

IN MEMORY OF

Dr Khoo Chong Yew

(1939-2017)

PAST PRESIDENT OF SMA

Text by Prof Wong Tien Yin, Medical Director, Singapore National Eye Centre; Provost's Chair Professor of Ophthalmology, National University of Singapore; Vice-Dean, Duke-NUS Medical School; Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Research and Education), SingHealth; President, College of Ophthalmologists, Academy of Medicine



Photo: Raffles Hospital

Dr Khoo Chong Yew passed away peacefully on 16 November 2017, aged 78. Here, I would like to acknowledge his vast and profound contributions to ophthalmology in Singapore and the region.

Singapore National Eye Centre

During the Singapore National Eye Centre's (SNEC) early years in the 1990s, Dr Khoo was a visiting consultant and advisor, Cornea

Division; Chairman, Singapore Eye Bank; Chairman, Ethics Committee; and Chairman, Medical Board and its Selection Committee. More recently, Dr Khoo chaired the SingHealth Centralised Institutional Review Board (IRB) A and served as IRB chairman at the Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI).

He was also among the first visiting consultants appointed to the Department of Ophthalmology, National University Hospital, in 1986, and was a clinical teacher with the National University of Singapore.

Public service – champion of ethical aspects of medicine in Singapore and the Asia-Pacific

Dr Khoo's views and advice on medical ethics were highly sought after and respected. He chaired the National Medical Ethics Committee, Ministry of Health (MOH), from 2003 to 2005, on top of the ethical committees of SNEC, SERI and the Parkway Group of Hospitals over various periods. He was also the chairman of the Singapore Advisory

Panel of the Medical Protection Society. MOH invited Dr Khoo to several important policy formulation subcommittees, such as the Health Advisory Council, Committee of Specialists Register and the Committee for Medisave for Private Hospitals. He also chaired the Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO) Ethics Committee.

International achievements in contact lens subspecialty

From 1998 to 2002, Dr Khoo chaired the International Contact Lens Council of Ophthalmology. He also co-authored the book, *Contact Lenses: Medical Aspects*, in 1989. He was a member of the Board of Expert Advisers for the Asian Foundation for the Prevention of Blindness and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness.

Leader

Dr Khoo served two terms as President of SMA (1985 and 1986). He was also on the Singapore Medical Council and the Advisory Subcommittee on Specialist Certification, Academy of Medicine.



The SMA Council expresses our deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the family of Dr Khoo Chong Yew on his passing. Dr Khoo was Past President of SMA and was the SMA Lecturer in 1992, delivering the Lecture on “The Doctor’s Role in a Hi-Tech World”.

Dr Khoo was Secretary-General of the XXVI International Congress of Ophthalmology (1990), which was perhaps the most prestigious world ophthalmic event to be held in Singapore.

Contributions to the community

Dr Khoo contributed significantly to the community, chairing the National Eye Campaign in 1984, which organised eye screenings in 75 community centres. He also provided ophthalmic care to needy patients at the Home Nursing Foundation and served on the Executive Council of the Singapore Eye Foundation. He had also led a Rotary Medical Mission to Cambodia to introduce implant surgery to ophthalmologists.

Honours and recognition

Dr Khoo was accorded the APAO Distinguished Service Award in 1987. He did Singapore proud by delivering the Javal Gold Medal Memorial Lecture at the International Contact Lens Council of Ophthalmology in 1994.

In recognition of his important contributions to SNEC, Dr Khoo was awarded the SNEC Gold Medal in 1997. For his work in the Discipline Committee of the Law Society, Dr Khoo was awarded the National Day Public Service Medal (PBM) in 2005.

Role model

We are indeed grateful to the late Dr Khoo for his outstanding contributions to ophthalmology. As one of the founding fathers of ophthalmology in Singapore, the younger generation truly has an exemplary role model in Dr Khoo. ♦

Further readings

1. Lim KH. *Leading lights in the Asia-Pacific: XXI Congress, Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology*. Singapore, 2006.
2. Lim A. *Seri: Singapore's World-Class Research – Singapore Eye Research Institute*. Singapore, 2008.

Legend

1. The late Dr Khoo (first row, centre) and the 26th SMA Council

