

Mount Elizabeth Hospital's Annual Seminar

The 29th Annual medical seminar of Mount Elizabeth Hospital, titled "Enhancing life through breakthrough medicine, it's possible" was held at Mandarin Orchard Singapore on the 24th of October, 2015.

The annual seminar brought together the best doctors Singapore had to offer along with doctors and reporters from numerous other countries. Zahid Khan, Director of Dhaka office, also took a delegate of doctors from various hospitals of Bangladesh to participate in the seminar. The group included doctors from all the top hospitals in Bangladesh who were present to share information and learn about the latest advancements in medicinal technology.

Dr Kelvin Loh, Senior Vice President, Parkway Hospitals Singapore and Chief Executive Officer of Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital, began the proceedings with his welcome address. He began by thanking everyone on their presence before explaining how far healthcare has really come. "Medicine has changed a lot and now it is possible for patients to live even after something like heart failure. Tumours also melt away in a short time given the technology that we have," he said. He then spoke about the services on offer by Parkway Hospitals, highlighting the presence of 'Internationally qualified specialists' and the 'affordable healthcare schemes'. "We are actively trying to bundle services together and providing price assurance packages and we are confident that the quoted prices won't change," he explained. He also said that with such advances in medical advances, duration of stay has become shorter and with the added privilege of combining services from two or more hospitals, costs have come down drastically.

Dr Hsu Li Yang spoke next. His presentation was titled "Update on Group B Streptococcus Outbreak in Singapore", which was quite a local issue based on the diet of the people and perhaps even a lack of awareness regarding the issue. Given that the prime suspect of the outbreak was



fish, it could be something for Bangladeshis to consider themselves. Dr Hsu Yi Lang pointed out that such infections persists not only in fish consumed in certain locations but the possibility of contraction existed even in the most expensive of restaurants. Dr Suraish Nair, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, spoke next on the topic of "Advances in Reproductive Medicine and Surgery-Bringing forth new life". His presentation was one of the most interesting, largely because it hit so close to home. He spoke about the biological problems that surface as we age such as decreasing egg count and the decline of egg quality. More importantly, when it came to Bangladeshi patients or similar, he mentioned that the presence of taboo around the subject can actually complicate the problems. "The right of having a child is a basic human right," he said, questioning how much role the government should play in this matter. He also highlighted when it came to donors, patients from abroad had a problem as they could not get a donor unless

they brought someone with themselves. Even in terms of abortion, Dr Suraish explained again that it had a lot to do with the parents making the choice they felt was best. Dr Suraish Nair's presentation was an eye opener and left the audience with plenty to mull.

Dr Dharambir Singh came next speaking on 'Evolution of Endoscopic Surgery in Otolaryngologist'. The seasoned otolaryngologist had quite a presentation too. He spoke about the pioneers of the field and how advances in the field had been made in the most unexpected of fashion. He spoke of Julius Lambert, the man who conducted 20-30 surgeries per day and then related the story of Harold Hopkins. To drive home his point of unexpected advancements, he mentioned how years ago BBC would telecast polo games but the quality of the footage meant it was impossible to see the ball. So, BBC approached Harold Hopkins and he invented the zoom lense which became so crucial for surgeries. He also spoke about

James Gordon explaining how he saw the ash from his cigarette fall in a patient's nose while performing surgery (yes, he smoked while in surgery) and saw the ash moving, opening his mind up to the modern concepts of endoscopy.

He was then handed the Exceptional Achievement Award, another feather in the cap conferred by the Singapore Tourism board on Mount Elizabeth, at the end of the presentation. This is one of the most prestigious awards given by the Singapore Tourism board and was testament to the group of hospital's quality of services offered and the role it plays in highlighting not only individual accomplishment but Singapore's overall advancement as well. After the award, the session was broken into two different parts titled "Specialist track" and "GP Track". The doctors and reporters then broke off and went to attend the sessions they felt they wanted to learn from and so the session moved forward.

The fact that Mount Elizabeth took the initiative of not only holding this seminar but making it open for all made it quite an engaging one and one that proved to be quite the learning experience. The doctors and journalists and all who were present did not just learn about scientific breakthroughs but experienced the hospitality of Mount Elizabeth and Parkway as a whole and it was evident why this is one of the best groups of hospitals on offer. The price assurance scheme was also deemed one of the most helpful as it gave prospective patients from distances a good idea of how much costs they could possibly have to bear. The local doctors from Bangladesh were also seen engaging in discussions and they agreed that this was indeed quite a helpful session and expressed their desire to return when the next conferences are held.

All in all it was a great learning experience and opened up new vistas for all those present.

By Osama Rahman, back from Singapore

