

Kwan Hoong from University of Malaya, Professor Ismail Bahari from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Ms. Marina Mishar from Atomic Energy Licensing Board and Richard Ee from Ministry of Health.



### **Julius Centre University of Malaya's Board of Studies Meeting 31 January 2008**

The Board of Studies of the Julius Centre University of Malaya (JCUM) conducted its first meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008 to discuss on the activities of JCUM. The board consist of members from the Faculty of Medicine and the Ministry of Health. Those present for this meeting were:



1. Prof Patrick Tan, the Deputy Dean of Faculty of Medicine;
2. Assoc Prof Awang Bulgiba, the Head of Department of SPM;
3. Datin Rugayah Bakri, Deputy Director Health Technology Assessment Unit, Ministry of Health;
4. Dr. Maimunah A. Hamid, Director of Institute for Health Systems Research, Ministry of Health;
5. Prof Dr Azad Hassan Abdul Razak, Head of Department of Surgery;
6. Assoc Prof Dato S. Noor Ghani, Dept of SPM;
7. Dr Sanjay Rampal, Dept of SPM ; and
8. Celine Quek, Dept of SPM

### **Julius Centre University of Malaya**

The Julius Centre University of Malaya was borne out of the collaboration between the University of Malaya (UM) and the University Medical Centre, Utrecht (UMCU). UMCU together with the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine (CEBM), University of Oxford, the Rumah Sakit Cipto Mangunkusumo (RSCM) Hospital, Jakarta and UM had earlier won a bid under the Asia-Link project series funded by the European Union. The winning bid for this particular Asia-Link project was called the Asia-Europe Clinical Epidemiology and Evidence-Based Medicine project (fondly referred to as Asia-Link within JCUM) and required the collaboration of at least 2 European and 2 Asian partners. The project will last for 3 years (Nov 2007 to Oct 2010) and was officially launched on 19 Nov 2007 in UM. To further strengthen

the ties between UMCU as well as UM, it was decided by the SPM Department that the department would set up a centre which would further the collaboration beyond the remit of the Asia-Link project.

Professor Awang Bulgiba presented the proposal to create this centre to the UM Management and the centre was approved by the UM Management on 9 Jan 2008 and subsequently by the UM Senate in April 2008.

The aims of the JCUM are:

1. To carry out research in the field of epidemiology
2. To develop the field of epidemiology in Malaysia
3. To train medical staff in the field of epidemiology and medical statistics
4. To improve the quality of epidemiological research in Malaysia
5. To develop training and activity development programmes in epidemiology and medical statistics in the Faculty of Medicine, UM
6. To act as the centre for problem solving in research methodology and medical statistics in the country

The Faculty of Medicine kindly agreed to renovate a number of rooms within the SPM Department to house the centre. Renovation work started in late 2008 and is expected to be completed in early 2009. The renovations are expected to cost around RM100,000. When completed the JCUM is expected to have a visiting professor room, 2 work areas to house 12 doctoral students and 2 research officers, a server room and a meeting room.

Presently the JCUM members comprise the following:

Prof Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud (SPM)  
Dr Noran Naqiah Hairi (SPM)  
Dr Mas Ayu Said (SPM)  
Dr Sanjay Rampal (SPM)  
Dr Victor Hoe Abdullah (SPM)  
Dr Claire Choo Wan Yuen (SPM)  
Dr Moy Foong Ming (SPM)  
Mr Mohd Roshidi Ismail (SPM)  
Dr Liew Su-May (Primary Care Medicine)

The associate members of the JCUM are:

Professor Yolanda van der Graaf (UMCU)  
Professor Diederick Grobbee (UMCU)  
Professor Arno Hoes (UMCU)  
Professor Paul Glasziou (CEBM)

The membership of JCUM is expected to grow in 2009 with more people realising the advantages of having affiliations with JCUM.

The first project officer hired under the Asia-Link programme was Ms Celine Quek She Lin. She served as project officer from January to March 2008 and was succeeded by Ms Aimi Naira Mat Ruzlin who served from April to December 2008. Ms Aimi left to pursue her studies at the end of 2008 and she was succeeded by Ms Hamizwanis Abdul Hamid.

The activities of the JCUM are:

1. Managing research activities in the field of clinical epidemiology and evidence-based medicine.
2. Managing the Asia-Europe Clinical Epidemiology and Evidence-Based Medicine Programme.
3. Short courses in the field of clinical epidemiology and evidence-based medicine.
4. Student exchange programmes amongst PhD candidates between Utrecht, Oxford and Jakarta.
5. Development of curriculum in the field of clinical epidemiology and evidence-based medicine.
6. As a reference and advisory centre in the field of clinical epidemiology and evidence-based medicine.

Since its inception, the centre has been active in carrying out activities under the Asia-Link programme. These activities include maintaining the Asia-Europe CE & EBM website (<http://www.asialink-ce.org>), organising short courses (with UMCU, CEBM and RSCM partners), selecting PhD fellows destined for UMCU and CEBM Oxford and coming out with the clinical epidemiology and evidence-based medicine module for the MBBS programme. Two PhD fellows were selected for 2008 under the Asia-Europe Clinical Epidemiology and Evidence-Based Medicine Programme. They were Dr Nirmala Bhoopathy and Dr Liew Su-May. Dr Nirmala is currently in UMCU and Dr Liew is currently in CEBM Oxford. The following activities were carried out by the Julius Centre since its inception.

Date	Event
17 Nov 2007	Launch of Asia-Link program in KL
18-20 Nov 2007	First Asia-Link course in UM (Diagnostic Research - Theory and Practice)
1 Jan 2007	UM project officer hired
Feb 2008	First Alliance newsletter

14 Apr 2008	First round of Asia-Link PhD interviews
14-16 Apr 2008	Second Asia-Link course in UM (The Practice of EBM)
Aug 2008	Second Alliance newsletter
Sept 2008	First batch of PhD fellows (Nirmala for UMCU and Su-May for CEBM Oxford)
	CE module agreed and being finalised
13 Oct 2008	Second round of Asia-Link PhD interviews
15-17 Dec 2008	Third & fourth Asia-Link courses in UM (Clinical Trials & Prognostic Research)

The first, third and fourth Asia-Link courses were conducted with the assistance of our UMCU partner while the second Asia-Link course was conducted with the assistance of our CEBM partner.

For 2009, JCUM is expected to mature further. JCUM is expected to house 2 PhD and 4 DrPH students beginning in the 2009/10 session. One of the activities of the JCUM will be the incorporation of CE and EBM into the undergraduate curriculum, which it is expected to be carried out in 2009. A wellness cohort study and CVD cohort study are being planned for 2009.

The future is bright for JCUM as it is an officially recognised research centre in the Faculty of Medicine and is expected to grow to be the referral centre for epidemiology and evidence-based medicine in Malaysia.

### **Asia-Link Stakeholder's Meeting in Manila**

Associate Professor Awang Bulgiba attended the Asia-Link Stakeholders' Meeting and Asia-Link Symposium in Manila from 21st to 24th February 2008 as the sole representative of UM. The meeting was aimed at presenting Asia-Link projects to stakeholders of Asia-Link grants and resulted in very useful knowledge of Asia-Link collaborations. Associate Professor Awang Bulgiba also managed to talk to a number of academicians from the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, France, Italy and Austria during the meeting and symposium. A lot of potentially



useful contacts were made with people from other countries and a lot of networking was accomplished during that time.



### **Asialink Meeting - 14-15 April 2008**



A meeting was held in the Department of SPM between representatives from the Julius Centre, University Medical Centre, Utrecht and Centre of Evidence Based Medicine, University of Oxford on the 14 and 15 April 2008. The meeting was to discuss on the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on the Asialink project: "Asia Europe Clinical Epidemiology and Evidence-Based Medicine Programme" and on the planning of the programme for the next three years.

Those present at the meeting included Professor Diederick Grobbee, Professor Arnoe Hoes, Professor Graaf Yolanda, and Marco Perdon from the University Medical Centre Utrecht, Professor Paul Glasziou from the Centre of Evidence Based Medicine, University of Oxford, Dr Helena M Verkooijen the Asialink project Manager, and representative from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya.

### **Seminar on "Effective and Efficient Disaster Management"**

The Department successfully organised the seminar on "Effective and Efficient Disaster Management" on 23rd July 2008 in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya. The seminar was officiated by Professor Ikram Shah, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya. The speakers for the conference included both International and local experts in disaster management from Universities, Government agencies and Multinational companies.

The participants for the conference included postgraduate students from the Faculty of Medicine, healthcare practitioners, both from the public and private sectors.

During the seminar, the following topics were discussed:

1. Introduction to Disasters and Management

2. Malaysian Disasters and Management
3. Community Based Disaster Preparedness
4. Disaster Evaluation and Management
5. Industrial Disasters and Management
6. Trauma Management in Disasters
7. Detoxification of Chemical Pollutants in Disaster Management
8. Motor Vehicle Disasters and Management

## **People & Events**

### **Professor Awang Bulgiba as external examiner for USM**

Prof Awang Bulgiba was invited to be the external examiner this year for the MSc in Medical Statistics for Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). He examined the dissertations of 6 candidates in that program and held an oral examination for them on April 22 and 23 in Kota Baru, which is the health campus of Universiti Sains Malaysia. He also held discussions with our counterparts from the Department of Community Medicine in USM and exchanged ideas on postgraduate education. He thinks there is great scope for collaborations with our counterparts from USM, which despite their distance have always maintained close relations with the SPM Department.



### **Master candidates orientation**

The new Master of Public Health and Master of Medical Science in Public Health candidates had their orientation session on the 29th and 30th May 2008 which was organised by the University. The candidates were also briefed by the Department of SPM's Postgraduate Unit which was followed by tea.

### **Lecture on Ergonomics and Healthy Work Practice during OSH week**

Dr Victor Hoe Chee Wai was invited by the Chemistry Department Malaysia to participate in the Occupational Safety and Health Week Programme. He spoke on the topic "Ergonomics and Healthy Work Practice". The talk was held at the Chemistry Department's Forensic Building in Petaling Jaya on 9th July 2008. It was attended by over 30 participants who were from all levels of staff from the Chemistry Department.



## **Lecture on "What is in your smoke?" at the launch of the Faculty of Engineering's anti smoking campaign**

Dr Victor Hoe Chee Wai was invited to deliver a lecture on dangers of tobacco smoking during the launch of the Faculty of Engineering's "Tak-Nak" or the Anti Smoking campaign. The campaign was launch by the Professor Md Ghazaly Shaaban who is the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering. The campaign was scheduled to run from 13th August till 27th August with various interesting activities. The event was attended by both staff and students from the Faculty of Engineering.



## **Talk on "Medical Research in a New Country - the UAE" by Professor Aw**

Professor Aw Tar-Ching the external examiner for the MBBS Phase IIIA examination presented a paper on "Medical Research in a New Country - the UAE" during the Wednesday morning clinical talk at the Clinical Auditorium in the University of Malaya Medical Centre. The session was chaired by Associate Professor Retneswari Masilamani from the Department of SPM. Professor Aw is Professor of Occupational Medicine and the Chair, Department of Community Medicine from the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, United Arab Emirates University in UAE.



Professor Aw started by giving a brief description of the country, the UAE, and followed with a talk on research in general and also the issue of research in UAE in particular. He also touched on collaborative effort between his University and other National and International organisations on research matters. Prof Aw stressed that there is opportunity for collaborative research between his university and the University of Malaya.

## **Workshops & Courses**

### **Multiple Logistic Regression in Medical Research**

The course on Multiple Logistic Regression in Medical research was held in the SPM Computer Laboratory from 13 February to 14 February 2008. The one and a half day course was designed to educate participants in the correct use of multiple logistic regression, using the SPSS software for their research in the medical field. The main faculty for this course was Assoc Prof



Awang Bulgiba who delivered his lectures and had hands-on sessions for the participants.

The participants included Master of Public Health and Master of Medical Science in Public Health candidate as well as professors, lecturers and students from the Faculty of Medicine and other faculties in University of Malaya.

### **Survival Analysis in Medical Research**



The course on Survival Analysis in Medical research was held in the SPM Computer Laboratory from 14 February to 15 February 2008. The one and a half day course was designed to describe the various methods used for modelling and evaluating survival data, also called time-to-event data; it included survival and hazard functions, Kaplan-Meier graphs, log-rank and related tests, and Cox proportional hazards model. The main faculty for this course was Dr Sanjay

Rampal who delivered his lectures and had hands-on sessions.

The participants included Master of Public Health and Master of Medical Science in Public Health candidates as well as professors, lecturers and students from the Faculty of Medicine.

### **Hospital Cost Accounting**

The course on Hospital Cost Accounting was held at the SPM Computer Laboratory on 17 and 18 March 2008. The two day course dealt with the process of calculating costing for a hospital. It gives an overall view of the methodology for analysing hospital costs and the different manner in which this information can be applied, including costing exercises for cost-effectiveness and cost-utility analyses as well as costing in the context of case-mix reimbursements. The faculty even threw in "kitchen sink and cooker" scenario. The main faculty for this course was Dr Ng Chiu Wan and Dr Maznah Dahlui who delivered their lectures and had hands- on sessions.



The participants included Master of Public Health and Master of Medical Science in Public Health candidates as well as lecturers and students from the Department of Community Dentistry, Faculty of Dentistry.

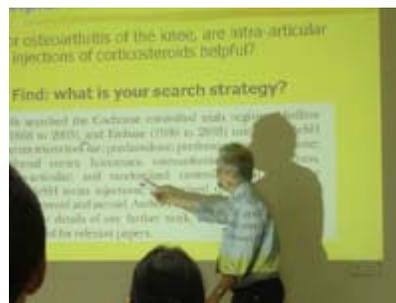
### **Logistic regression using SPSS (27-28 March 2008)**

Prof Awang Bulgiba conducted a one and half day workshop on logistic regression using the SPSS software. The workshop was organised by the SPSS Users Group and took place at the SPSS Training Centre Plaza Mont Kiara on 27 and 28 March 2008. A total of 9 participants took part in the workshop. The participants had the benefit of small group teaching and hands-on

experience with logistic regression using SPSS. Participants were taken through the theory part of logistic regression, practical aspects of logistic regression and were required to complete an exercise in analysing data using SPSS.

### **The Practice of Evidence Based Medicine**

The workshop on Practice of Evidence Based Medicine was held from 14-16 April 2008 at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. The workshop was organised by the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine with the collaboration from and the Centre of Evidence Based Medicine, University of Oxford. It was attended by healthcare professionals from the University of Malaya, Ministry of Health Malaysia, Melaka Manipal Medical College, University Malaysia Sabah and Aga Khan University.



The main faculty was Professor Paul Glasziou from the Centre of Evidence Based Medicine, University of Oxford. He was assisted by Dr Bambang Tridjaja and Dr Indah Widyahening from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Indonesia, and Dr Liew Su-May, Dr Mas Ayu, Dr Sanjay Rampal and Dr Victor Hoe from Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya.

### **Scientific Writing for Publication Workshop (26-29 April 2008)**

Prof Awang Bulgiba was invited by the Ministry of Health to conduct a workshop in Gems Beach Resort in Kuala Terengganu together with Prof Looi Lai Meng, Prof Sarinah Low and Prof Ng Kwan Hoong. The workshop was on Scientific Writing for Publication and was co-organised by the Kuala Terengganu District Health Office. The workshop was conducted over 4 days (26-29 April 2008) and Prof Awang's session was on 27 April. There were 60 participants of various job categories. Prof



Awang Bulgiba spoke on how to write the statistical results of a journal publication and conducted an exercise with the participants on interpreting and presenting results.

### **Using Endnote X1: A One-day Workshop on 7 May 2008**

The 7th of May saw yet another successful seminar conducted on "ENDNOTE" by the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine (SPM), Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya.

The workshop took off with an introduction by Professor Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud, the Head of the Department of SPM, on bibliography software and Endnote. Though there have been other bibliography software being used lately, Endnote has been taken up well

because it has been recommended by University Malaya and also appears much more user-friendly.



Dr Moy Foong Ming enlightened everyone with the manual data entry and deleting methods, furthering on managing the libraries. She focused on creating, deleting and copying from one library to another and the interesting session was learning to edit styles from one to another based on one's needs and requirements. Searching an online database directly from Endnote was an added information to the earlier manual method.

Prof Awang kept all the participants captivated on how to import citations from ScienceDirect, download full-text and link files from citations using Endnote. Prof Awang also demonstrated on how to import Reference Manager Database and PubMed citations into Endnote.

Other sessions followed, enabling participants to insert citations into a word document, change styles and create an unformatted reference list.

The afternoon 'Hands-On' sessions kept everyone busy till the end as the exercises were as challenging as ever with some of the participants facing internet 'hiccups'. Everyone tried their best to learn as much as they could, as it appeared so useful to the participants, where Endnote seemed relevant to the groups who were mainly researchers within and outside the Medical Faculty.



There was an overwhelming response and good feedback from the participants to this courses and the Department of SPM plans to conduct another in the near future.

### **Short course on Quality Management in Health Care**

A short course on "Quality management in health care" was conducted in the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine on 18th -19th August 2008. The course was jointly organized by Institute of Health System Research, Ministry of Health, Malaysia and Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Malaysia. The overall objective of this course is to enable health professionals to understand and apply the concepts and principles of quality and quality management. This course will prepare participants to take an active role in quality improvement in their health care setting.

There were altogether (31) course participants. Majority of participants were MPH and MMedSc (PH) students. The rests were from Ministry of Health, Sri Kota Medical Centre and MOHAS College.

**The introductory lecture on quality in health care** was conducted by AP Saimy B Ismail (Department of Social & Preventive Medicine). The lecture covered the concepts, terminology and historical overview of quality in health care. **Quality cycle and principles of quality in Health care** lecture was given by Mr. Ramli Zainal (Institute of Health Systems Research). It focused on steps of the quality cycle and application to quality improvement project. **Measuring and evaluating quality** was taught by Dr. Tin Tin Su (Department of Social & Preventive Medicine). The topic covered tools to measure and evaluate quality management programme and data collection methods.



Prof. Maimunah A. Hamid (Institute of Health Systems Research) led the questions and answers session, and introduced the group work. The participants were divided into four groups and worked different case studies.

**Quality Management Approaches and Framework** lecture was given by Dr. Siti Haniza Mahmud (Institute of Health Systems Research). The framework for quality of care assessment and issues in licensure, certification, credentialing and accreditation were discussed. Dato' Dr. Sirajoon Noor Ghani (former Associate Professor, Department of Social & Preventive Medicine) gave the lecture on **quality culture – institutionalization and sustaining quality**. The lectures focused on practical issues in implementing and improving quality in the health care setting.

The participants continued group work and presented their deliberations. All lecturers were involved in the group's presentation, discussion and evaluation sessions.

Almost all participants were highly satisfied with the course contents and management. The course fulfilled their expectation and increased new and relevant knowledge on quality in health care. The participants highly recommended conducting similar courses in future. Some suggestions are, to focus more detail on implementing quality, cover more topics and combine with field excursion. The MPH and MMedSc students suggested that such short courses should not be conducted during the semester breaks.

We applied for CME accreditation for this course to the secretariat at the Malaysian Medical Association. Six credit points under category IC will be accredited for each participant. Three Credit Points under Category 3B (a) will be given to the Speakers.

### **Basic Biostatistics Course at University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) on 16-17 August 2008**

Professor Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud and Mohd Roshidi Ismail conducted a Basic Biostatistics Course at University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) on 16th and 17th August 2008. Organised by the Clinical Research Centre (CRC), Hospital Umum Sarawak, the course aims to

provide basic theory and practical skills on biostatistics for clinicians and researchers in health or medical fields from both CRC and UNIMAS.



### **Dept of SPM's Strategic Planning Workshop 8th - 10th August 2008**

The Department completed the development of documents for the Malaysia Quality Framework (MQF) for the Master of Public Health, Master of Medical Science in Public Health and Doctor of Public Health, and the Strategic Planning Workshop in Corus Paradise Resort Port Dickson from the 8 - 10 August 2008. The Department managed to engage the expertise of Professor Aw Tar-Ching the Professor of Occupational Medicine and the Chair, Department of Community Medicine from the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, United Arab Emirates University in UAE who has extensive working experience in institutions in United Kingdom and other worldwide organisations. Dato Dr S. Noor Ghani who was previously the head of the Postgraduate Section with the Department were also roped in for his extensive expertise in the field of medical training, both at the university and Ministry of Health Malaysia.

The workshop started with team building activities and identifications of current and future issues within the Department, followed on the second day the development of the MQF documents and then the strategic planning. The workshop has managed to develop the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine Strategic Plan for the next 10 years.



## Asia Europe Clinical Epidemiology Workshops on Clinical Trials and Prognostic Research

The Asia Europe Clinical Epidemiology workshops on Clinical Trials and Prognostic Research were successfully conducted on 17 December 2008. The three days workshop was held at the Department and attended by participants from various agencies including the Faculty and Ministry of Health.



**AsiaLink**  
Clinical Epidemiology & Evidence-based Medicine  
<http://asialink-cc.org>

AsiaLink Clinical Epidemiology Programme:  
**PROGNOSTIC RESEARCH WORKSHOP**  
15-17 December 2008  
University of Malaya


Department of Social and Preventive Medicine  
Faculty of Medicine  
<http://spm.um.edu.my>



**UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA**



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## Statistics and EBM for psychiatrists

Prof Awang Bulgiba and Dr Mas Ayu conducted a 2-day course for psychiatrists from all over Malaysia from 13-14 December 2008 at the Damai Laut Swiss-Garden Resort in Lumut, Perak. The course was attended by 20 psychiatrists from all over the country. The topics covered included basic statistical analysis and the use of PICO and RAMmBO in systematic review.

