

# ANNUAL REPORT OF WESTERN PACIFIC PHARMACEUTICALS FORUM OF FIP 2005-2006

The Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum has consolidated its position as an active working link between the pharmaceutical associations in the Western Pacific Region. The Forum has completed its fifth year as the face of FIP in our region. The objectives of the Forum are as follows –

- Improving health in the Western Pacific Region by development and enhancement of pharmacy practice and research,
- Encouraging the implementation of pharmacy service and practice, projects by national pharmaceutical associations.
- Supporting WHO policies and integrating appropriate WHO policies into undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development programs.
- Combatting the production and distribution of counterfeit and substandard medicines and the sale of medicines by people who are not qualified.
- Formulating policy statements on health issues identified at meetings of the Forum.

The Western Pacific Region of WHO is the most dynamic region in the world. Its development is related to the great economic changes taking place in the powerhouses of China and Vietnam. The growth in these countries affects the whole region. Changes to the practice of pharmacy have continued at great pace, particularly in relation to the separation of prescribing and dispensing in countries such as Japan, China Taiwan, the Philippines, whilst in Australia and New Zealand with a long history of the separation, considerable developments are taking place in the cognitive services offered by pharmacy. Singapore and Malaysia are still moving towards the separation policy. The government of Vietnam has taken a major step forward with a master plan titled 'Strategy for Pharmaceutical Sector Development up to 2010' in order to assure sufficient supply of quality medicines and the rational and safe use of medicines.

I have been impressed visiting many hospital pharmacies in countries of our region to see the extremely high standards of practice in our hospital pharmacy system. I am delighted with the dynamic attitude shown within our region by our hospital pharmacy colleagues. The Forum looks forward to the day with uniform standards of practice established for countries in our region to enable interchange of pharmacists, provided linguistic skills were attained.

At our last Annual General Meeting, two members of our Executive Board retired due to the effluxion of time: Dr Lu Lizhu and Dr Mei-Ling Hsiao. Both gave valuable service to the establishment of the Forum. Dr Lu Lizhu brought knowledge of pharmacy from the Peoples Republic of China and an understanding of a complicated structure of practice between community, hospital pharmacy and the pharmaceutical industry in China. This in itself was a valuable service to the Forum and to the understanding of pharmacy practice in China.

Dr Mei-Ling Hsiao's retirement was a great loss, not only as an extremely knowledgeable member from China Taiwan, but because of her position in government, she was able to bring to the table an understanding of regional government affairs and process. Dr Hsiao contributed greatly to the progress of the Forum by establishing our website, supported by the Pharmaceutical Society of China Taiwan. On behalf of the Executive Board, I extend our thanks to Dr Hsiao. These two valuable members were replaced by two distinguished and well known pharmacists within the Western Pacific Region: Dr Tony

Tam from China Taiwan and Dr. Soo Ja Nam from Korea.

## **Executive Committee**

I have the honour of working with a group of distinguished pharmacists as the Executive Board of the Forum. Joining with me as President I have: Mr Nobuo Yamamoto, Vice-President, Japan; Dr Wai Keung Chui, Singapore; Dr Tony Tarn, China Taiwan; Dr Soo Ja Nam, Korea and Mr Reynaldo Umali, General Secretary, the Philippines and thank them for the co-operation and devotion to the development of our regional body of FIP working with the World Health Organisation. We also express our appreciation to the enthusiastic support of so many of the pharmacy associations and sub-committees in the countries of our region.

The 2004-2005 Annual General Meeting was held in Cairo, Egypt prior to the FIP meeting. During the year Executive meetings have been held in different member countries throughout the region. These Executive meetings have, this year, been held in Manila, Singapore and Taipei. The three Executive meetings for 2007 will be held in Manila, Melbourne and the third meeting has not yet been decided on, but if the GPP program is instituted in Vietnam, most likely in that country.

## **WHO Regional Office Manila**

It is appropriate that we pay tribute and express our thanks to the various officers of the World Health Organisation in the Western Pacific Region who have given us so much encouragement and support, particularly Dr Budiono Santoso and Mr Jun Yoshida

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The Forum continues to work, where possible, with FAPA which covers both the Western Pacific and South East Asian regions of the World Health Organisation.

## **PROGRAMS**

### **Avian Influenza**

The Forum established a working party to create a fact sheet on Avian Influenza which has been distributed to the pharmaceutical organisations within the region and to FIP with a request to the regional organisations to publish the document in their journals, also seeking permission for any pharmacist who wishes to copy for public benefit

The Forum is of the opinion that there is much misinformation regarding Avian Influenza and this document has been prepared with support and advice of WHO Western Pacific Region in order to dispel some of the misapprehensions. A copy of the Avian Influenza fact sheet is attached to the report. (Appendix I)

The fact sheet has been published widely throughout the region as it is being placed on our website.

### **Counterfeit Drugs**

Because of the rapidly escalating problem of counterfeit drugs within this region, a fact and information paper on counterfeit drugs was introduced by a working group with the advice and support of WHO has been circulated to all the pharmacy organizations in the region, with a request for publication and promotion of the document. It has also been posted on our website. (Appendix 2)

WHO Rapid Alert System seems to be working well and has notified a number of products across a number of countries.

Large number pharmaceutical associations have created awareness programs to warn consumers of the existence of counterfeit medicines the need to only obtain medicines through recognised professional centres.

Korean Pharmaceutical Association provides a good example of a motion that is brought to the attention of the Korean public. An original version showing the cartoon characters will be presented to meeting.

Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Mongolia, are four countries that give Forum most concern in relation to the distribution of counterfeit medicines.

Cambodia has produced a series of posters and T shirts to educate distributors, wholesalers, retailers and prescribers and the public regarding using or dealing with counterfeit medicines. Approximately 10 per cent of all medicines sold in Cambodia are suspected to be counterfeit within the WHO definition of counterfeit medicines. Fortunately many more products were found to be of substandard quality.

Although many of the WPPF countries have a very strong regulatory system, the supply of medicines through the internet still allows for supply to unwary consumers of counterfeit and substandard medicines.

### **Pharmacy Practice Outreach Program**

The Forum was pleased to support the process to establish an outreach program in the Western Pacific Region. To this extent a seminar and listening session was held in Singapore in June 2006 in order to identify the most appropriate country or countries for the next stage of project. Special delegations were present from Vietnam and

Mongolia, with expressions of interest from Malaysia and the Philippines.

The delegations from Mongolia and Vietnam fulfilled the necessary criteria for consideration, required by the FIP GPP program. The Forum, together with the program manager, Mr Kurt Rasmussen from Denmark, will make inspection visits to both Mongolia and Vietnam.

## **I**

The Executive of the Forum was extremely pleased to hear from the government of Vietnam that it was launching a five year program to undertake a change of structure of the whole of the pharmaceutical industry and profession in Vietnam. This includes manufacturing, distribution to the pharmacy and the distribution by the pharmacist. The Vietnam site inspection is to be made almost immediately following the release of this Annual Report with a view to identifying how the outreach program could fit into Vietnam and more particularly, in relation to the intentions of the government to restructure and review the pharmaceutical industry.

The Executive of the Forum also believes that as there are many countries in our region with highly developed GPP standards that they could also be willing to support the FIP GPP project in the interests of developing uniform standards of practice in our region. The Forum would be delighted to hear of any offers of support.

### **The Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum Website**

The website continues to go from strength to strength and was well developed during the year under the direction of Jack Chen from the Pharmaceutical Society of China Taiwan. Unfortunately, Mr Chen has resigned to undertake further studies in the United States and he has been replaced by Ms Hsin-Chun (Katrina) Chou. The website has set up an editorial sub-committee with individual persons being allocated to the task of contacting each of the countries within the region and continually updating information on the website.

The website has recently undertaken some formatting changes to give more information to members of associations through our region. It is the intention of the Forum to establish an education program to enable pharmacists who are not within reach of education programs within their own countries to gain this opportunity through our website.

We wish to put on record at this Annual General Meeting the appreciation of the Forum for the support of the Pharmaceutical Society of China Taiwan in maintaining our website.

### **Country Reports**

The Forum continues to obtain reports from all pharmaceutical organisations in the region on two occasions each year and then distributes these reports with the minutes of the appropriate meeting of the Executive.

The Forum has found that this is an excellent way to keep each country aware of both concerns and events within the pharmacy profession in the region.

The country reports create a much greater awareness of each country and has created an interest that has resulted in many formal inter-country visits and contacts to obtain further information for various projects being undertaken.

### **Pharmacy Education and Workforce Survey in the Western Pacific Region**

Over the past five years many changes have been undertaken in the undergraduate education programs for pharmacists in the Western Pacific Region. Many of these changes have been undertaken because

of the changing nature of the clinical practice of pharmacy. Some changes in 2006 of particular note are the new requirements in Japan to have a six year pharmacy degree program to obtain a licence to practise and the extension in 2009 in Korea to a six year program. Considerable changes have also taken place in China Taiwan.

The Forum co-operated with FIP in the development of the report 'Global Pharmacy Workforce and Migration Report – A Call for Action'. This is an excellent document to provide global workforce information to all pharmaceutical organisations. It is available in hard copy and also available for downloading from the FIP website: [www.fip.org/hr](http://www.fip.org/hr).

### **New Member Country**

The Forum was able to make contact with the Pharmaceutical Society of Mongolia and following many interactions electronically, has been able to formally meet with a delegation from Mongolia during the Executive meeting held in Singapore.

Mongolia has become a formal member of the Forum and of FIP. It has a well established pharmacy degree course in the capital of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, and in this year has recently held its first clinical pharmacy conference. Mrs Caroline Beischer from Australia formally represented the Forum at this historic conference.

Mongolia has had a national medicines policy since 2002 and is eager to make contact with the wider world.

### **World Health Professions Alliance**

At the second seminar of the World Health Professions Alliance, made up of the World Medical Association, the International Council of Nurses, FIP and joined this year by the World Dental Federation, most of the pharmaceutical organisations in the countries in our region were represented.

The seminar's title 'Teaming up for better health' encouraged and supported by the World Health Organisation encourages greater cooperation between these four recognised principal members of the primary healthcare team.

The Alliance reception for Health Ministers and members and the opening of the World Health Assembly was deeply saddened by the sudden death of Dr Lee from Korea, Director-General of the World Health Organisation. Dr Lee had made a great contribution to activity in public health problems in the short duration of his period as Director-General and will be sadly missed.

### **Ask Questions About Medicines Programs**

All countries continue with this program. The Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore produced a book in its 'Discover Medicine' series entitled 'What's wrong with Oscar'. The Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore published this book to educate children about the importance of taking medicine in the proper dosage and to show them how medicines help restore them to good health. This book has achieved international acclaim

Topics in the book include

- ✍ Why do I fall sick?
- ✍ What are germs?
- ✍ What happens inside my body when I am sick?
- ✍ How do I get well?
- ✍ What does a pharmacist do?
- ✍ Why do I have to take my medicines?
- ✍ Why do I have to finish taking my medicines?

Regular programs also continue in Australia, China Taiwan, Japan and

the Philippines.

### **Pharmacists Against Tobacco**

Continuing programs are supported by individual country pharmaceutical associations. The pharmaceutical associations in China Taiwan have produced an excellent information display for smoking cessation to be used in the pharmacy by pharmacists and pharmacy assistants in advising the public on the dangers of smoking.

Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand continue active anti smoking campaigns regularly throughout the year.

### **Interaction with IPSF**

During the year the Forum continued its co-operation and interaction with IPSF particularly through the Immediate Past President, Katja Hakkarainen and subsequently with John Nguyen the President of the Asia-Pacific Region of the International Pharmacy Students Federation.

As President, I had the opportunity to represent the Forum and the President of FIP at the International Pharmacy Students Federation conference held in Cairns, Australia in July of this year. Some 400 students were present, with a very strong representation of students from within the Western Pacific Region. The next IPSF conference will also be held in the Western Pacific Region, in Taipei, China Taiwan.

### **Regional Meeting of Health Ministers**

The regional meeting of Health Ministers was held in September of this year in Auckland, New Zealand and was attended on behalf of the Forum and FIP by the General Secretary, Reynaldo Umali. Mr Umali made a presentation on the work of the Forum to the Health Ministers present.

Mr Umali was also able, as General Secretary, to introduce the Asia-Pacific President of IPSF, Mr John Nguyen, to many of the delegates present at the meeting.

### **The FIP Foundation/Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum Travel Scholarship**

The scholarships with year were awarded to Ms Sharon Hsiao from China Taiwan and Mr Aaron D'Souza from Australia. The reports of these two young pharmacists received by the Forum and FIP indicated the great value found by young pharmacists participating in these travel scholarships. It is the Forum's wish to extend these travel scholarships and it is the intention to hold discussions with WHO Western Pacific Region in order to establish internships for final year pharmacy students, or newly graduated pharmacists in countries within the region, to further their experience.

### **General**

Last year the Forum was able to congratulate the National University of Singapore and the Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore in celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> year of service to pharmacy. This year the Forum extends its congratulations and best wishes to Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, Victorian College of Pharmacy which has achieved its 125<sup>th</sup> year of service to the profession and looks forward to celebrating with an Executive meeting in Melbourne, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Pharmaceutical Society in Australia in 1857.

The Forum looks forward to providing its principal role in the region by working closely with the pharmaceutical associations in the Western Pacific Region, with WHO and with FIP.

The Forum would like to thank Dr Peter Kielgast, in his role as

mediate Past President of FIP, for the support that he has given to First years of existence of the Western Pacific Forum and to his support for the concept of the Forums of FIP in principle. We also express our appreciation to Mr Ton Hoek, General Secretary of FIP and the staff at the FIP office in The Hague, for their co-operation with the Forum during the past year.

The Forum is most impressed with the global outlook of young pharmacists in our region and we believe that augurs well for the future and the future co-operation of pharmacists within our Western Pacific Region and our close neighbors in the South East Asian region.

was most impressed with a particular statement by Aaron D' Souza, a young Australian pharmacist and awardee of an FIP International Travel Scholarship on behalf of the Forum. In his report Aaron said

*'the most important lesson I learned from my experience is that pharmacists the world over share similar concerns, similar cares and similar Issues, an end to memory is discussing the benefits of pharmacy professional services with pharmacists from a wide variety of countries'. He goes on to say "these international links and cross disciplinary networking will be/ Innovation and development in the practice of pharmacy*

The Forum looks forward to serving all pharmacists in the Western Pacific Region in the future.

**John Ware OAM**  
President  
Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum

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## APPENDIX 1 WPPF WORKING GROUP ON AVIAN INFLUENZA 13 JANUARY 2006, MANILA

Avian influenza or 'bird flu' is a contagious disease of animals caused by a virus that normally infects only birds and, less commonly, pigs.

The H5N1 virus is the agent of cause for the recent outbreak of bird flu among the populations of domesticated poultry around the world.

Bird flu cannot be transmitted from poultry meat or egg products that are fully cooked.

#### Prevention against infection

- Avoid contact with birds, unless necessary. Exercise extreme personal hygiene when handling birds and bird products
- Cook all foods to a minimum of 70°C to kill the virus
- Eggs should be cooked through, avoid consuming runny egg yolks
- Do not allow juices from raw poultry to come in contact with cooked or uncooked foods, therefore good food hygiene practice is essential

Currently there is no pandemic outbreak. Health authorities will notify the public should human to human transmissions occur.

#### Preventative vaccines

- a. Vaccines against bird flu are being developed and clinical trials on a few potential vaccines are being conducted
- b. Currently available vaccines are not effective against bird flu

Antiviral medications such as Tamiflu (oseltamivir) and Relenza (zanamivir) can reduce the severity and duration of seasonal influenza, but **they are not specific for bird flu**

8 Do not self-medicate without first consulting with a physician or a pharmacist, especially when you are also suffering from other chronic medical conditions

Consult a pharmacist for proper storage of these medications at home. Stockpiling of such medications is not advisable

10 Beware of potential counterfeit drugs available in the market, it is therefore not recommended to purchase these medications over the Internet. All medications should be obtained or purchased from legally

11 The symptoms of bird flu are similar to ordinary flu. If you are involved with poultry or birds in any way and develop flu-like symptoms, consult your physician or local health authority immediately.

12 For more information on bird flu please refer to the following

- Your Ministry of Health or Department of Health
- Your city or town health office
- Your national pharmaceutical associations
- [http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/avian\\_faqs/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/avian_faqs/en/index.html)
- [http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian_influenza/en/)

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