

## Report on SMA 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Medical Convention “Surviving in a World of Germs: What You Must Know About”

The SMA 32nd Annual Medical Convention was recently held on 21 & 22 April at Suntec Convention Centre. It was well attended by over 200 participants on each day.

The theme of the Convention was “Infectious Diseases” and we partnered the Society of Infectious Disease, Singapore (SIDS), which was the co-organiser. The Convention was sponsored by Yakult Singapore, who has been a regular sponsor of our Annual Conventions since 1992. The event attracted several pharmaceutical exhibitors - Abbott Laboratories, Bayer, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, Kyowa Hakko, Pfizer, Roche and Wyeth.

We were pleased that Consumers’ Association of Singapore (CASE) supported this event. Our Guest of Honour was Dr Teo Ho Pin, CASE President and Member of Parliament. In his opening speech, he stressed the importance of prevention

being better than cure and hoped that consumers and patients can be adequately informed and educated in the fight against infections in the community.

In the bilingual public forums, the invited speakers spoke on a range of topics that were commonly encountered by children and adults - coughs and colds, respiratory and urinary tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases and viral hepatitis.

In the professional symposium, Dr Wong Sin Yew, President of SIDS, gave a keynote speech on “What can be done about Antibiotic Resistance”. Although antibiotics have saved countless lives and changed the practice of medicine, they are also victims of their own success. He explained that there is a need to be concerned because infections with antibiotic resistant organisms have been associated with poorer clinical outcomes and higher resource use. Dr Wong

believed that the problem is a global one and it threatens mankind with the prospect of returning to the pre-antibiotic era. Physicians need to prolong the viability of current antibiotics by using them only when they are needed. They also have to work towards utilising better diagnostic tools when managing patients with infections. More importantly, there is a need for increased patient education so as to pre-vent patient over-reliance on antibiotics.

Other experts in the professional symposium presented updates of clinical management on infections of the respiratory tract, urinary tract, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection and Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease. ■

### Editor’s Note:

For those who have missed this year’s Convention, the seminar notes can be viewed or downloaded from our website at <http://www.sma.org.sg/whatsnew/convention2001.html>



From left, Dr Thirumoorthy, A/Prof Goh Lee Gan, A/Prof Cheong Pak Year, Dr Leong See Odd.