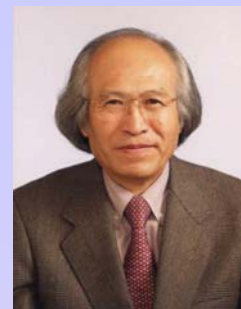


A Message from the President

Dear Friends,

This is a warmest greeting and message of mine as the President of APPES to all of our dear members. It was, indeed, a great honor and pleasure for me to be elected as President of APPES, and to be given the privilege to work together with pediatric endocrinologists in the Asia-Pacific region to improve the health of children with endocrine disorders.



As in all fields of medicine, global information and collaboration are crucial to the progress of science and the clinical practice of pediatric endocrinology. APPES is expected to play a pivotal role for this in the Asia-Pacific region, similar to the role of the two big international societies of pediatric endocrinology, ESPE in Europe, and LWPES in the North America. Although APPES is a very young society which was born only 4 years ago in 1999, APPES is the sole international society of pediatric endocrinology in the Asia-Pacific region. In fact, APPES has made a significant contribution to the improvement of science and the clinical practice of pediatric endocrinology through its scientific and educational activities, even after such a short period of 4 years after its inauguration.

APPES has thus grown up from infancy to childhood through the energetic efforts of the first President, Professor Louis Low, and his team, and also through the strong support of the APPES members. It is time for us to bring up this child, "APPES", to an active, thoughtful and mature adult. APPES should not only be more and more active in its scientific and educational activities, but also more and more politically powerful to communities, industries and other scientific societies. I realize that I am heavily responsible for this second step in the development of APPES, and that I cannot meet my responsibilities for APPES without the strong support and help from our executive and council committees, and more importantly, from all members of APPES.

In the meantime, the 3rd biennial scientific meeting is scheduled to be held in Kobe, Japan, from 24th to 26th September 2004, and all APPES members are invited to join us and contribute to the scientific achievements of APPES. Regarding the educational activities of APPES, we are organizing (1) the Endo-Link, a pediatric endocrine meeting, in Seoul, Korea, from 10th to 11th October 2003, in partnership with Serono, and (2) the APPES Fellow's Course for young pediatric endocrinologists at Awajishima island, which is a lovely small island facing Kobe, from 20th to 22nd September 2004, prior to the main meeting of APPES in Kobe. I wish many young pediatric endocrinologists in our Asia-Pacific region will be interested to participate in these educational activities of APPES, and to be encouraged to promote their scientific and clinical work.

Last but not the least, I would like to ask you for your support and help for APPES once again. I am looking forward to seeing you at our meetings.

Kaichi Kida, M.D. & Ph.D.
President, APPES
Professor of Pediatrics
Ehime University School of Medicine
Ehime, Japan

APPES Biennial Scientific Meeting, November 11-13, 2002

The second annual scientific meeting held in Cairns, Australia was an outstanding success. Over 250 participants from 19 countries in the region enjoyed a stimulating scientific program in the wonderful facility of Cairns Convention Centre. The plenary speakers, Annette Gruters, Frances de Zegher, Martin Silink, Martin Ritzen made stimulating contributions both with their formal talks during the meeting and informal discussion with participants. In addition to the traditional format of symposia, free oral presentations and posters, the meeting included 'meet the professor sessions' and clinical discussions that allowed constructive interaction between the audience and speakers.

A pre-congress Fellow's Meeting was held at Palm Cove, one hour north of Cairns. The participants included 42 fellows and 9 faculties. The format of the meeting included presentations by the participants discussing clinical problems that had been set by the faculty, as well as summary lectures by the faculty. The setting of the meeting close to the coast in a tropical environment created the atmosphere for excellent communication between all participants, faculty and fellows.

Education is a key objective of APPES and we have been fortunate in having strong support from the pharmaceutical industry for both the fellow's training meetings and our scientific meetings. We would like to acknowledge the major support of Novo Nordisk for both the fellows meeting and the scientific meeting in Cairns, and of our other major sponsors for the scientific meeting, Pharmacia, Lilly, Serono and Ferring Pharmaceuticals. Their support and that of our other sponsors allowed us to successfully hold the meetings in difficult circumstances when it became apparent in mid 2002 that we were not able to proceed with the original meeting planned for Chennai, India. The meeting convenors would like to specifically acknowledge the major secretariat contribution of Skye Potesta and Janine Stovold from Serono Symposia International, both of whom worked tirelessly for 4 months to make the meeting such a success.



Key organisational people for APPES 2002 ; Skye Potesta (Serono Symposia International), Geoff Ambler (Meeting convenor) and Wayne Cutfield (Scientific Convenor)



APPES President, Kaichi Kida, relaxing at the dinner

Geoff Ambler
Chris Cowell

Participants in the 2002 APPES Fellows Meeting

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Report of Pharmacia and Upjohn Visiting Scholar Fellowship (January – April 2000), at the Division of Paediatric Endocrinology, Mattel Children's Hospital, University of California, Los Angeles.

Dr Fatimah Harun, Department of Paediatrics, University Hospital, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Having completed my housemanship in Ninewells Medical School, Scotland, and having trained in Paediatrics and Paediatric Endocrinology at the Royal Sick Children's Hospital, Edinburgh, and spent my previous sabbatical leave in Europe at the Karolinska Institute, I thought it would be great if this time I spent part of my sabbatical leave in the American Continent.

However in the years 1998-2000, Malaysia and the other ASEAN countries were affected badly by the economic crisis, and the Malaysian government disallowed her citizens to spend time overseas, unless there was external funding. I was very fortunate to be awarded the Pharmacia and Upjohn Visiting Scholar Fellowship, to spend part of my sabbatical leave at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA. I joined the Division of Paediatric Endocrinology at the Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA with Professor Mitchell E. Geffner and Professor Cohen Pinchas from 17th January to 14th April 2000. My objective was to be exposed to their spectrum of endocrine disorders, especially those with growth problems, and to learn and understand about the genetic basis of these disorders.



The period of stay in UCLA was spent mainly with patients in the clinics and wards with Prof Geffner, thus providing me with the opportunity to compare the spectrum of endocrine disorders, their investigative procedures and treatment modalities with those back home. I also attended their paediatric grand rounds and combined endocrinology conferences (paediatrics and adult endocrinology, obstetrics and gynaecology, biochemistry endocrine surgery), where their latest research directions and results were presented. I found these updates and discussions to be very stimulating.

What was rewarding as a clinician was that patients were fully investigated and those that could not be confirmed clinically and biochemically, would have a genetic diagnosis for confirmation. These disorders are often those with a spectrum of sexual ambiguity and growth disorders, including Frasier syndrome, congenital adrenal hypoplasia, Simpson Golabi syndrome which I had the opportunity to see, amongst others. Those with specific growth disorders like Growth hormone deficiency (genetic and acquired) and Turner Syndrome were administered growth hormone. In Malaysia, only a limited number of Growth hormone deficient children received government funding for growth hormone treatment. Other short children who would benefit from growth hormone treatment, including Turner girls, were assisted by the growth hormone Fund which I helped to set up.

During my attachment, I was also fortunate to have met Professor Maria New, one of the world's authorities on congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH). The department staff and I had the opportunity to discuss the wide phenotypic spectrum of CAH, the natural history, management and genetic basis of the disease with Professor New.

I also spent some time in the laboratory of Professor Pinchas Cohen whose work was mainly on the IGF and their binding proteins, and I studied their role in growth and growth disorders. I also took the opportunity to revise basic molecular biology, with practical sessions on polymerase chain reaction (PCR), agarose gel electrophoresis, and Southern blot analysis. I found the experience particularly useful as it provided me with the opportunity to understand basic molecular endocrinology.

Overall, it was a fulfilling 4 months at Professor Geffner's unit. My acceptance there was a first step to establishing an academic link between the two institutions with regard to future collaborative work or training of fellows and staff between two countries.

Upon my return, my unit is now working with the department of molecular biology in my faculty, to explore the genetic basis of endocrine disorders in the Malaysian population, with our current focus on congenital hypothyroidism and hypopituitarism. Some preliminary findings on the Pax 8 gene will be presented at the coming 7th Asia Oceania Thyroid Association Congress in Singapore, December 2003.

Finally, I would like to thank APPES for awarding me with the visiting fellowship grant. I hope that there will be many more grants made available for the benefit of senior staff from developing countries in our region.

INTRODUCTION

Newborn screening in Indonesia, is not a government policy as yet. Unfortunately, without a screening program for congenital hypothyroidism (CH), patients who are diagnosed late, will suffer from mental and physical handicap. While delayed treatment with thyroid hormone may partly restore their physical growth, their mental development remains very disappointing.

The implementation of a neonatal screening programme in a large developing country like Indonesia, is beset with many problems. However, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), through the project entitled *Regional Program For National Neonatal Screening For Congenital Hypothyroidism in East Asia*, aimed to introduce a screening system for CH, and reduce the prevalence of mental retardation through the improvement of diagnosis and treatment within the region. This encouraged me on my quest to initiate a neonatal screening programme for CH in Indonesia.



The specific objectives of the project include the following:

1. To develop a newborn screening project for CH
2. To start a hospital or community based pilot study
3. To collect meaningful data (including missed cases) for use in educating the public, medical professionals and authorities
4. To start a quality assurance program

With the expected outcome to screen 50% of annual births in the year 2005 and 100% of annual births screened as part of a national program by year 2010, I started the program in June 2000. It was not easy to set up such a newborn screening programme. In the beginning, I had important support from other member states of the East Asia Pacific Region (Korea, Thailand, Malaysia) which had experience in screening programs for CH.

PHARMACIA SCHOLARSHIP

Although I had been collecting information from published papers, I realized that it was not enough, and I required more information on all aspects of newborn screening for CH in a developed country. I was very fortunate to receive the Pharmacia Upjohn Scholarship 2001 from APPES, in which I was given the opportunity to learn about CH from the NSW Newborn Screening Programme at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children (The Children's Hospital at Westmead) from November – December 2001. During my stay, I was exposed to all aspects of the NSW Newborn Screening Programme. The programme screens all babies born in New South Wales and in the Australian Capital Territory. There are approximately 92,000 babies who are screened for Congenital Hypothyroidism, Cystic Fibrosis, Galactosemia, Phenylketonuria as well as 30 other rare inborn errors of amino acid, organic acid and fatty acid metabolism. I was fortunate to have the tutelage of Professor Bridget Wilcken, Director NSW Biochemical Genetics & Newborn Screening Services, who was also was President of the International Society of Newborn Screening.

I was able to observe blood collection, the different modes of transport of samples, and the laboratory logging in and record keeping in relation to samples, as well as the testing parameters. I spent time with a Clinical Nurse Consultant who is the programme coordinator, to observe the follow-up of babies detected by the screening tests and the methods of dealing with inadequate samples. I am grateful to the Head of the Newborn Screening Laboratory, Dr Veronica Wiley, who helped me in understanding aspects of quality assurance.

I also attended the metabolic and phenylketonuria clinics, and pre-clinic multi-disciplinary meetings to discuss the patients with the metabolic dieticians. I had the opportunity to attend the paediatrician's update meeting at the hospital, for all New South Wales paediatricians, and the weekly metabolic journal club meeting and the hospital Grand Rounds.

BENEFITS

When I returned to Indonesia, I drew on the invaluable experience to plan for a newborn screening programme in Indonesia. We established a multi-disciplinary Newborn Screening Team, comprising experts in the fields of Paediatrics, Obstetrics, Public Health, Endocrinology, and Laboratory Medicine to plan a pilot study on screening for CH in the West Java Province, which has a population of 30 million, and birth rate of 600,000 per year. As of 31st December 2002, 23,332 babies had been screened, and 8 babies were detected with permanent congenital hypothyroidism. The results were presented to the policy makers in the Department of Health, who were made aware of the importance of the programme in decreasing handicapped children and promoting better quality of life for the affected children. On 13th May 2003, the Department of Health formed a National Newborn Screening Committee, of which I am a member. The committee will be responsible to develop a nationwide newborn screening programme and screening for CH as the first priority.

CONCLUSION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks to the Pharmacia and Upjohn Scholarship organized by APPES, I was able to visit an excellent center for newborn screening in Australia, and to gain experience in all aspects of setting up a screening program. The pilot study we have conducted has made the government of Indonesia realize the significance of the screening program, and to designate part of its budget to prevent mental retardation from CH by screening and early treatment.



OFFICIAL NOTICES

OTHER FUTURE SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS ORGANISED BY APPES:

1. Endolink, Seoul, Korea, 10-11th October 2003
2. APPES Fellow's Meeting, Awajishima Island, Japan, 20-22 September 2004
3. The 3rd APPES Biennial Scientific Meeting, Kobe, Japan, 24-26 September 2004
4. Combined meeting of ESPE, APEG, APPES, SLEP, JSPE, Lyon, France, September 2005
5. APPES Fellow's Meeting 2005, date and venue to be confirmed
6. The 4th APPES Biennial Scientific Meeting 2006, date and venue to be confirmed

THE 3RD APPES BIENNIAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

September 24-26, 2004, Kobe, Japan

The third APPES Scientific Meeting will be held in Kobe, Japan from 24-26 September 2004. It will be a 2½ day scientific meeting with one day combined with the Japanese Society for Paediatric Endocrinology. The meeting will be an exciting blend of cutting edge endocrinology research and practical clinical endocrinology. There will be 3 plenary speakers and 4 symposia covering wide and important themes such as puberty, growth, metabolism and hot topics in Endocrinology. In addition there will also be interactive, practical management sessions. There will be a balanced mix of international speakers, expert regional speakers, including world class Japanese speakers.

PAEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGY JOINT MEETING, 2005

September 22-25, 2005, Lyon, France

The next joint meeting for the Lawson Wilkins Paediatric Endocrine Society/European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology will be held from September 22 to 25, 2005 in Lyon, France. This meeting will be held in association with the other regional societies from South America, Japan, Australasia and APPES. The first program planning meeting was held recently in Lyon. There was strong commitment by the two major societies to have significant involvement from the smaller regional societies and it is likely that the overall theme of the meeting will be global perspective on paediatric endocrinology. Lyon is a delightful medium sized French city situated on the Rhone river in the south of France. The meeting facility is new and will be excellent for the purposes of the joint meeting.

The next planning meeting will be held in early February 2004. There is an opportunity for this region to suggest topics for symposia and potential speakers. I am keen to advocate for a strong representation from our region and hope that the membership may be able to provide ideas for either speakers or symposia as soon as possible. Please contact Chris Cowell via email, chrisc@chw.edu.au prior to January 2nd, 2004.

CONSENSUS DEVELOPMENT: CHILDHOOD OBESITY

March 24-27, 2004, Caesar Hotel, Dead Sea, Israel


An international group of medical colleagues have undertaken to plan a conference aimed at developing a consensus about the prevention, recognition and treatment of childhood obesity and its co-morbidities. This conference will be held in March 2004 under the principal auspices of the Israel Pediatric Endocrine Society. Participants will need to prepare a manuscript prior to the meeting on a specific topic of interest selected from a list provided, which will be discussed with a group leader. Registration and accommodation would be covered. Those interested can obtain further details from the scientific secretariat, P Speiser at PSpeiser@lij.edu.

APPES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Vice-President:	Chris Cowell
Treasurer:	Geoff Ambler
Secretary:	Loke Kah Yin
Scientific Chairman:	Wayne Cutfield

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**Look out for updates
of APPES which will
soon be distributed
to members electronically!**

Please provide updated email addresses to paetaysl@nus.edu.sg, if necessary.