



Meridian

Newsletter of the Australian Chinese Medical Association of Victoria
澳洲維省中華醫學會

August 2010, Volume 7 Number 3

President's Message



What an eventful start to the presidency! Just two weeks prior to the first seminar on management of chronic pain, our sponsor, Mundipharma, threatened to pull out of the sponsorship, citing conflict with Medicines Australia's code of practice. However, a change in venue and some hard negotiations pulled the seminar back on track. Our own member, Dr Alberta Hoi, gave a great presentation at the Shark Fin House in Melbourne CBD.

This event is perhaps an indication of things to come. With increasingly tight regulations from Medicines Australia, we may have to look elsewhere for sponsorships of our seminars. Pharmaceutical companies are also requesting more information about attendees to their sponsored seminars. The ACMAV committee has been grappling with the issue of the release of personal or professional information to these companies. We hope to be able to come to a sensible compromise. Please refer to 'Notice to Members' on page 6.

The last few years have seen a gradual transformation of the ACMAV to a mature organisation that has the capacity to assist many disadvantaged groups both locally and internationally through our Foundation. Through this work we have been making an increasing presence in the community and have forged strong alliances with organisations including HSBC, Investec and the Chinese Cancer Society of Victoria.

The ACMAV's inaugural Charity Ball this year will enable us to extend these community efforts. The Ball will be held at Crown's Studio 3 on November 13th, 2010 with all proceeds going to the ACMAV Foundation, through which our members can continue their work with the disadvantaged. Dr Sally Ng and her team have done a tremendous job organising this Ball, and we will need all your support to make it a success. Tickets can be purchased online at www.trybooking.com/GTV or by returning the flyer on page 8.

On a more sombre note, it was with great sadness that the ACMAV farewellled one of its Past Presidents, Dr Rick Hing, on 6th July 2010. He was a highly respected colleague with a passion for life and a commitment to service, who has contributed much to the community.

~ *Theong Low* ~

Below: Dr Alberta Hoi on osteoarthritis and pain management, May 2010



In this edition...

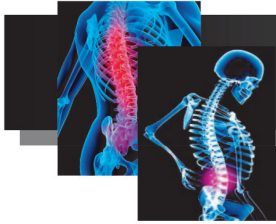
The last three months have certainly been a gastronomical delight, in terms of the educational and edible content of our seminars! We are what we eat and to a certain extent, we feel what we eat. In June, Professor Peter Gibson's gave an excellent summary of the role of FODMAPS in irritable bowel, whilst leading inflammatory bowel disease specialists alerted us to the rising prevalence of this disease in Asian immigrants. In July, The Melbourne Liver Group presented hepatitis B and it's important association with hepatoma. But it hasn't been all gastroenterological, with helpful hints from Dr Alberta Hoi in managing a very common problem: pain in osteoarthritis. On the global front, Dr Albert Leung opens our eyes to the ophthalmological issues in Malakula Island, Vanuatu. Now it's time to brush off that tuxedo and bring out those hats—Spring Carnival Fever awaits at our inaugural Charity Ball. Ticket sales are OPEN and we hope to see you there!

~ *Nora Lee and Chris Leung* ~

Movie of the Month

On recommendation by Prof Michael Kamm and our Vice-President Dr Nicole Yap – a crime thriller with relevance to our political milieu.





Seminar program 2010

May - Chronic Pain in Osteoarthritis

The problem of chronic pain in osteoarthritis is all too common, and one often wonders how to best manage it. Over a delightful meal of Queensland mud crab and duck soup from Shark Fin House, Dr Alberta Hoi (Rheumatologist) gave a clear overview of pathophysiology and management principles. For instance, the evolution of chronic pain is not simply recurrent nociceptive input but also an expectation that is not met by an individual when nociceptive drive fails to be abolished in a timely fashion. Such abnormal pain signal processing can also be found in fibromyalgia. Effective management centres on appropriate diagnosis with a note to look for red flags, education and addressing all facets of pain. Four target areas are inflammation, pain pathways, mechanical factors and psychosocial triggers. As part of the structured approach, setting goals with the patient, judicious use of opioid analgesia via “contracts” and adjuvant therapy such as TCAs and SNRIs are important. Thank you to Alberta for a great talk and to Shark Fin House for accommodating this meeting at such short notice. Thank you also to Mundipharma for sponsorship. ~ *Chris Leung* ~

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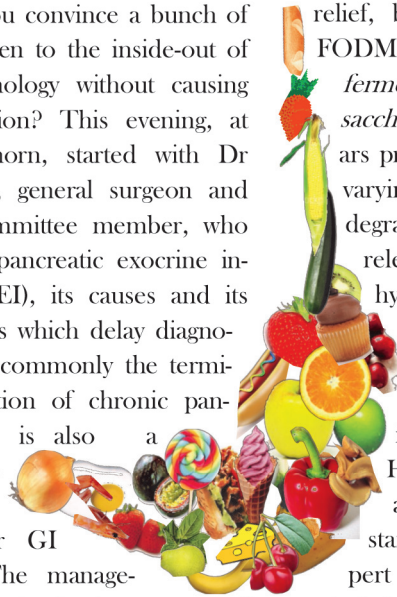
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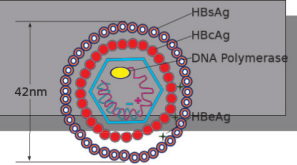
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June - Food for thought?

Discussing unpalatable topics over dinner is tough at the best of times. So how do you convince a bunch of doctors to listen to the inside-out of intestinal pathology without causing mass indigestion? This evening, at Choi’s Hawthorn, started with Dr Salena Ward, general surgeon and ACMAV Committee member, who spoke about pancreatic exocrine insufficiency (PEI), its causes and its multiple guises which delay diagnosis. Although commonly the terminal manifestation of chronic pancreatitis, PEI is also a consequence of surgically altered upper GI anatomy. The management, particularly the importance of adequate enzyme replacement, was detailed by Dr Chris Leung, gastroenterologist and also an ACMAV Committee member. Following this, our focus turned to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) which comprises up to 50% of referrals to gastroenterologists, yet the condition is still somewhat ‘unsorted’. Proposed mechanisms include altered bowel flora, afferent hypersensitivity to luminal distension, gut dysmotility, and post-

infectious enteritis. Patients have often exhausted a multitude of diets seeking relief, but perhaps not the low-FODMAP diet. FODMAPs, or *fermentable oligo-, di- and mono-saccharides and polyols*, are sugars present in almost all foods in varying quantities. On bacterial degradation in the bowel, they release gas. This irritates the hypersensitive bowel, leading to bloating and cramping. The reduction of offending foods can significantly improve IBS symptoms. High-FODMAP foods can also be nutritionally rich, so starting this diet requires expert guidance. The evening concluded with Prof Michael Kamm and Dr Lani Prideaux from St Vincent’s Health introducing the ENIGMA (EasterN IBD Gut Microbiota) study which compares gut flora between developing and developed countries as a critical environmental factor in the pathophysiology of IBD. Please refer to advertisement on page 7. Thank you to the speakers for their engaging presentations, to Abbott Products for sponsorship, and to Choi’s for the excellent food and service. ~ *Nora Lee* ~





July - Hepatitis B and Hepatoma: A Testing Issue.

Shark Fin House again hosted the evening, this time a panel discussion on Hepatitis B and liver cancer. With Dr Sally Bell (Gastroenterologist, St Vincent's Hospital), Dr Ben Cowie (Infectious Diseases, Royal Melbourne Hospital), Dr Anouk Dev (Gastroenterologist, Monash Medical Centre), Dr Robert Chen (Gastroenterologist, St Vincent's Hospital) and Dr. Julie Wang (General Practitioner and Epidemiologist, Burnett Institute), the night proved most informative.

It was concerning to note that one third of people living with the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) in Australia have not been diagnosed. As such, routine opportunistic testing is essential and should include HBsAg, Anti-HBs and Anti-HBc.

The natural history of HBV with the four phases of immune tolerance, clear-

ance, control and escape was covered with relevance to treatment decisions. We were also reminded of the importance of active immunisation and reducing the incidence of hepatoma with antiviral therapy. Hepatoma screening with 6-monthly ultrasound and alpha fetoprotein is particularly important in those with cirrhosis, a family history of hepatoma, HBV+ve Asian men aged

>40y and women >50y, HBV+ve Africans >20y and those aged >40y with high HBV DNA levels and transaminases.

Thank you to the panel of speakers for a practical and clinically relevant night and also General Practice Victoria, the Cancer Council and the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health for their support.

~ *Chris Leung and Lucy Lim* ~



Above: The panel - general practice, gastroenterology, and infectious disease

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The Global Front

An Eye on Vanuatu...

What? Vanuatu Eye Care Project

When? June 2010

Where? Malakula Island, Vanuatu

Sometimes the road to self-discovery lies on a path that leads a person far from home. Returning back to Vanuatu this year, I found a more mature personality had blossomed since my first trip in 2007. I also realised my weaknesses and began to improve upon them. It is often said that 'success is a journey, not a destination.' The same can be said about Life itself for that matter. We all come from different walks of life and have different dreams to pursue. Sometimes these paths meet with experiences shared and at other times, they don't. I'd like to share some of our teams' experiences.

For two weeks in June 2010, two teams of doctors (including another ACMAV member, Dr Cheryl Oh), nurses and optometrists flew to Vanuatu to provide eye and health checks. Our team began by flying to Malakula Island in northern Vanuatu. There we village-

hopped with the yacht, *Chimere*. Just like Life itself, we enjoyed smooth seas and rough waves, like some of the challenges faced. Our busy days were lightened by the friendly smiles of the local NiVans (what the locals call themselves), the abundance of fresh fruit and the team camaraderie. Com-

mon problems encountered in-

cluded pterygium, musculoskeletal disorders (thank you, Philip Hench for refining corticosteroids!), diabetes, hypertension and tropical yaws.

For resource-limited countries, self-sufficiency and sustainability are key to their healthcare. Though in the short term we assisted over a thousand patients

in those two weeks, in the longer term, education and workshops will augment the resources they have or will receive through charitable organizations.

On a final note, our attitude towards Life reflects Life's attitude towards us. We should endeavour to

nourish our talents and share them in what way we can, be that locally or in-

ternationally. After all, 'where your treasure is, your heart will be also.'

~ *Albert Leung* ~

Above: Our Malakula Island team with the crew of the yacht Chimere, coincidentally moored adjacent to another yacht 'Asylum'.



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Obituary: Dr Norman Richard Hing



30th March 1959 - 6th July 2010

Our colleague, known fondly as Rick to us, was an intelligent and talented individual. From a young age, he excelled at school, being in the state's top 5% in the Year 12 of 1976, NSW. He began a career in dentistry at the University of Sydney, graduating in 1982. He obtained a Masters of Dental Surgery (MDS) through the University of Adelaide and the Royal Adelaide Dental Hospital in 1990, and Fellowship in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (FRACDS OMS) in 1994. Meanwhile he pursued a medical degree, graduating with M.B.B.S from the University of Adelaide in 1993. He subsequently was appointed Assistant Oral and Maxillofacial surgeon at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, with invitation as lecturer for tutorials for the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons.

He was the third child of Norman and Dora, in a loving family with siblings Penny (deceased) Amanda, Belinda and Antony. He was a devoted father to Emma and Max, (with Sue) and Grace (with Kelly).

As an ACMAV member, he regularly wrote articles on cars for Qi Magazine, revealing his love for car racing. His many talents included excelling in field sports, model-making and singing. His wicked sense of humour was demonstrated at

our seminars in his later years. Rick steered the Association with purpose and dignity during his presidency in 1999.

His family, relatives, friends and colleagues acknowledge the loss of a kind and generous person who succumbed at a young age to a frontal lobe tumour. It would comfort us, somewhat, that from diagnosis in May 2004 to the last days, Rick never lost touch with his family and friends. His wife, Kelly, was his constant support through the period of surgery and chemotherapy. His resilience shone through with his return to practice between episodes of chemotherapy.

In 2007 he had shoulder surgery, and in 2008 a second surgery was performed for recurrence of the brain tumour. Within a short post-treatment interval of two months, he returned to practice while on chemotherapy. This period of time also revealed his devotion to family, undertaking a skiing holiday in Japan with his children Emma and Max while still experiencing side effects of the medication. Undaunted, he also took all three children and Kelly to Bali and New Zealand. He stopped practice on 7th August 2009.

The phrase "Life is not meant to be easy" holds true, but for Rick, his determination and resilience shone through during the most difficult times.

Ricky, we salute you.

~ *Siew-Khin (Happy) Tang*
ACMAV Past President (2000) ~



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Calendar & Classifieds

events

DATE	TOPIC	VENUE
25 Aug	Type 2 Diabetes: Practical Management and New Therapies	Quanjude Melbourne
15 Sept	A better marker for the diagnosis of Vitamin B12 deficiency	Sunkee BBQ Seafood House, South Yarra
19 Oct	HSBC Seminar	Wealth Garden, Doncaster East
10 Oct	Fun Run St George Melbourne Marathon	MCG
24 Oct	ACMAV Tennis Tournament	Melbourne Tennis Centre
13 Nov	ACMAV Charity Ball	Crown Casino



Enquiries:
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doctor@dermatologyclinic.com.au



Notice to Members

The ACMAV committee has worked hard over the years to ensure that the Seminars Program remains a quality forum for education, professional development and networking. The continued success of this Program is also dependent on external sponsorship from various corporate institutions.

In recent times, the spotlight on sponsorship from pharmaceutical companies has resulted in Medicines Australia enforcing more stringent guidelines.

To comply with these changes, from August 2010, the ACMAV may be required to provide sponsors with a list of seminar attendees with contact details for auditing purposes. Only practice addresses will be released unless otherwise directed.

Any queries regarding this matter can be directed to Dr Theong Low, ACMAV President;
president@acmav.org

Your cooperation is much appreciated.

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Dr Lani Prideaux, Gastroenterology Fellow,
St Vincent's Hospital 9288 3598
Prof Michael Kamm 9417 5064



Above: Gastrointestinal Night speakers; from left - Dr Chris Leung, Dr Lani Prideaux, Prof Peter Gibson, Dr Salena Ward, Dr Theong Low, Prof Michael Kamm



Below: A full and attentive house at Choi's, Hawthorn, Melbourne



2010 ACMAV Charity Ball

Australian Chinese Medical Association of Victoria presents
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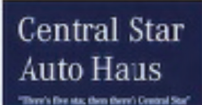
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