



Meridian

Newsletter of the Australian Chinese Medical Association of Victoria

澳洲維省中華西醫協會

October 2015 Volume 12 Number 2

President's message

2015 has seen ACMAV evolve with the changing times, and with it comes a change of the guard. This is the last message from me, as your President for the last 3 years!



During the recent AGM (*above*) at Thai Terrace, Kew, attendees learnt of our aims to improve our association for the benefit of our members. Sponsorships need to be found for both long and short term partnerships; seminars are to be more interactive than didactic; ACMAV foundation is being transferred to a Health Promotion Trust which will continue to provide health education and support for our members and the general public, specifically the Asian population. We also discussed the future of ACMAV house which in time will require development, or be sold and revenue to be used for the benefit of fulfilling our obligations to the Health Promotion Trust. All these issues are what have been worked on behind the scenes during the course of this year.

Despite this hard work, we managed our first self funded ACMAV seminars on "The forgotten cause of hypertension (unless both your parent's have Conn's syndrome!)". This otherwise dry topic was presented in such an enjoyable fashion that even my surgical brain can still recall the main points by endocrinologist Dr Jun Yang.

After our successful Minions movie day, we surged forwards with another social event. The Self Defense class was organized by Dr Cheryl Oh at her Taikwondo group in Doncaster. This event was extremely successful to the point of being almost too many attendees! I made the mistake of partnering with Helena who I didn't know was black belt! Nevertheless I learnt some basic

moves and feel more confident walking back to the car in the dark, hoping not to encounter another Helena!!

The last event was the annual tennis tournament at the Australian Tennis Centre, which Douglas Gin organises. This year there were three late withdrawals due to injuries, leaving only 4 players to fight out the contest on a hot and windy day! The winners were Douglas Gin and Lean Peng Cheah, and runners up Trevor Lau Gooley and Yu Long Leow. I would strongly recommend to new members to add new blood for next year's tournament so we can make it more competitive!!

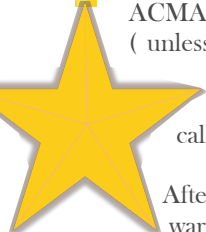
We have planned the last seminar in December with Updates in Bariatric Surgery - very suitable prior to the season's festivities! Yum cha to welcome the Year of the Monkey will be in February, and updates in Melanoma in March 2016.

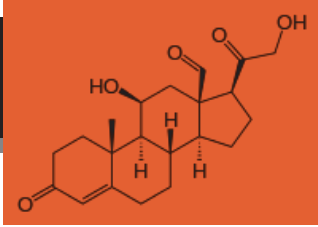
I welcome Chris Leung as President. I wish him well and hope that I have been able to put in place changes that will make his job a bit easier. The dedicated industrious Helena Ng, who has been steadfastly at my side without whom I'm sure many of our evolving changes would not have happened so expediently, is stepping down as treasurer and Cheryl Oh is taking on her tasks. Jom Cheong is stepping up to Vice President. Our wonderful Meridian producer, graphic artist/ haematology registrar, Nora Lee is now secretary, whilst Lilia moves on to spend her efforts on family and new role as President of Australian Chinese Business Association. Thank you to Jason Chuen and Andrew Teh for resolutely staying as committee members and we welcome Jamie Cheong and David Chong to our team. We are sad to see Kevin Shaw depart as he moves forwards with his career.

I leave you now, after a wonderful experience leading such a great group of medicos through educational seminars and conferences, to fun times at our fundraising balls, and public health awareness event at Federation Square. Along the way I have got to know you all a little more, and am a better person for it. I wish you all well for the Festive Season. For the last time, I will leave you with a thought from M Ghandi—

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow; learn as if you were to live forever."

Nicole Yap FRACS





ACMAV activities

Hypertension—have you forgotten?



On 21 October 2015, Dr Jun Yang FRACP, PhD, presented on primary aldosteronism. Held at Tao Tao Restaurant in Hawthorn, it was great to see such an enthusiastic turnout.

Primary aldosteronism is where excess non-suppressible aldosterone secretion results in adverse effects including increased intravascular volume, potassium loss, suppressed renin production, myocardial fibrosis and a

metabolic alkalosis. Whilst it may be uncommon, it is certainly not as rare as suggested in medical texts. Causes of hyperaldosteronism are varied - bilateral adrenal hyperplasia, an adrenal adenoma, aldosterone-producing adrenal carcinoma, familial genetic mutations or ectopic adenoma/adenocarcinoma.

In the most severe cases, patients may present with poorly controlled refractory hypertension with multiple hypokalaemia, cardiac failure, renal dysfunction.

Earlier cases may have no hypokalaemia and a mild hypertension. In fact, only 20% of patients with primary

hyperaldosteronism manifest hypokalaemia. Early diagnosis is essential to prevent end organ damage. A strong family history of early-onset hypertension should also trigger investigation.

The plasma renin-aldosterone ratio is a useful screening test. The precise reference ranges depend on individual laboratories. It is important to remove any pre-analytical variables including certain antihypertensives and dietary salt. Non-interfering antihypertensives include hydralazine, prazosin and verapamil. Referral to a specialist endocrine hypertension clinic is advised when patients are on multiple agents.

Confirmation of the diagnosis includes a saline suppression test. An infusion of saline should normally cause aldosterone levels to fall. Affected patients have no suppression of aldosterone.

A key aspect of diagnosis is determining whether unilateral or bilateral disease is present. Adrenal vein sampling by an experienced operator is a standard criterion for distinguishing this. Unilateral disease is more amenable to surgery. Treatment for bilateral disease is centred on mineralocorticoid receptor (MR) antagonists such as spironolactone and eplerenone. These two drugs differ in potency, specificity and side effects, and their use should be based on the individual's circumstances. It was an interactive and informative evening. Many thanks to Jun for a fantastic talk, and for all who assisted in the event.

Tennis Tournament

In keeping with tradition, the ACMAV Annual Tennis Tournament was once again contested, on Sunday 25/10/15. Unfortunately with two late withdrawals due to injury, only five players were registered to play.

The weather was clement, although hot and at times windy. The Tournament ended up being fought out at a private home court outdoors.

In the end, only four players continued battling to the conclusion.

The results were as follows:

Winners - Douglas Gin & Lean Peng Cheah

Runners up - Trevor Lau Goocy & Yu Long Leow

New entrants are most welcome for next year's event.

Movie day—Minions



Few can resist the utter absurdity of the Minions, their wicked sense of humour, and quirky antics providing a good laugh to the whole family. ACMAV members and family members gathered on a cold weekend to indulge in this yellow spectacle. Given the popularity of the event, similar ones are planned in the future.

ACMAV Committee 2015-16



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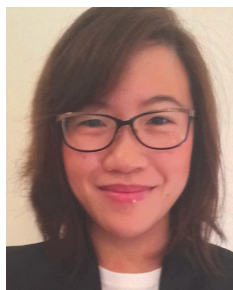
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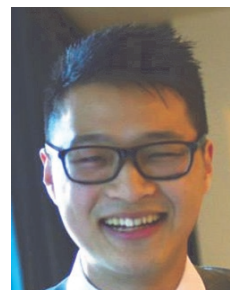
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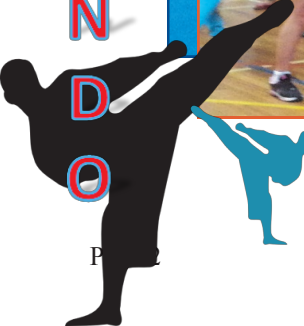


Dr Andrew Teh

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On a still-chilly Saturday afternoon, a handful of keen and the curious ACMAV members listened eagerly applied themselves to pummelling , walloping and kicking things. This was organised by Dr Cheryl Oh and held at Doncaster Secondary College with a professional instructor. The turnout was so impressive there will most likely be a follow up session—dates to be confirmed. Oh, and FYI there are (at least) two blackbelts in the Committee— so fear not.



The back page

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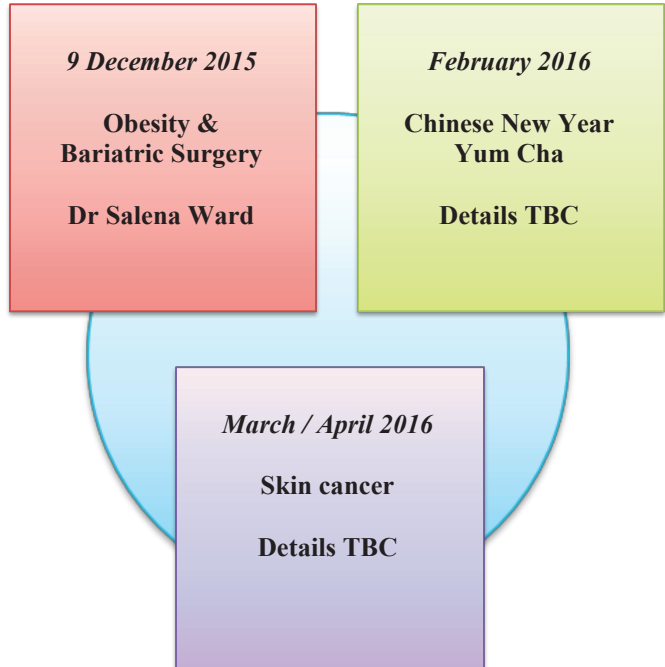
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