



The Society held its AGM on 23 August 2014. We reported on the work done a year ago. The highlights of the year were two seminars organized by the society and the 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting which was reported in the last issue of the GSS Bulletin. We succeeded in capturing all the presentations and powerpoints on video – Google “ASCA 2014 –

Gerontological Society of Singapore” and it will bring you to the webpage which is URL: <http://www.gs.org.sg/asca2014.htm>. Thanks are due to our photographer Mr Chuah Chin Joo for his painstaking efforts.

May I take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Council Members for their invaluable contributions: Ms Kwek Puay Ee, Ellen Cheng, and Christine Sim. We welcome the following new in-coming Council Members: Ms Phyllis Lee, Ms Mary Low and Mr Wong Lit Shoon.

The first task of the new Council will be to organize the SG50 GSS Conference. The provisional programme is given on Page 6. Come and participate in the deliberations of the strategies on ageing in Singapore the next 50 years.

Sincerely,



A/Prof Goh Lee Gan  
President, Gerontological Society

## GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY COUNCIL MEMBERS FY 2014-15

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### **Published by:**

Gerontological Society  
89, Short Street, #03-07,  
Golden Wall Centre  
Singapore 188216

### **Printed by:**

Motion Printers & Publications Pte Ltd  
Blk 3023 Ubi Road 3 #06-08  
Singapore 408663



# Photo Highlights...

## 28th AGM cum Forum "Question of the Age"

### 23 August 2014, York Hotel



AGM in progress...President Goh Lee Gan delivering the Annual Report to a rapt audience



(left to right): Council Member Dr Chiang Hai Ding, Speaker Dr Rosemary Khoo, President of NUS Alumni, Honorary Advisor Mr Laurence Wee



(left to right): Honorary Member Mrs Ann Wee, Immediate Past President Prof. Kua Ee Heok in action



Forum Panel (L-R) Laurence Wee, A/P Goh Lee Gan, Prof Kua Ee Heok, Dr Philbert Chin (Chairman, RSVP), Dr Rosemary Khoo



# ASCA2015

## SG50 SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON AGEING

AGEING IN SINGAPORE THE NEXT 50 YEARS

Thursday, 19 March 2015, Marina Mandarin Hotel



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the SG50 Scientific Conference organised to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of Singapore as a nation. The theme of Ageing in Singapore the next 50 years reflects the ethos of this meeting. We have safely passed fifty years of nationhood. The first of the baby boomers born in the post-war era of 1946 to 1964 have now come of age.

How do we as a nation continue to age gracefully? This conference will provide some thoughts and insights.

We are very happy that our Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong will be the Guest of Honour. Thank you Mr Gan for gracing the Conference. We will have 4 seminars covering: successful ageing in the next 50 years; active ageing and chronic disease management; financial independence; and ageing in place.

In this Conference we will be launching a little volume to commemorate the founding of modern day Singapore as a nation with the same title as the Conference theme. At

the same time, we will also be launching the Dementia Prevention Programme.

There will be something of significance for every stakeholder on ageing and care. We look forward to welcoming you to this SG50 Scientific Conference on Ageing.

Sincerely,

A/Prof Goh Lee Gan  
President, Gerontological Society

Register at  
<http://www.gs.org.sg/sg50conference/>  
Enquiries please contact  
Ms Nellie Wong at 62806690,  
email: [gerontologicalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:gerontologicalsociety@gmail.com)

## Report on Forum Proceedings

### Question of the Age (1) How did the elderly age in the last 50 years?

The first speaker Prof Kua Ee Heok recounted the early years of Singapore as an independent nation. He began with the 3 Chinese deities – Fortune. Wealth. Longevity. And that these are what all of us would wish for in our journey through life and in bringing up the next generation. And we get there by doing the right things: resilience, working hard, and going the extra mile. About longevity, the greying of the population is probably the most significant demographic phenomenon in the twenty-first century Prof Kua triumphantly announced. But life was also not a piece of cake: the early years of independent Singapore was a scenario of big families with many mouths to feed. Resilience and tenacity were the hallmark of our parents and these values were imbibed by the baby boomer generation.

The second speaker Dr Philbert Chin spoke of an integrated world of families living in close proximity in what he called integrated living – the kampong life of old. There was the spirit of sharing. He also noted that Singapore prospered and we have all benefitted with the economic progress of our country – there is a need to give back to society too, to help those who are not so fortunate.

The third speaker Dr Rosemary Khoo spoke of the gradual extension of life as control of infections and diseases became possible with the advances of medical science. She also alluded to the landscape of big families. With time, the family size became smaller. Also, with the adoption of Mandarin and the loss of linguistic skills in



dialects in the younger generation, the intergenerational gap grew – the shared world of experience diminished as the dialect skills became more and more diminished.

In the discussion, Dr Philbert Chin commented that with the intergenerational gap, loneliness of the elderly was a consequence. The smaller family size that became the norm with population planning meant there were fewer people to mingle with the elderly. Mr. Laurence Wee also noted that the preoccupation with iPhones, piped-in music in hand-held devices also cut off the social interactions of the younger generation with those around them. Prof Ann Wee talked of the opportunity to learn from one another in the early 60s – she recounted of how the knowledge of self-care was transferred from

one to another – the spread of health literacy – simply because the people had more opportunities to mingle in the kampong setting.

Summary:

- Staying resilient and staying focused in bringing up the family.
- Aspiring to fortune, wealth, and longevity by doing the right things.
- Being inclusive and integrated in relationship with one another.
- Maintain strong family and social relationships.
- Giving back to society some of the things we have received and benefitted.

## Question of the Age (2)

### How should the elderly age in the next 50 years?

The next part of the seminar was to answer the question of how the elderly should age in the next 50 years.

Dr Philbert Chin felt the need to bring back the integrated life of family members. More interaction is necessary and ways and means to breakdown the linguistic barriers. In a way, with the baby boomer grandmothers and grandfathers being more literate, the ability to converse with the grandchildren in English will be less formidable. Still there is the question of opportunity to do so. If the interactions are sparse and few and far in between, not much exchanges of points of view, cultural values, and personal experiences could take place.

The need to grow the younger population numbers was also brought up. Today, the family size is small. Perhaps, the efforts to increase fertility should be given more social support so that young couples feel less daunted to have one or more children above the norm of boy or girl, two is enough.

More interactions and more social engagement at the individual level were again brought up. The message needs to go to the younger generation to avoid shutting themselves out with the new gadgets of communication and music enjoyment through their handphones and portable devices. But easier said than done.

The idea of being included was also discussed. The perception is the elderly person is often not included in the discussions of the day. There will be a need for advocacy for the elderly in this area. Dr Chiang Hai Ding also felt this is necessary.

Ageing well is important. First, by taking care and control of chronic diseases will reduce the risk of disability and the burden of disease. Second, C3A type of activities keeps us engaged. If we also consider having the elderly in active employment beyond 65 years, some may need retraining into new jobs, or even enhancement of skills in whatever they are doing. The ability to exploit technology is certainly a useful skill.

The idea of care beyond cure was also brought up. Certainly, older patients with disability, dementia and end of life will need care to optimize their quality of life.

The discussion of the silver industry was also brought up. Care of frail elderly in their 90s may stretch family resources and paid help may be necessary. There is also the need for respite services.

On the whole it was a lively forum. The Chairman thanked the floor for their active participation.

Summary:

- Be included: more intergeneration communication and conversation.
- Better family and social connections for those who are not so socially outgoing.
- Age actively: be occupied with socially productive and meaningful activities. Exploit technology for better life.
- Control chronic diseases well.
- Participate in developing services that will be needed by the elderly. Develop a social support system to take care of the frail and unwell.



# SG50 SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON AGEING

AGEING IN SINGAPORE THE NEXT 50 YEARS

Thursday 19 March 2015, Marina Mandarin Hotel

Early bird registration by 18 February 2015	<input type="checkbox"/>	SGD \$ 220.00	<b>CONTACT</b>  <b>MS NELLIE WONG</b> 61 Upper Paya Lebar Road #05-02A Tat Wan Building Singapore 534816 Tel: 6280 6690 Fax: 6283 4922 Email: gerontologicalsociety@gmail.com
Conference Fee	<input type="checkbox"/>	SGD \$ 250.00	
Gerontology Society of Singapore members	<input type="checkbox"/>	SGD \$ 150.00	
Overseas Delegates	<input type="checkbox"/>	SGD \$ 180.00	
Student Delegates	<input type="checkbox"/>	SGD \$ 150.00	

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# SG50 SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON AGEING

## AGEING IN SINGAPORE THE NEXT 50 YEARS

Thursday 19 March 2015, Marina Mandarin Hotel

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKERS
<b>8:30 am</b>	<b>Registration</b>	
<b>9:00 am</b>	<b>Welcome Address by President, Gerontological Society</b>	A/Prof Goh Lee Gan
<b>9:10 am</b>	<b>Keynote Address by Guest of Honour</b>	Mr Gan Kim Yong <i>Minister of Health</i>
<b>9:25 am</b>	<b>Launch of :</b> a) SG50 Commemorative Book Ageing in Singapore The Next 50 Years  b) The Dementia Prevention Program	
<b>9:45 am</b>	<b>Zumba Gold</b>	
<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	
<b>10:15 am</b>	<b>Symposium 1 : Successful ageing in the next 50 years</b> • Successful ageing from a Geriatrician's perspective • Mental resilience and an Undeclared Mind • Singapore, a society for all ages • Panel Discussion	Prof Chin Jin Jih Prof Kua Ee Heok Dr Chiang Hai Ding
<b>11:30 am</b>	<b>Symposium 2 : Active ageing &amp; Chronic Disease Management</b> • Active ageing - the TaRA way • Chronic disease management - what works • Ageing gracefully with the right nutrition • Never too old to learn • Panel Discussion	Prof Rathi Mahendran A/Prof Goh Lee Gan Pamela Er Dr Rosemary Khoo
<b>1:00 pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>2:00 pm</b>	<b>Symposium 3 : Financial Independence</b> • Ensuring financial security for Singapore's Seniors • Spending the health dollar • Fundamentals for the individual • Skills matter, not age • Panel Discussion	Christopher Gee Prof Phua Kai Hong Lee Yuit Chieng Dr Lim Sia Hoe
<b>3:00 pm</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	
<b>3:15 pm</b>	<b>Symposium 4 : Ageing in place</b> • Today and tomorrow in Singapore • Today in Asia and Europe • The smart home today and tomorrow • Singapore's telerehabilitation experience: Its basis and how it works • Changing landscape of long term care • Panel Discussion	Ong Yunn Shing Walter Lee Ms Chay Pui San A/Prof Gerald Koh Choon Huat Dr Ian Leong Yi Onn
<b>5:30 pm</b>	<b>End of Conference</b>	