

NOT JUST SKIN DEEP THE WORLD CONGRESS OF DERMATOLOGY

Text and photos by Lim Gim Hui

The World Congress of Dermatology (WCD) is held once every four years and holds a prestige equivalent to the “Olympics” of dermatology conferences.

This year, the 24th WCD was held in Milan, Italy, from 10 to 15 June 2019, and I was most privileged to have my poster selected by the conference authorities for presentation at the world conference. My poster presents the data for Phase I of the research project conducted with the National Skin Centre (NSC) during my third year in medical school.

I am also happy to share that this year’s conference was made extra special for the NSC team when their hard work came to fruition, winning the bid to host the 25th WCD here in Singapore in July 2023.

A brand new experience

This was my first time attending and presenting at an international conference overseas. It was a very large-scale conference and it was impressive to note that there were over 16,000 participants and over 6,000 projects presented at the conference.

During the conference, some of the most memorable sessions included presentations on humanitarian dermatology, where people from around the world shared how the use of tele-dermatology can tackle problems in areas like rural Nepal, where

there are limited dermatologists. Some examples shared include how the care for HIV patients was done in Africa to ensure compliance to highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) treatment and how health education and awareness programmes were conducted in Fiji for patients with vitiligo, among others. These experiences resonated with me, as I found myself inspired that there are also opportunities for dermatologists to play a part in humanitarian missions.

Over the few days in Milan, I made new friends from around the world and learnt more about their culture and the way dermatology is practised in their country. We even got to mingle with one another and tour the city of Milan in the evenings after the conference proceedings.

Overall, the conference was a very enriching experience for me. After my poster was selected for the conference, I was initially hesitant to attend the conference because of the high cost required. I am very thankful to Duke-NUS Medical School and the SMA Charity Fund for helping to defray the cost of attending the conference. It was with their support and encouragement that I decided to go ahead. I am very thankful that I managed to attend such an important conference to learn more about dermatology and even made some friends along the way.

Thank you for your support and for making the trip possible. ♦



Legend

1. Prof Roy Chan, Head of the Singapore Bidding committee for the WCD, addressing the congress attendees after Singapore won the bid
2. Me and the poster I presented at the conference

Gim Hui recently returned inspired after an opportunity to serve in Project DOVE, an overseas medical mission trip in Vietnam with Duke-NUS Medical School. He is thankful for these opportunities and hope that these experiences will help him to better serve patients in the future. He is currently a fourth year medical student.

