

Parkinson's news

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“ The Society has set up a Patient Welfare Fund to provide financial assistance to needy patients. You can get an application form from your doctor. For enquires, please write to Chairperson, Patient Welfare und Subcommittee, Parkinson's Disease Society, C/O NNI Administration level 2, National Neuroscience Institute, 11 Jalan Tan Tock Seng, Singapore 308433. ”

Tan Geok Tian (Founding President of Parkinson's Disease Society of Singapore)

A Tribute

In the 10th anniversary of the Parkinson's Disease Society of Singapore, it is fitting that we pay a tribute and remember our late colleague, Mr Tan Geok Tian, who passed away last year. Geok Tian had been a tireless champion for the awareness of PD in Singapore, his own wife being afflicted by the disease. I remember first meeting him 10 years ago in December 1996, at the old wing of Tan Tock Seng Hospital to discuss the setting up of the Society. At that time, Geok Tian was already well-known for his numerous contributions and participation in several patient-care and charitable organizations.



He enthusiastically agreed to lead the PD Society and roped in several of his friends like Reggie Thien, Wong Kum Sek, Gerald Minjoot, Julie Lau, Margaret Chiam, Robert

Chui, Tommy Lee amongst others to form the first executive council. Geok Tian was a busy man, but he gave a lot of himself to establish the Society. The other members were experienced in raising funds, with many of them being in Rotary Club. With the money raised, we could get several activities going, like public forums, printing informational booklets, newsletters and excursions for the patients.



From the Editor

For the family of Geok Tian, we cannot bear as they do, the immense impact of his passing. However, for those of us who have been involved in the fight against Parkinson's Disease (PD), we feel the loss of a man who have given us so much of his special grace and spirit, the unselfish time and energy to serve the entire PD community and society. For many years, Geok Tian has held the flag and was the champion for the welfare and plight of all our PD patients. While we sadly waved him goodbye, we hope the legacy that he left us with would propel our PD Society to better serve the community and to greater heights.

Cont'd from cover page

We used to meet in an office in the Singapore Cancer Society near Shenton Way, of which he was also vice-president and eventually president. Without fail, Geok Tian would get us Polar café curry puffs and tea so that we would not be too hungry during the meetings. He had a friendly, fatherly demeanor and would always take pains to put us at ease during the meetings.

One day, sometime last year, we learned about Geok Tian's illness. Although he was hospitalized several times, he still chaired our PD meetings and remained positive and cheerful. He told me he was determined to beat his illness. Unfortunately, after a period of time, he succumbed to his illness, and when he passed away, we felt that we had lost the one of the biggest

champions of Parkinson's disease in Singapore. Geok Tian,

unselfishly, put a lot of time and effort in helping to

build the PD Society. It is indeed with great sadness that we mourn his loss and hope that

the Society will continue to flourish after him.

By Dr Adrain Tan





An Enlightening Experience at *Toronto Western Hospital, Canada*

The first Parkinson's Disease (PD) Nurse was appointed in the year 2001. The success of this led to my appointment as the second Parkinson's Disease Nurse Clinician as there is a significant number of Parkinson's Disease patients in Singapore.



To broaden my role as a Nurse Clinician, I had the opportunity to go to Toronto Western Hospital, Ontario, Canada for an overseas attachment as recommended by Dr Tan Eng King.

During this attachment I had the chance to work closely with Dr Anthony Lang and Dr Elena Moro, who are well-known specialists in the field of Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders.

Together with a Nurse Co-ordinator, Yu-Yan Poon, Dr Elena Moro, who is the director of the Movement Disorders Surgical Program, they would assess, plan and liaise with other departments' staff ensuring the selected patient is fully prepared for both the surgical procedure and post-operative management. The nurse would directly involve and co-ordinate the various multidisciplinary groups for assessment and treatment of patients.

I gained significant insights into the practice of skilled clinical care, the provision of advice and education, communicating with patients and carers, and also between health and social care services.

I also took the opportunity to go to Day Hospital at North York General Hospital, Ontario, Canada whose main goal is to improve quality of life of patients with progressive debilitating disease and maximizes independence. Many of these day-care patients had PD with other medical problems. I did manage to go to a support group and met a nurse co-ordinator who facilitated the group. The support group was actually run by the patients who took turns to co-ordinate.

With the new skills and knowledge I have acquired, I hope to fulfil my role as a PD nurse clinician in providing better care for PD patients.



P A R K I N S O N

- **P**eople worry when Parkinson casts its shadow on them.
- **A**nd are distressed that it may shake & sway them.
- **R**ight now we are doing our best to help the rest.
- **K**nowledge & experience are making us the best.
- **I**n all we do, we care for them.
- **N**ever feel depressed, fight on & be impressed.
- **S**o don't fret & frown, but exercise & smile & be true.
- **O**nly you should know that Parkinson could be controlled by you.
- **N**ever fear, help is right here.

Poem written by Robert Chia, a Parkinson's Disease patient.

Acknowledgement



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sponsoring this April issue
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National Parkinson's Disease Society of Singapore

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