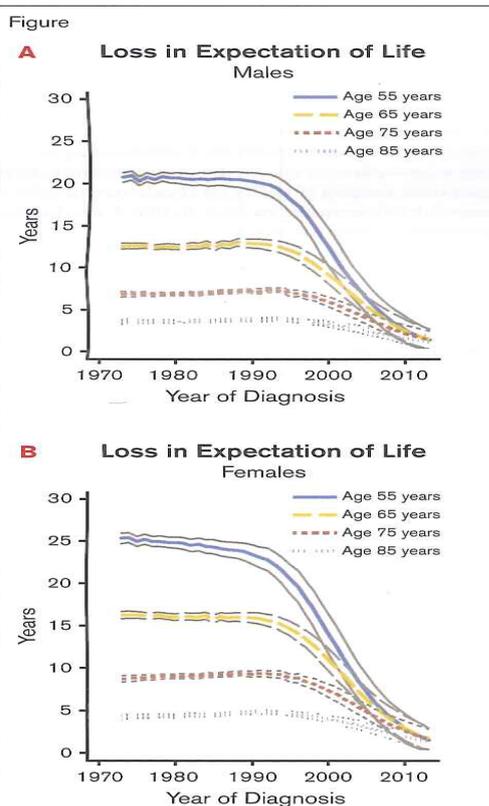


Featured Article: CML No Longer Means Early Death

Bower H, Björkholm M, Dickman PW, et al. Life expectancy of patients with chronic myeloid leukemia approaches the life expectancy of the general population. *J Clin Oncol*. 2016 10.1200/JCO.2015.66.2866 [Epub ahead of print].

Chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) affects approximately one in 100,000 individuals per year and accounts for 15 percent of all new cases of leukemia in the Western Hemisphere. Before the development of targeted therapy with tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKIs), the median survival was five to seven years.¹ CML treatment has changed dramatically over time. Mainstays of medical therapy for CML initially consisted of busulfan or hydroxyurea, followed by interferon- α +/- cytarabine in the 1980s and 1990s; allogeneic transplantation was employed in all phases of the disease.² Imatinib mesylate, the first TKI to specifically target the BCR-ABL1 oncoprotein,³ was introduced into trials in 1998.⁴ Imatinib treatment significantly increased the survival and quality of life for patients of all ages, particularly those in chronic phase.^{5,6} As a result of this and other TKIs, the prevalence of CML continues to rise.⁷ This, along with the current recommendation to continue TKI therapy on a lifelong basis (several trials are evaluating TKI discontinuation in patients who have achieved a durable complete molecular remission), is likely to greatly impact future health-care costs.

To better quantify the magnitude of the survival gain and its meaning to an individual patient, Dr. Hannah Bower and colleagues determined the life expectancy and the number of expected years of life lost in patients diagnosed with CML in Sweden between 1973 and 2013. This population-based study included 2,662 patients diagnosed with CML in the Swedish Cancer Registry who were monitored until death, censoring, or the end of follow-up. As Swedish law requires that every incidence of cancer is reported to the registry, this study captured the majority of patients with CML in Sweden. Additionally, the study design ensured accurate date of death records. The life expectancy and life-years lost were predicted from a flexible parametric-relative survival model and from results from four selected ages at diagnosis – 55, 65, 75, and 85 years. Only CML patients who were 50 years or older were included in the analysis to optimize the accuracy of the life-years-lost calculation.



Loss in expectation of life (LEL) in patients with chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) in Sweden over years of diagnosis by age and sex. LEL is the difference between the life expectancy of the CML population and that in a matched subset of the general population. LEL for all ages at diagnosis in 2010 was less than three years.

Reprinted with permission. © 2016 American Society of Clinical Oncology. All rights reserved. Bower, H et al: *J Clin Oncol* (Life Expectancy of Patients With Chronic Myeloid Leukemia Approaches the Life Expectancy of the General Population) 10.1200/JCO.2015.66.2866.

The life expectancy of the general Swedish population increased throughout the follow-up period. The life expectancy of the patients with CML of all ages increased dramatically between 1990 and 2013. A diagnosis of CML in 1990 in a 55-year-old woman on average reduced her life expectancy by 24.9 years (95% CI, 24.3-25.6), whereas a diagnosis in 2010 for the same woman reduced her life expectancy by only 2.9 years (95% CI, 1.2 to 4.6). The largest increase in life expectancy, and thus the largest decrease in years of life lost, was seen in younger patients, even though older patients also showed a benefit (Figure). Patients diagnosed in 2010 on average lost less than three years of their life due to their diagnosis, and the life expectancy of patients diagnosed with CML in 2013 approached that of the general population.

The authors suggest that the increased life expectancy data and timing of its development in different age groups reflected in part that imatinib mesylate was approved as second-line CML treatment in Sweden in 2001 and first-line treatment in 2002, and that its use in younger patients predated its use in older patients. They further speculated that as the life expectancy of CML patients of all ages improved prior to 2001, improvements in survival of patients with CML over the years cannot completely be attributable to the introduction of TKIs.

A major limitation of this study is that it lacks information on treatments, comorbidities, and cause of death (whether due to progressive disease, cardiovascular events, or secondary malignancies), thus precluding numerous potentially interesting analyses such as the impact of specific variables on life expectancy and life-years lost as a result of CML. A major strength of this study is that it provides population-based information. Additionally, the results are given in patient and provider-centered statistics. From the patient and clinician's perspective, life expectancy and life-years lost are arguably more meaningful endpoints than many surrogate endpoints commonly employed in CML clinical trials such as complete cytogenetic remission, major molecular remission, or early molecular response.

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3. Druker BJ, Tamura S, Buchdunger E, et al. Effects of a selective inhibitor of the Abl tyrosine kinase on the growth of Bcr-Abl positive cells. *Nat Med*. 1996;2:561-566.
4. Druker BJ, Talpaz M, Resta DJ, et al. Efficacy and safety of a specific inhibitor of the BCR-ABL tyrosine kinase in chronic myeloid leukemia. *N Engl J Med*. 2001;344:1031-1037.
5. O'Brien SG, Guilhot F, Larson RA, et al. Imatinib compared with interferon and low-dose cytarabine for newly diagnosed chronic-phase chronic myeloid leukemia. *N Engl J Med*. 2003;348:994-1004.
6. Druker BJ, Guilhot F, O'Brien SG, et al. Five-year follow-up of patients receiving imatinib for chronic myeloid leukemia. *New Engl J Med*. 2006;355:2408-2417.
7. Huang X, Cortes J, Kantarjian H. Estimations of the increasing prevalence and plateau prevalence of chronic myeloid leukemia in the era of tyrosine kinase inhibitor therapy. *Cancer*. 2012;118:3123-3127.