

DR CHEW CHIN HIN, PPA
Citation of
First Tan Tock Seng Hospital Orator

BY

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Once in a while one gets a unique opportunity to welcome home a son of the soil ie. A bumiputra.

This is such a defining moment.

Chew Chin Hin comes from a distinguished family of scholars and academics. His late parents, the illustrious Dr and Mrs Benjamin Chew were well known for their community and charitable work in the Republic.

Chin Hin grew up in Singapore but went to University of Hong Kong graduating MBBS in 1955. In 1961, he obtained the MRCP (Edinburgh) and on his return was appointed to the Tan Tock Seng Hospital with which he remained closely associated until 1982 when he was appointed Deputy Director of Medical Services in the Ministry of Health. He retired from the Civil Service in 1991.

In his 35 years of public service, Chin Hin has consistently and tenaciously pursued excellence. As a dedicated man of medicine he contributed much to both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. During the period 1973-1975 he held the prestigious position of Master, Academy of Medicine in Singapore. He was a pioneer of "going Regional and International" long before the present government made it fashionable. For his role in fostering closer links between the local medical fraternity and overseas medical colleges he was conferred the fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians of London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and the American College of Physicians. Only the Irish appeared to have missed him !

Chin Hin also excelled in the field of clinical service, research and administration. He was the Foundation Head and Senior Physician, Department of Medicine IV Tan Tock Seng Hospital from 1964-1979. As Chairman of the Ministry's Tuberculosis Research Committee, he contributed to the landmark study on tuberculosis chemotherapy in the early 1970s and authored and presented many scientific papers at regional and international scientific meetings particularly in thoracic medicine. In 1979 Chin Hin changed direction and became Medical Superintendent, Tan Tock Seng Hospital and 3 years later Deputy Director of Medical Services in the Ministry of Health. He has held high office in numerous academic and public bodies including the Singapore Medical Council, National University Hospital Board, Medical Clinical Research Committee in the Ministry of Health, SATA, International Union against Tuberculosis just to name a few. For his contributions to teaching, research and administration, Chin Hin was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Gold) in 1982.

Since his retirement in 1991 he has continued his hectic schedule. He is presently Advisor & Deputy Director, School of Postgraduate Medical Studies, National University of Singapore and Honorary Consultant and Advisor, National University Hospital. He is also Visiting Consultant, Department of Rheumatology & Immunology, Tan Tock Seng Hospital. He holds the Chairmanship of the National Medical Ethics Committee and played a pivotal role in formulating the Advance Medical Directive. Throughout this journey he is supported by his charming wife Anna and a close and loving family.

To those of us who know him well, he is a kind, generous, honest and above all loyal to his beliefs and friends although his demeanour occasionally may appear stern. In his early days, I have heard someone describe him as a Japanese general in TTSH. But to Chin Hin, TTSH is not just a four letter word. It embodies 150 years of dedication, caring for the sick and the poor and above all the combined visions of thousands of people – a unique institution in the annals of medicine in Singapore.

As someone who has benefited from his counsel and advice and generosity for I succeeded him as Head of Department Medicine IV, may I say " Welcome Home ". Ladies and Gentlemen it is now my pleasure and privilege to call upon Dr Chew Chin Hin to deliver the first TTSH Oration.