

President's Welcome



Dear APACPH Members,

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our executive board members who had attended the APACPH Management Committee Meeting in Taipei last March. According to the report of Prof. Amin, the APJPH will get impact factors in July and the organizer of the 41st APACPH Conference decided its supplement will be published by APJPH.

The Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health (APACPH) is celebrating its 25th Anniversary since it was founded in Hawaii with just 5 founding members. It has now grown to 63 members in 21 countries with the leading universities in each country being represented through, medical, public health and dental schools.

APACPH President's office in collaboration with the 41st Conference Organizing Committee is coordinating the participation of the leadership of our member universities to provide us their vision and direction for the next 25 years. Some of the themes suggested are:

- (1) The Universal University, the Internet & Borderless Education (ICUH)
- (2) Historical Milestone for APACPH
- (3) Universities and Advocacy for Indigenous People & Human Rights

I personally look forward to your participation at this our 41st APACPH International Conference at Taipei, Taiwan from 3-6 December 2009. With your support and efforts, the coming 41st APACPH Conference in conjunction with the 25th APACPH Anniversary will be a fruitful and successful one.

Warmest regards,



Wen-Ta Chiu, MD, PhD
 President, APACPH
 President, Taipei Medical University

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Background: The Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health

APACPH is a consortium of over 60 public health institutions in 19 countries across the Region. The Vision of the Consortium is to achieve the highest possible level of health of all the people of the nations of the Asia-Pacific region. APACPH aims to enhance Regional capacity to improve the quality of life and to address major public health challenges through the delivery of education, research and population health services by member institutions.

APACPH supports activities that forward its five main objectives:

- (i) To enhance the quality and relevance of educational and training programs in public health;
- (ii) To expand knowledge, improve skills and demonstrate effective interventions;
- (iii) To raise awareness of current, emerging, and re-emerging public health issues and develop programs of action for their resolution;
- (iv) To enhance the capacity and sustainability of public health systems;
- (v) To assist in policy and leadership development for health;

APACPH has six Regional Offices, holds an Annual conference on a topical public health issue and publishes in conjunction with Sage Publishing, the Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health, the only English language journal of its type in the Region.

APACPH Member Notices

Annual Subscription Payments

Invoices for the 2009 APACPH member subscription have been sent out. Please process your payment as soon as possible. Payments of invoices are due on **8 August 2009**.

APACPH Conference 2009 - Taipei, Taiwan

The conference will be from **3-6 December** with the pre-conference workshops and the APACPH General Assembly on 3 December. **Due date for Abstracts has been extended to 15 July** and Conference Registration will open on **June 30**. Please logon to the conference website www.apacph2009.tw for details and updates.

Changes with APACPH Management

Prof Ian Rouse who was the Honorary Treasurer has moved to Fiji to take up the position of Dean at the Fiji School of Medicine. We congratulate him on his new position and look forward to seeing him at future APACPH meetings and also perhaps having the Fiji School of Medicine join the APACPH membership. Due to this move, the Executive Board has nominated **A/Prof Phitaya Charupoonphol** from Mahidol University to take up the position of Honorary Treasurer.

Changes at the APACPH Directorate

The Directorate Office will be ceasing its operations from Monash University from 2010 onwards. Monash University has been hosting the APACPH Directorate Office since 2007 under the leadership of Prof Brian Oldenburg who will still remain as the APACPH Representative from Monash University as well as the Regional Director for the Australian Regional Office.

The Executive Board is currently reviewing options of relocating the Directorate Office or to find other ways to carry out the functions of the Directorate Office.

The APACPH Executive Officer, Mr Desmond Gul, will also be finishing up his time with APACPH by the end of June. He will be taking up a new position as Research Administrator for the Centre of Microbial Genomics at Monash University. Ms Emma Frean who has recently joined Monash University will be taking over the role of Executive Officer for APACPH during this time till the end of the year.

World Health Day Forum at Monash

Alfred Medical Research and Education Precinct (AMREP) Global Health Forum, World Health Day 2009

(prepared by Emma Frean)

'**Global Health and Global Crises**' was the theme of the 3rd Annual AMREP Global Health Forum which took place on World Health Day in Melbourne on 7 April 2009. Significant contributions in organizing the Forum were made by AMREP partners, including **Monash University**, the **Burnet Institute**, **Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute** and **The Alfred Hospital**. Over 250 participants, from South Africa, China, Indonesia, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia participated in the event to exchange ideas and discuss the ways in which the global financial crisis and its subsequent economic impact on all countries will affect the future health and well-being of citizens from developing nations.

The Forum brought together both international and local researchers, among them representatives from Oxford University, the Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research and the Fiji School of Medicine, as well as professionals from the World Bank and AusAID. There was also considerable representation from the NGO community, with representatives from World Vision, Médecins Sans Frontières and Plan International. Up to one third of participants were students from various disciplines, with a significant presence by Ignite, a student-lead organisation functioning out of Monash University with a focus on global health improvement. The group coordinated a photographic exhibition of images relevant to the theme of the Forum and attendees were asked to nominate the best image. The winning photo was submitted by Daniel Mason, entitled 'Mother and Child'.

Keynote speakers included **Professor Dan Ncayiyana**, Editor, South African Medical Journal, who gave an informative presentation on the challenges of access, equity and quality confronting health and health systems in sub-Saharan Africa. He highlighted the role played by poverty and poor governance in South Africa's failure to achieve better provision of health services in the fifteen years of post-apartheid democracy. **Professor Mark McGillivray**, Chief Economist at AusAID, similarly discussed health inequality and increasing deprivation in developing countries, with particular reference to the current financial climate. The greatest challenge to improving global well-being lies in restoring the health-income nexus for low health countries through positive global income growth.

The changing nature of the international health operating environment, known as 'global health architecture', was discussed by **Ms Susan Ivatts**, Director of the Health & HIV Thematic Group (AusAID), who highlighted the proliferation of organisations, initiatives and partnerships to address declining health status in low and middle income countries. The current work by the High Level Taskforce on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems shows a need to strengthen countries' capacity to take ownership of projects, along with a need to build better relationships between actors, particularly those with civil society.

Further to the theme of the global financial crisis and aid financing was that of the global food crisis and the state of nutrition and health of developing countries. Resulting from an increase in demand and higher energy prices, global food prices rose by 83% over 2007-08 financial year. This pushed 100 million people below the 'dollar-a-day' poverty line and forced low income groups to switch to nutritionally-poor foods. Speakers identified a need for a greater focus on food-based nutrition, largely through agricultural capacity building, as trialled in the Millennium Villages Project in Africa.



Winning photo - 'Mother and Child' by Daniel Mason

Swaziland Mission by Taipei Medical University

Prof Wen-Ta Chiu in his capacity as President of **Taipei Medical University**, had just returned from the **Kingdom of Swaziland** for an inspective tour of Taiwan Medical Mission which is executed by Taipei Medical University.

The Guidelines of this Mission are as follows:

1. To provide long-stay medical service in Swaziland;
2. To provide professional medical training and know-how transfer programs from Taiwan;
3. To assist hospital management in Swaziland;
4. To execute hygiene and nutrition plan for children;
5. To provide mobile medical services

Since April last year, the team of 9 Taiwanese doctors and health professionals stationed at the Mbabane General Hospital has performed numerous brain, spina, abdominal and orthopaedic surgeries as well as worked with the local surgeons in cancer surgery. The team also worked with the local people to improve the health of the people of Swaziland.

Apart from visiting this medical team in Mbabane General Hospital, Prof Wen-Ta Chiu participated in the celebration event of His Majesty, **King Mswaiti III's** birthday and met with the Prime Minister, **Dr. Dlamini** for further cooperation.

APACPH Early Career Network (ECN) Regional Short Course

Theme: **Health advocacy and policy strategies for the prevention and control of Non Communicable Diseases**

Dates: **August 12-14th August 2009**

Venue: **College of Public Health, University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines**

Facilitators:

Dr Susan Mercado, Programme Coordinator, Cities and Health Programme, World Health Organization Western Pacific (WPRO)

Dr Cherian Varghese (WHO Technical Officer for Non Communicable Disease)

Prof Marilyn Fe Lorenzo (expert in health policy)

The short course is to familiarize students with the strategies of public health advocacy and how to translate public health evidence to public health advocacy. The residential short-course will be open to students and professionals in the Asia-Pacific region. The course is currently offered in English only.

Who should take this course?

- Public health professionals
- Public health researchers who wish to translate their evidence-base to informing policy and making change
- Staff from Ministries of Health, international and governmental organizations wanting to see how evidence can be translated into reforming program policies

What is the cost?

The cost for the course itself is free. However, participants are expected to pay **US\$200** per person towards the accommodation, meals and field trips/tours over the course period. Participants are responsible for all of their travel expenses and incidentals such as laundry, personal phone calls, faxes, internet or email usage, and shipping of personal items from the course. There will be tours which will be co-ordinated by course organizers to key locations such as Health Promotion department and Anti-tobacco campaign offices in Manila (TBA)

Participants are encouraged to secure financial aid from their Ministries of Health, WHO and universities. Please note that entry into Philippines requires a Visa only if you wish to stay longer than 21 days.

More information & Registration:

Please check the APACPH website for more information <http://www.apacph.org>

Registration forms can be downloaded from the APACPH website and are due on 11 July. Any queries and registration forms are to be sent to Connie Liew (ECN South East Asia Chapter Head) at connieliew86@hotmail.com

41st APACPH Conference 2009 Overview

The 41st APACPH Conference will take place from **3 - 6 December 2009** in the NTUH International Convention Center, Taipei, Taiwan. This event will be hosted by Taipei Medical University, National Taiwan University and the Taiwan Public Health Association.

“University Role in Education for Globalization and Health,” “Historical Milestone for APACPH” and “Health, Peace, and Harmony” were adopted as the main themes of the 41st APACPH conference. In addition, a range of other public health themes will be used for the sessions.

This year will also mark the 25th anniversary of APACPH founding and a range of other activities will also be organised in conjunction with the conference.

Important dates:

Abstract Submission: by **15 July 2009**

Early Bird Registration: by **15 October 2009**

Pre-Registration: by **15 November 2009**

More information is available on the conference website: www.apacph2009.tw

Photo Competition

To celebrate APACPH's 25 anniversary at the conference, we plan to hold a photo competition. Winners of the competition will be awarded at the 41st APACPH Conference this December in Taiwan.

For those who are interested in participate this competition, please email the photos to apacph.photo@gmail.com no later than **15 August 2009**. Committee members will review all of the submitted photos within a month, and announce the result on the 41st APACPH Website.

Any photo related to the history of APACPH will be welcomed. One participant can submit more than one photo. For better arrangement of the competition, please follow the following rules:

- 1) Photo format: JPG;
- 2) Photo quality: more than 300 DPI;
- 3) Photo size: less than 3 MB;
- 4) Please provide 30-50 words description of each photo with the submit form;
- 5) Files will not be returned;
- 6) 10 best photos will be selected, and each photo will be awarded with USD 100 plus certificate, and another 10 photos will be awarded with certificate.

Please note that winners retain ownership of the copyright in any submitted Photographs. APACPH shall have the right to publish the awarded 20 photos in the conference proceeding and exhibit the photos during the conference. Photographs will be given attribution credit based on the name supplied with submission. The winner shall work with APACPH to change the file in any way deemed necessary for publication of the Photograph(s). The winners shall supply, upon request, original, unmodified digital files.

More information about the competition can be found on the APACPH Conference website www.apacph2009.tw Should there be any enquiry, please do not hesitate to contact the competition team of the 41st APACPH Conference (apacph.photo@gmail.com). Thank you!

2nd International Conference on Rural Medicine (ICORM)

FACING GLOBAL CHALLENGES IN RURAL MEDICINE: AN INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

23 - 25 November 2009

Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Rural Medicine Education Centre (RMEC), Sikuati, Rural clinics and villages, Kudat, Sabah, Malaysia

Organized by School of Medicine, **Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)**

With nearly a decade into the new millennium and based on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in healthcare, the 2nd ICORM 2009 conference allows for a concerted global effort by experts to share, discuss and address pressing concerns with healthcare services delivery especially in rural healthcare. Indeed, there will also be ample opportunities for collaboration internationally and nationally in rural medical education and research particularly on the effectiveness of delivery of healthcare services.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To discuss current rural health challenges and effective mechanisms of health care delivery in the rural community;
2. To enable the rural community to be responsible for their own health and increased productivity through continuing smart partnership with healthcare providers;
3. To enhance the development and establishment of rural health education curriculum to meet the needs of global challenges; and
4. To foster collaboration in conducting research activities amongst international and national rural health experts.

The deadline for abstract submission is **31 July 2009**.

For more information: icorm2@gmail.com

<http://www.ums.edu.my/conferences/ICORM2009>

International Conference on Psychosocial Factors at Work

November 30 - December 2, 2009

Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

Hosted by Faculty of Public Health, **Mahidol University** and **Occupational Health Nursing Association of Thailand**

WHO reports workplace fatalities; injuries and illnesses remain at unacceptably high levels and involve an enormous and unnecessary health burden, suffering, and economic loss amounting to 4-5% of GDP. Considering the current global economic crises from both production output and worker stress perspectives, there is a pressing need to examine occupational health issues. We are presenting this conference to explore current knowledge of occupational health issues related to work ability, ageing, and psychosocial factors; identify immediate and long term health, health education, and research priorities; and provide a forum for discussion of best practices internationally.

Website: www.workability2009.com

Asia Conference on Emerging Issues in Public Health

Date: **29 November - 2 December 2009**

Venue: **School of Public Health, The Chinese University of Hong Kong**

Public Health challenges are never far from the front page of our newspapers and minds of the public. Its relevance to society and individuals is once again highlighted by the H1N1 human swine flu pandemic raising the important challenge of how to educate professionals and the public. This conference will provide a timely platform for discussing the emerging issues in public health and educational strategies for the future. More importantly, the conference will provide an important occasion where Schools of Public Health and other public health organizations (notably the Centres for Disease Control and Departments of Health) can meet up and identify shared interests and joint ventures in education, training, service and research.

The conference will also provide pre-conference training/ workshops, which will be of benefit to young public health workers and those who wish to keep updated with major advances in the areas of in public health. We welcome you all from wherever you work to come to share your experiences, to voice your opinions, to present your important research, to find out about recent healthcare reforms in China, to identify potential collaborators, and to make new friends.

Dateline for Earlybird Registration and Abstract Submission: **20 September 2009**

More details of the conference, registration, abstract submission and other relevant information can be found at the conference website: <http://www.sph.cuhk.edu.hk/asiacommunity2009.html>. Or contact the Secretariat at sph2009@cuhk.edu.hk

Healthcare in South-East Asia Economic Crisis

Healthcare in the midst of economic crisis in South East Asia - Much needs to be done to mitigate its impact in the region

by Namita Bakshi MBA (HR), B.A (Economics Hons. & Statistics) - Formerly at Mahidol University

'The challenge of the economic crisis however is not just financial and economic. It is health, social, political and even includes issues of governance'. - WHO - SEARO

Introduction



World economy has presently entered into severe economic depression after the 1930s. Its effect is increasingly evident in many countries in different magnitudes. The challenge facing the world now is to prevent an economic crisis becoming a social and health problem. Countries at all levels of development are concerned about the impact of the economic crisis on health. Coming hard on the heels of food and fuel crisis of 2008, this is likely to be a serious set back in the fight against poverty and achieving the target of poverty-alleviation in fulfilling the obligations of Millennium Development Goals. Decline in healthcare spending coupled with increased cost of treatment, reduced family income and insurance coverage will affect the utilisation of health services and their quality. The most common effect will result in decline of demand for private healthcare with consequent transfer of demand to the public sector. If public health services are compromised and not adequately equipped to cope with, the overall quality may deteriorate. This problem will affect all countries in which public-funded services are under pressure.

Impact of economic crisis on healthcare: Evidence from Asia

Experience from Asia shows that due to rise in food prices last year, about 100 million people were pushed into poverty alone and a number of children suffered the condition of under-nutrition. The 1997–1998 crises did indicate a fall in immunisation rates and under utilisation of primary health services especially, among the poor. The period also witnessed a fall in private healthcare spending across the region and showed a greater reliance on public health spending, government commitment towards health, and comprehensive strategy for universal coverage particularly in Thailand. The shortfall and consequent increase in the prices of drugs were also noticed and a significant decline in donor contributions towards health projects was experienced in most of the Asian countries.



Strategies to mitigate the impact of economic crisis on health

Despite financial crisis and consequent fall of revenue generation, unemployment and decreased income level, health should be given utmost visibility. Health is an entitlement to which people have basic right. Good health makes significant contribution to economic growth, poverty reduction, social development and human security. The health response should aim at transforming the quality of life and should be used to promote a greater focus on social and developmental justice. Some countries will be more vulnerable to the impact of economic crisis than others. It is therefore very important, to take into account the need of vulnerable populations – particularly the poorest of the poor – wherever they may live.

The magnitude of the current crisis with its wide ramification will make the policy makers to be more vigilant for long-term plans on various issues of healthcare. Looking to various intricacies of the present crisis world wide, innovative strategies like partnerships and collaboration between and within countries will be crucial. Rapid monitoring and analysis, effective communication, exchange of experience, flexible working arrangements and evidence based research will be all essential to mitigate the impact on healthcare and achieve success. Additionally, the five-point framework (Fig. 1) by the WHO to ensure the health sector emerges from the crisis in good condition should be kept in mind for action.

The present economic crisis has posed challenges to healthcare and the natural right of every human being to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health. On the other hand, the crisis has also offered opportunities to lay foundations for more equitable and effective health systems for the future. This will rationalise and pave the way for good health and prosperity of the people throughout the world. Hence, solidarity, standing by commitments and keeping promises to support each other will be the need of the hour.



Fig -1: Five-point framework for action by the WHO

Calendar of Events

1st International Conference on Health Services Delivery Management

Date: 14-16 October, 2009

Location: Phitsanulok, Thailand

Website: <http://www.health.nu.ac.th/hdm2009/>

Theme: Strengthening the management of primary health care and district health services in uncertain times: International perspectives

Organized by: Naresuan University, Thailand and University of New England, Australia

Asia Conference on Emerging Issues in Public Health

Date: 29 November - 2 December 2009

Location: Hong Kong, China

Website: <http://sph.cuhk.edu.hk/asiaphconference2009.html>

(see more information in newsletter)

This conference will provide a timely platform for discussing emerging issues in public health and educational strategies for the future. More importantly, it will provide an important occasion where Schools of Public Health and other public health organizations can meet up and identify shared interests and joint ventures in education, training, service and research.

Organized by: School of Public Health, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

International Conference on Psychosocial Factors at Work

Date: 29 November-2 December 2009

Location: Bangkok, Thailand

Website: <http://www.workability2009.com>

(see more information in newsletter)

This conference will explore current knowledge of occupational health issues related to work ability, ageing, and psychosocial factors; identify immediate and long term health, health education, and research priorities; and provide a forum for discussion of best practices internationally.

Organized by: Faculty of Public Health, Mahidol University and Occupational Health Nursing Association of Thailand

2nd International Conference on Rural Medicine

Date: 23-25 November 2009

Location: Sabah, Malaysia

Website: <http://www.ums.edu.my/conferences/ICORM2009>

Theme: Facing Global Challenges in Rural Medicine: An International Collaboration

(see more information in newsletter)

With nearly a decade into the new millennium and based on the United Nations MDGs in healthcare, the conference provides a continuation which allows for a concerted global effort by experts to share, discuss and address these pressing concerns especially in rural healthcare. Indeed, there will also be ample opportunities for collaboration internationally and nationally in rural medical education and research particularly on the effectiveness of delivery of healthcare services.

Organised by: Universiti Malaysia, Sabah

41st APACPH Conference

Date: 3-6 December 2009

Location: Taipei, Taiwan

Website: <http://www.apacph2009.tw>

(see more information in newsletter)

Contact

For further information on any of the items mentioned in the newsletter, to include items for the next newsletter, or to enquire on any APACPH-related business, please contact:

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