

Annual Report 2009/ 2010
The College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka
(Incorporated by Parliamentary Act No. 18 of 1999)

1. 14th Annual Academic Sessions of the College

The fourteenth Annual Academic Sessions of the College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka (CCPSL) was held from the 9th to 12th September 2009 at the Hotel Taj Samudra, Colombo 3. The inauguration ceremony was held on the 9th September 2009. The chief guest was Dr. Ferdosi Rustom Mehta, WHO Representative for Sri Lanka. Dr Sujatha Samarakoon, Dr Dula de Silva, Dr. Pushpa Jayawardana and Dr E. Sundaralingam were awarded Fellowships of the College in recognition of their outstanding services to the field of Community Medicine in Sri Lanka. Dr Janaki Vidanapathirana, Dr. Deepika Attygale, Dr Chrisantha Abeyasena and Dr. Paba Palihawadana, read the respective citations. The Secretary, Dr. Nalika Gunawardena proposed the vote of thanks. The ceremony ended with a reception.

A pre-congress workshop was held prior to the academic sessions on the 9th September 2009 at the Computer Centre, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya on searching for the best evidence: Hands-on workshop for Community Physicians. It was conducted by Dr Kumara Mendis of the University of Sydney, New South Wales

Academic sessions commenced on the 10th September 2009, at the Hotel Taj Samudra with a Symposium on improving neonatal care to achieve MDG 4. Dr Chithramale de Silva, Consultant Community Physician (CCP), Family Health Bureau (FHB) opened the symposium by presenting an introductory presentation on “What is MDG 4 and where are we” which was followed by presentations from Dr. Dhammika Rowel, CCP of the FHB on newborn care programmes in Sri Lanka and from Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena on recent advances to meet the challenges to improve neonatal care. Dr Ayesha Lokubalasooriya, CCP, FHB presented the public health programmatic issues in relation to achieving MDG 4. This was followed by guest lectures on the influenza pandemic by Dr Suzanne Westman and fertility change and its implications on maternal and child health by Dr Loshan Moonasinghe, CCP, FHB and current status of maternal mortality in Sri Lanka: challenges for future by Deepika Attygalle, CCP, FHB. In the evening on the 10th September 2009, fifteen free papers were presented with poster presentations during the lunch break.

The oral presentations were as follows:

- Alcohol and tobacco use in two districts in Sri Lanka
De Silva V, Samarasinghe D, Gunawardena N
- Prevalence of asthma and comparison of ventilator capacity of asthmatics and non asthmatics among workers in selected garment factories
Abeyasena C, Jayawardana P, Wickramasinha W.P.K, Dassanayake I.S

- Knowledge and practices on selected non communicable diseases among GCE A/L students in state schools, Maharagama
Gamage A.U, Jayawardana P
- Effectiveness of rabies control strategies on reducing incidence of human rabies in Sri Lanka
Kumarapeli V, Awerbuch-Friedlander T
- Deaths due to liver diseases in Sri Lanka: A comparison with selected countries in the world
E.J.M.P. De Silva
- Age, Sex and Hyperlipidemia: Is it a simple association?
Pathmeswaren A, Pinidiyapathirage J, Kasturiratne A, Wickremasinghe A.R
- Risk factors for knee osteoarthritis in adults aged more than 50 years
Namali H. J. P., Fonseka P.
- Prevalence of carcinogenic human papilloma virus infection and its determinants among ever married women in the district of Gampaha
Gamage, D.G. , Rajapaksa, L. C. , Abeyasinghe M.R.N.
- RTA related to three wheelers registered in urban Council, Panadura: Characteristics of three wheeler drivers and associated factors
Sampath H.M.R.C., Fonseka P.
- Factors related to timing of first contact with an allopathic medical practitioner, among patients presenting with symptoms of breast cancer in a selected hospital
Kumari P.B.V.R, Goonewardena C.S.E
- Knowledge and practices of mothers regarding selected aspects of sexual abuse of adolescents in the MOH area, Udubaddawa
Jayawardana P, Makawita M.U.M.
- Knowledge and attitudes on HIV/AIDS and sexual behavior among male soldiers in Sri Lanka Army
Semage S.N, Samarakoon S.
- Knowledge of the school teacher regarding the School Health Program and School Health Promotion in Negombo MOH area
Dabrera T.M.E, Gunawarden C.S.E
- The quality of reporting of case-control studies published in selected Sri Lankan medical journals
Abeyseena C, Poddalgoda I
- Quality of ambulance care available for transfer of emergency patients to the National Hospital of Sri Lanka
Abeyseena C, Nandasena L.G.S

On the 11th September 2009 Annual Academic Sessions commenced with a symposium on nutrition. The keynote address was delivered by Dr Dianne Stevens on Global Challenges in Nutrition followed by a presentation on child malnutrition: is it a problem in Sri Lanka by Dr Sudharshani Fernandopulle, CCP, FHB. The final presentation in the symposium was made on community based innovative interventions by Dr Haritha Aluthge. Following the symposium there were three presentations on case studies namely spending on drugs: have we got it right?, implementation of Bio Sand Filter Project in Gamagoda, Kalutara MOH area with community participation and experience of a school based dengue control programme in the Colombo Municipal Council area. This was followed by a field report on IDP sites. The Guest Lecture was delivered by Dr. Kumara Mendis on new trends in evidence based practice. The afternoon symposium was on continuous professional development. Dr Sunil Senevirathne Epa presented an over view of national CPD programme for Sri Lankan doctors which was followed by presentations by Dr V. Murali, CCP on portfolio and by Dr Rasika Rampatige, CCP on current status of the CPD programme of the CCPSL.

In the evening on the 11th September 2009, nine free papers were presented with poster viewing during the lunch break.

The oral presentations were as follows:

- Rapid assessment of nutritional status and maternal child health services provided tot the pregnant mothers and the under five children among internally displaced people in Vavuniya
Ruwanpathirana T. , Shantha G.G.N.
- Selected factors associated with primary sub-fertility and it's consequences
Herath I.N.S., Sivayogam S.
- Quality and Parental Satisfaction on Care Provided by Child Care Centre's in Kandy Municipal Council Area
Navaratna_W.M.S.N.K, Senerath U.
- Knowledge ,attitudes and practices of caregivers on selected factors in the Revised Child Health Development Record (CHDR) in the district of Monaragala
Shantha G.G.N.,Fernandopulle S
- Knowledge and practices on selected aspects of maternal health and newborn care among postpartum mothers attending Child Welfare Clinics in MOH area Kaduwela in Colombo district.
Nilaweera R.I.W and Galappaththy G.N.L
- Male Participation in Promoting selected Psychosocial Aspects of Early Childhood Care for Development in the Nugegoda Medical Officer of Health area
Fernandopulle S, Lokuketagoda B. U. W. P

- Anal incontinence in postpartum period: a community based cross sectional study.
Rajeshkannan N, Pathmeswaran A
- Breastfeeding Performance Index: a composite index to describe overall breastfeeding performance among infants under 6 months of age
Senarath U, Dibley M. J., Agho K. E
- Prolonged breastfeeding reduces risk of breast cancer in Sri Lanka women: a Case-control study
De Silva M, Senarath U, Gunatilake M and Lokuhetty D

The symposium on the third day of the Annual Academic Sessions was on Non Communicable Diseases. The keynote address was delivered by Dr Norihiro J-Kato on variations in the incidence of CVD in Asia and steps to contain epidemics. Dr Janani Pinidiaypathirage made a presentation on findings of Ragama Health Study followed by a presentation on Cancer Registry by Dr Anuradhini Kasturiratne.

Five free papers were presented on day 3 of the Annual Academic Sessions.

The oral presentations were as follows:

- Fine particle air pollution due to secondhand smoke in selected public places of Sri Lanka
Nandasena Y.L.S., Wickremasinghe A.R., Lee K., Sathiakumar N.
- Prevalence and correlates of occupational stress among middle level managers in domestic commercial banks in the Colombo district.
Suraweera S.A.I.K, Seneviratne R De A/, Herath H.M.S.S.D
- Psychosocial status of the spouses of enforced disappeared men in the district of Hambantota
Rangani W.P.T, Goonewardena C.S.E
- Characteristics of mental status among medical students practicing and not practicing meditation
Silva J.P & Gunathunga M.W
- Knowledge and practices of solid waste management among chief female occupants of Medical Officer of Health area Yatiyantota.
Jayasinghe D.U.C.J, Goonewardena C.S.E

The following posters were displayed.

- Practices to prevent chronic complications of Diabetes Mellitus among diabetic patients attending clinics in Provincial General Hospital, Ratnapura
Perera W L S P , Tissera P A D, Fernando T E I

- Prevalence of knee osteoarthritis among adults aged >50 years in the district of Colombo
Namali H. J. P., Fonseka P, Guanathilake N.
- Reproductive Tract Infections among the reproductive aged women in low socioeconomic communities of urban Colombo
Herath S., Fonseka P, Samarakoon S.
- Television viewing, academic performance and participation in nonacademic activities among adolescent school children in the Educational Division, Maharagama
Thenuwara, N.V.J, Gunawardena, N
- Measuring disability: modifying and adapting Stanford Health Assessment Questionnaire Disability Scale
Seneviwickrama K.L.M.D. Weerasinghe M.C
- Development and validation of an instrument to identify patients with knee osteoarthritis in the community
Namali H. J. P., Fonseka P, Guanathilake N.
- Socio-demographic characteristics and principal cooking fuel type in Sri Lanka: Analysis of data of the Demographic and Health Surveys
Nandasena Y.L.S., Wickremasinghe A.R, Sathiakumar N.
- A review on contributory factors to role strain among working mothers
Nilaweera R.I.W, Jayawardana P
- Availability of facilities and equipment in ambulances that provide care in pre hospital set up
Abeyseena C., Nandasena L G S
- The attitudes and practices, regarding pre hospital care and emergency medicine, among ambulance drivers and minor employees accompany patients in ambulances
Abeyseena C., Nandasena L G S,
- Admission patterns and completeness of documentation in Accident and Emergency Unit of a Sri Lankan hospital for children
Kumarendran B, Kumanan T.
- Knowledge, attitude and practices of doctors at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka on screening and management of alcohol misuse among patients
Nagodavithana K.C., Gunawardena N.

Prize for the best paper on Epidemiology

Prevalence of carcinogenic human papilloma virus infection and its determinants among ever married women in the district of Gampaha

Gamage, D.G. , Rajapaksa, L. C. , Abeysinghe M.R.N.

Prize for the best paper on Maternal and Child Health

Breastfeeding Performance Index: a composite index to describe overall breastfeeding performance among infants under 6 months of age

Senarath U., Dibley M. J., Agho K. E

Prize for the best paper on General Public Health

Fine particle air pollution due to secondhand smoke in selected public places of Sri Lanka

Nandasena Y.L.S., Wickremasinghe A.R., Lee K., Sathiakumar N.

Prize for the best poster presentation

Admission patterns and completeness of documentation in Accident and Emergency Unit of a Sri Lankan hospital for children

Kumarendran B, Kumanan T.

The judges for oral presentations and posters were, Dr. Palitha Abeyakoon, Dr Paba Palihawadena, Prof. S. Sivayogam,, Prof L. Rajapaksa, Dr Dula de Silva, Dr C. de Silva, Dr U Senerath, Prof. Pathmeswaran, Dr. Samitha Ginige

The Induction of the New President was held at the Auditorium of the HNB Tower on 1st October 2009 . The chief guest was Dr Athula Kahandaliyanage.

2. 14th Annual General Meeting of the College

The Annual General Meeting was held immediately after the Scientific Sessions and was chaired by Prof. A.R. Wickremasinghe.

The following members were appointed as office bearers for the year 2009/2010.

President	Dr. Sujatha Samarakoon
President Elect	Dr. Rabindra R. Abeyasinghe
Vice President	Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne
Immediate Past President	Prof. A. R. Wickremasinghe
Secretary	Dr. Gawrie N. L Galappaththy
Treasurer	Dr. Samitha Ginige
Asst. Secretary,	Dr. Deepika Attygalle
Editor	Dr. Wasantha Gunathunga

Ex officio
Council

Dr. Nalika Gunawardena
Dr. H.M.S.S.D. Herath
Prof.Pushpa Jayawardana
Dr. Deepthi Perera
Dr. Paba Palihawadana
Dr. A. Balasuriya
Dr. Janaki Vidanapathirana
Dr. V. Murali
Dr. Risintha Premaratne
Dr. S.M. Arnold
Dr. Rasika Rampatige
Co-Opted
Dr Anoma Jayathilake
Dr Hasitha Tissera
Dr. Prasantha De Silva
Dr Kapila Jayarathne
Dr Vindya kumarapeli

3.0 Activities for the year 2009/2010

3.1 Council meetings

During the term 2009/2010, 13 Council meetings (including a one emergency Council meeting) were held and the attendance of Council members at the meetings is given below:

Name	Attended	Excused	Absent
Dr. Sujatha Samarakoon	12	1	0
Dr. Rabindra R. Abeyasinghe	7	6	0
Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne	7	5	1
Prof. A. R. Wickremasinghe	5	4	4
Dr. Gawrie N. L Galappaththy	11	2	0
Dr. Samitha Ginige	12	1	0
Dr. Deepika Attygalle	6	6	1
Dr. Wasantha Gunathunga	1	3	9
Dr. Nalika Gunawardena	9	3	1
Dr Anoma Jayathilake	2	3	8
Dr Hasitha Tissera	8	1	4
Dr Kapila Jayarathne	6	5	2
Dr. H.M.S.S.D. Herath	12	0	1
Dr. Pushpa Jayawardana	10	2	1
Dr. Deepthi Perera	1	1	11
Dr. Paba Palihawadana	5	5	3
Dr. A. Balasuriya	7	2	4
Dr. Janaki Vidanapathirana	9	2	2
Dr. V. Murali	8	2	3
Dr. Risintha Premaratne	8	3	2
Dr. S.M. Arnold	9	2	2
Dr. Rasika Rampatige	3	7	3

Dr Prashantha de Silva	7	2	4
Dr Vindya Kumarapeli	12	0	1

3.2 Continuous Professional Development activities

The College conducted several Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities during the year.

Young Community Physicians' Forum

The following sessions of the Young Community Physicians' Forum were held:

- Learning outcomes of grade one students and their nutritional status by Dr N. Waidyathilake
- Getting research into practice: Healthy school bag campaign in Sri Lanka by Dr Kapila Jayaratne
- Contraceptive methods – now and for the future by Dr Loshan Munasinghe
- Medical certification of cause of deaths in Sri Lanka by Dr Saman Gamage
- Pandemic Preparedness plan by Dr V Murali
- Why do we need a Population Based Cancer Registry? By Dr Anuradhani Kasturiratne
- Commencing Population Based Cancer Registry in Colombo District Dr Suraj Perera

Guest lectures

The following guest lecture was organized by the College during this year. The details are given below.

- 20th October 2009 – Dr Harold Margolis, Director, Paediatric Dengue vaccine Initiative, IVI, Seoul on challenges in dengue diagnostics and vaccine development

3.3 Joint Activities

Symposium on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD)

A symposium was jointly organized by the NCD Unit, Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition, the Ceylon College of Physicians, Faculty of Public Health UK and the College of Community Physicians, Sri Lanka. It was held on Saturday, 30 January 2010 at the SLMA Auditorium.

The objectives of the symposium were:

1. To understand the prevention and control of NCDs in developed countries.

2. To recognize the role of other professional organizations in the prevention and control of NCDs in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka
3. To publicize the initiatives taken by the NCD Unit, Ministry of Health for prevention and control of NCDs in Sri Lanka

Four guest speakers delivered lectures on the following topics, followed by discussions:

1. Vascular time bomb: the UK perspective - Prof. Maryon Davis, President, UK Faculty of Public Health

The presentation mainly highlighted the UK health system and the structure, the UK smoking reduction strategy, the national obesity strategy, national diabetes initiatives and the NHS Health Check.

(The UK Faculty of Public Health - Currently a Faculty of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the UK and the officially recognised standard-setting body for PH specialists in the UK.)

2. Primary - tertiary care partnership in tackling the problem of NCD in Sri Lanka - the role of the Ceylon College of Physicians - Prof. Chandrika Wijeyrathna, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine, Colombo, Chairperson of the NCD Subcommittee of the SLMA and Convenor- NIROGI Lanka Project, DPTF, SLMA

3. Managing Long-term conditions: using quality to improve outcomes - Dr Latha Hapugoda, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, NHS, Hounslow, UK

The presentation mainly highlighted the UK Initiatives, strategy for improved quality on diabetes care, and quality and outcomes framework with particular emphasis on diabetes, hypertension, CHD and explored the applicability of the quality and outcome framework (QOF) and NICE guidance to the SL scenario

4. National Policy on NCD prevention and control in Sri Lanka : facing future challenges - Dr. Vindya Kumarapeli, Consultant Community Physician, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Unit, Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition

The presentation mainly highlighted the initiatives taken by the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka including the national policy on NCD prevention and control, its main strategies and the current projects that pilot some of the strategies identified in the national policy.

3.4. 10th South East Asia Regional Scientific meeting of the International Epidemiological Association(IEA)

IEA conference was held in Sri Lanka from 23rd -26th May 2010 in Colombo. The co-chairs were Prof A.R Wickremasinghe and Dr Sujatha Samarakoon. Dr Janaki Vidanapathira and Dr Nalika Gunawardena were the secretary and treasurer respectively. The meeting was organized by the College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka in partnership with the International Epidemiological Association and South East Asia Regional councilor of IEA.

The theme of the meeting was "Epidemiological Methods in Evidence Based Healthcare". The conference consisted of pre-conference sessions, plenary sessions, symposia and oral and poster presentations on a wide range of public health topics.

The IEA Conference focused on key challenges, strengths and opportunities in the region to utilize evidence based health care and in improving quality of life.

Objectives of the 10th SEARSM-IEA were as follows:

- To share experiences of public health specialists in the region
- To exchange evidence in good epidemiologic practice and to enhance its capacity
- To strengthen networking and collaboration of epidemiologic research and practice in the region
- To utilize epidemiological principles and methods to support Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially those related to health

The Conference was officially inaugurated with the patronage of the Guest of honor Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, Hon. Minister of Health. Welcome Address was given by Dr. Sujatha Samarakoon, Co-Chair, 10th SEARSM-IEA. Prof. Vinod K Srivastava, IEA Regional Councilor welcomed the gathering on behalf of the International Epidemiological Association. ‘Beyond the Delhi Declaration on Epidemiology’ statement was delivered by Dr. Firdosi Rustom Mehta, WHO representative for Sri Lanka. Two special lectures were delivered by Prof. Jorn Olsen Past President, IEA on “Challenges and opportunities for epidemiologists in the next decade” and Prof. Rajitha Wickremasinghe Co Chair, 10th SEARSM-IEA on ‘Clinical Epidemiology: The key to revitalizing Primary Health Care’.

Prior to the inauguration following pre-conference sessions were held:

<p>Pre Conference Sessions -1 Trusting the evidence: a practical workshop on critical issues in the design, conduct, reporting and synthesis of studies on the effects of interventions in healthcare Conducted by Dr. Prathap Tharyan, Director, South Asian Cochrane Network & Centre and Dave Sinclair, South Asian Cochrane Network & Centre</p>	<p>Pre Conference Session- 2 Improving nutrition in Asia to help achieve MDGs Organized by The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka and the National Nutrition Alliance</p>
<p>Pre Conference Session -3 Workplace health promotion setting approach- Sri Lankan Evidence</p>	<p>Pre Conference Session – 4 The Trauma Secretariat 4th anniversary Congress</p>

Organized by Plan International	
Pre Conference Sessions – 5 How to get your research published: better writing skills Conducted by Prof: Shah Ebrahim, Department of Public Health, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine , UK	Pre Conference Sessions- 6 Navigation to Cochrane library Conducted by Dr. Prathap Tharyan, Director, South Asian Cochrane Network & Centre

Plenary sessions were delivered by the following world renowned speakers.

Theme: Meeting the challenges of emerging health problems in South East Asia

1. “The Global Spread of Dengue/Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever: Current Trends and Prospects for the Future” Duane J Gubler, Director, Program on Emerging Infectious Disease, Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, Singapore, and Asian Pacific Institute of Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases University of Hawaii, Honolulu
2. Can Asian Countries halt and reverse the AIDS epidemic by 2015?
Mr Prasada Rao, Special Advisor to Executive Director UNAIDS
3. Epidemiological trends in Japan and Asia
Dr.Toshihiko Hasegawa, and Chairman, Department of Health Policy & Management, Nippon Medical School, Tokyo, Japan
- 4 Current situation and lessons learnt from Pandemic Influenza H1N1
Dr. Madhu Ghimire, Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology Unit (ARI/CDD), Department of Communicable Diseases, WHO-SEARO

Theme: Vision for the region in achieving Millennium Development Goals

1. Achieving MDGs in South Asia : Equity perspective
Dr . Genevieve Begkoyian, Regional Advisor (Child Survival & Development) UNICEF
2. Migration Agenda - Recent Progress and ways forward
Dr. Davide Mosca, Head of Health (Global), International Organization of Migration
3. Risk of myocardial infarction and stroke among Asians
Dr Norihiro Kato, Dept. of Gene Diagnostics and Therapeutics, Research Institute, National Center for Global Health and Medicine, Toyama, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo,JAPAN

Theme: Translation of evidence in to practice

1. Translating evidence into chronic disease management
Prof Michael Abramson, Professor of Clinical Epidemiology & Deputy Head, Department of Epidemiology & Preventive Medicine, Monash University
2. Improving Access to Health Services in South East Asia
Prof Vinod K Srivastava, IEA Regional Councillor- South East Asian Region, Professor of Social and Preventive Medicine, King George Medical University, Lucknow, India,
3. Managing musculoskeletal pain: from epidemiological evidence to improving outcome for patients

Prof Gary J Macfarlane, Professor of Epidemiology and Deputy Head of Institute of Applied Health Sciences, Epidemiology Group, Institute of Applied Health Sciences, University of Aberdeen

4. Methodological Problems in Measuring Health Impacts of Community Water Supply Programs - Experience from the Jhansi (India) Health Impact Study.

Prof Babu L. Verma, Professor of Bio Statistics, Maharani Laxmi Bai Medical College & Hospital, India

Curative and preventive health care professionals, researchers, decision-makers and students from key disciplines, institutions and networks presented research outcomes and practical experiences under the following tracks. (as oral or poster presentations).

<p>Track A - Health Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health policy research • Evidenced based healthcare • Climate change 	<p>Track C - Clinical and Field Epidemiology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infectious disease • Non-communicable diseases • Epidemiological modeling • Surveillance of diseases forecasting • Biostatistics
<p>Track B - Reducing Morbidity and Mortality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennium Development Goals • HIV/AIDS • Domestic violence • Mental health • Maternal neonatal and child health • Neglected tropical diseases 	<p>Track D - Injury Epidemiology & Rehabilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability care • Injury and prevention • Occupational and environmental health

Nine symposia addressed various important health problems in the region. These were organized by both local and international agencies. Both local and international eminent speakers presented the latest evidence in the field of public health. The following were the themes of these symposia and the institution/agency which organized it.

- Capacity building for evidence based health care -Organized by LANKAPHEIN, Sri Lanka
- Managing Natural Disasters and Complex Emergencies :Epidemiological Approach - Organized by Disaster Management Unit, Ministry of Health care and Nutrition, Sri Lanka
- An evidence based approach to Tuberculosis control -Organized by National Programme for Tuberculosis Control & Chest Diseases. Sri Lanka
- Success of Malaria control in Sri Lanka -Organized by Anti Malaria Campaign Sri Lanka
- Translation of Research into Policy and Program: The INCLLEN Experience - Organized by INCLLEN
- Migration Health: Challenges and Perspectives in Asia Jointly Organized by - International organization of the Migration (IOM- Sri Lanka) and the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka

- Sexual and Reproductive Health: Our challenges for the New Millennium -Organized by Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka
- Strengthening Health Systems- Organized by 10th SERSM -IEA
- Global and national systems available to ensure vaccine safety: prequalification process, post marketing surveillance and causality assessment -Organized by SEARO WHO & Epidemiological Unit, Ministry of Health Sri Lanka

In addition, to the above symposia , four evening symposia were conducted to cover emerging health topics relevant to Sri Lanka. These were targeted on invited Sri Lankan practitioners, researchers and policy makers and aimed at to updating them with new evidence and best practices. Relevant participants were invited to participate. The themes of these symposia were as follows:

- Delhi Declaration on Epidemiology: Beyond Delhi to Sri Lanka -Organized by The College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka and WHO – Sri Lanka
- Mapping at risk populations for HIV: A success story of better partnerships - Organized by UNAIDS & World Bank
- Nutrition Epidemiology: The Paradox in South Asia Organized By - UNICEF, Sri Lanka
- Grand challenges in NCD Prevention and Control in South East Asia Region -Organized By NCD unit Ministry of Health

A special session on ‘Management of Adverse Events Following Immunization and Risk Communication in Sri Lanka and the Region’ was organized jointly by WHO SEARO and Epidemiological unit, Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka, as a part of this scientific meeting. Furthermore delegates were updated through various conference stalls which were funded by various institutions.

Total number of participants for the 10th SEARSM-IEA were 580. Of the total, 149 were foreign participants and 431 were local participants. The conference organizers were able to provide full and partial scholarships for 82 foreign participants. Free registration was given for 37 Community Medicine post graduate trainees and 9 other local delegates. All registered delegates were given the opportunity to access the Cochrane library for period of 1 month.

Numerous agencies helped this scientific meetings by providing sponsorships and by contributing voluntarily to organize activities. Many professionals from various intuitions/directorates of Ministry of Health and faculties of medicine gave enormous support in organizing this Conference.

3.5 Revision Course in Community Medicine

A revision course in Community Medicine was conducted in July/August 2010 for medical officers interested in updating their knowledge in Community Medicine particularly for those sitting for the selection Examination for MSc Community Medicine. Seventy six medical officers attended the course. The Council thanks all resource persons who assisted in CPD activities. We solicit your cooperation in future activities as well.

4.0 Journal of the College of Community physicians of Sri Lanka

Volume 15 No. (1) of the Journal was released. The Council thank the editor and the editorial board and all the contributors to the journal.

5.0 Orations

The College Oration for 2009 was delivered by Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne on ‘Caring for the internally displaced: A personal journey of a Community Physician’ on 9th September, 2009

6.0 Issues in the Public Health Service

Appointment of Consultant Community Physicians

Appointments of Consultant Community Physicians were delayed as the Medical Services Minutes had to be amended to include the specialized public health institutions as end stations. The Public Services Commission was of the view that since there was an ongoing court case challenging the current marking scheme on specialist transfers, the sanction of the Supreme Court be obtained to amend the Medical Services Minute and to get the advice of the Attorney Generals Department in this regard. The ministry Legal Officer and DDG (PHS)I had a discussion with the Deputy Solicitor General and at the meeting he advised the ministry to amend the Medical Services Minutes as the ongoing court case was on an entirely different issue and it had no bearing on gazetting the end posts.

With the Attorney Generals sanction end stations were gazetted on 30.11.2010 and the ministry advertised 42 end posts and 28 transferable posts. Selections were finalized and appointments were made with effect from 19.05.2010

Appointments to the Deputy Medical Administrative Grade

Deputy Medical Administrative Grade (DMAG) was created by an amendment to the Medical Services Minute on 17.04.2007. The ministry of health took no steps to advertise the posts in the DMAG even though the College took up this issue with the ministry officials on several occasions. Since our membership was denied the right to embark on a career in Medical Administration, the College decided that it should petition the Supreme Court and obtain redress. The College instituted legal action in the Supreme Court seeking an order to advertise the posts in the DMAG. President’s Counsel Mr Anil Silva appeared on behalf of the College. The

Supreme Court allowed the application and ordered the ministry of health to advertise the posts immediately. The ministry thereafter advertised the posts in October 2009 , held interviews in Feb 2010 and published the interim list of selections.

As these appointments are considered as promotions and is a creation of a new grade the approval of the cabinet of ministers should be obtained since the functions of the Public Service Commission are now vested with the cabinet. The process of submitting the cabinet paper by the ministry took almost four months after repeated reminders by the College and ultimately a cabinet paper was submitted on 04.08.2010. The cabinet had referred the matter to the Cabinet Subcommittee and the Cabinet Subcommittee had queried why certain candidates who applied have not been given posts. This had arisen since the ministry had submitted a list with all candidates who applied for the DMAG posts instead of submitting the name list of the selected candidates for whose appointments the cabinet approval is needed. The official who represented the ministry was unable to explain to the cabinet subcommittee that certain applicants were not given posts as the posts they applied had been filled by applicants higher up in the merit list. Due to the negligence of the ministry the appointments would be further delayed until the ministry submits clarifications to the cabinet, taken up again in the cabinet subcommittee and referred back to the cabinet where final approval would be given. The President of the College of CCP has written to the Hon Minister of Health and the Secretary of this grave injustice.

Meeting with the Hon Minister of Health & Secretary, Ministry of Health

The College of Community Physicians held a meeting with the Secretary, Ministry of Health, on 31st May 2010 and with the Hon Minister of Health on 02nd June 2010 to discuss the issues in the public health service. Following issues were taken up for discussion

- Appointments to the Deputy Medical Administrative Grade
- Acting appointments to administrative posts to be done in a transparent manner by calling applications
- Advertising of all vacant Medical Administrative posts
- Withdrawal of Circular No: 01-10/2010 issued by Secretary, Ministry of Health, Making appointments to the Administrative Grade by submitting Cabinet Memorandums
- Assigning the NCD Unit, and the Mental Health Unit, under a DDG (Public Health Services)
- Job functions/Duties of Consultant Community Physicians
- Streamlining the award of Fellowships
- Representation of Public Health in the National Health Advisory Council

During the meeting it was pointed out that there is an undue delay in making appointments to the Deputy Administrative Grade even after the selections have been finalized. The Secretary, Ministry of Health, agreed to expedite the process.

The College raised the issue of making acting appointments to administrative grade posts in a haphazard non transparent manner. It was highlighted that Medical Officers with MSc Medical Administration are appointed to these posts depriving the rights of Medical Officers with qualifications in Community Medicine. The College requested when making acting appointments they should be advertised and appointments be made on an agreed point scheme giving equal opportunities for medical officers with Community Medicine and Medical Administration qualifications.

It was pointed out that many senior administrative grade posts such as Director NCD, Director Training and DDG posts are vacant and the ministry should take immediate steps to advertise these posts and make permanent appointments with officers in the Senior Medical Administrative Grade. Recently the DDG (Laboratory Services) post which was vacant for almost three years was advertised and interviews were held.

The former Secretary, Ministry of Health, had issued a circular (Circular No: 01-10/2010 dated 15.02.2010) giving opportunity for medical officers following the MSc Medical Administration to apply for Deputy & Senior Administrative Grade posts. The College pointed out that this is illegal as a medical officer to be eligible to apply for a Deputy Medical Administrative Grade post he/she should have a PG qualification and PG trainees without a PG qualification is not eligible to apply. Secretary, Ministry of Health, too agreed that the circular was irregular and undertook to cancel it.

The College brought to the notice of the Hon Minister that a certain Administrative Grade appointment in the ministry had been made in an irregular non transparent manner by obtaining cabinet appointment without advertising that post. The College pointed out that all appointments to the Deputy, Senior and DDG grade should be made as per the provisions of the Medical Services Minute. The College revealed that it was made to understand that there are moves to make appointments to the administrative grades by submitting cabinet memorandums to suit individual needs of the Health Ministry hierarchy and this move should not be allowed.

The College was of the view that the NCD Unit, and the Mental Health Unit should be assigned under a DDG (Public Health Services). At Present the Non Communicable Disease Unit and the Mental Health Unit are under DDG (MS) I. For better coordination of activities within the Ministry of Health these units should be under a DDG (PHS). Also these units needs to be expanded with more CCPs and MOs appointed to cater to the huge demand of chronic NCDs, injuries, Mental health problems and cancers which is increasing at an alarming rate. The College has pointed out on several occasions that these barriers put forward by certain administrators will hinder the progress towards achieving MDG and will reverse some of the social and health indices that were achieved with a large contribution from the public health sector.

At present there are no Job functions/Duties of Consultant Community Physicians. The College pointed out that due to this CCPs are made to perform non technical duties by certain medical administrators. It is sad that the Ministry of Health has not made an effort thus far to develop functional task analysis for consultants in the public health field. The College requested the ministry to formulate job functions of CCPs and the College would extend its assistance in this regard.

It was pointed out that the award of fellowships are done in a non transparent manner and majority of fellowships are awarded to selected few favourites overlooking eligible majority. Hon Minister agreed to streamline the process. Thereafter a committee has been recently appointed to make the selections for award of fellowships.

The College brought to the notice that there is no representation of Public Health in the proposed National Advisory Council and requested the College be nominated to the Council.

Irregular appointment of Acting Director NCD

The College brought to the notice of the Secretary, Ministry of Health, that the appointment of Acting Director NCD has been made in a non transparent manner overlooking more qualified and eligible officers who are in higher up in the merit order of the Deputy Medical Administrative Grade selections. The College requested to cancel this appointment as a technically head should give leadership to this important component considering the disease burden caused by ischemic heart diseases, strokes and injuries. The College appealed to the Secretary to advertise and make a permanent appointment to the Director NCD post with immediate effect.

Irregular appointment of Acting Director Environmental & Occupational Health

The College complained to the Secretary, Ministry of Health, that Dr G.W.W. Pathirana has been retained in the post of Director (E&OH) despite having disciplinary inquiries against him and retiring in 2009. The College requested this officer be removed from this post and a proper appointment made immediately.

7.0 Membership database

Several rounds of requests for update of information were sent to the membership. The updated membership list is available.

8.0 Annual Academic Sessions

Duty leave to attend Annual Academic Sessions

Council obtained approval from the DGHS to grant duty leave for medical officers in the public health services to attend the Annual Academic Sessions.

10.0 Social activities

The Council felicitated Dr Sudharshani Fernandopulle on the 19th August 2010 on her appointment as a Member of Parliament.

11.0 New members

The names of the following to be enrolled as members of the College are recommended for ratification by the general membership:

Life Members

- 1) Dr. M.U Madumale
- 2) Dr. N.A Jayathissa
- 3) Dr Baba Rahuman
- 4) Dr. Anoma Basnayake
- 5) Dr I. N Sawanthi
- 6) Dr A. Liyanapathirana
- 7) Dr P.T Rangani
- 8) Dr S. D Wijesinghe
- 9) Dr C.S Edirisinghe

Ordinary members- none

Associate Members – none

12.0 Acknowledgements

We express our heartfelt thanks to the following:

- The Secretary, Ministry of Health, Former Secretary and former Additional Secretary Ministry of Health Care and Nutrition for their support.
- The Director, Malaria control programme and the staff for assistance and logistical support provided throughout the year.
- All those who supported towards the success of the IEA
- All resource persons for their contribution in making the academic activities of the College successful.
- The Editor and the Editorial Board for their contributions to the Journal and in reviewing the abstracts and the assistance provided in preparing the abstract book.
- Dr. M Sethunga and Mr Chathura Walawwaththa for managing the Public Health Lounge and the support in all College activities
- Mr. Anil Silva for providing us with legal advice

- All foreign guest lecturers
- All members and the well-wishers who have contributed to the activities of the College during the year.

Dr. Gawrie N. L Galappaththy
Honorary Secretary,
College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka 2009/2010