



Dear members,

Virtual 19th Annual Scientific Meeting of CPathAMM, 22-24 June 2022.

On behalf of CPathAMM, the Department of Pathology, Hospital Melaka, and the Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) would jointly organise our 19th Annual Scientific Meeting **virtually**, due to the persistent Pandemic and the uncertainty of the new Omicron mutants which have already landed in Malaysia. The Organising Committee, led by Dr Raudhawati Osman and Dr Aletza, advised by Professor Dr Ariza Adnan, have invited prominent speakers from overseas (U.K. and Australia), as well as distinguished speakers among our local colleagues.

The theme of the meeting – *Pathology and Laboratory Medicine: Current Advancement & Emerging Trends*.

Please mark your calendar for the dates. See you there online.

Annual General Meeting CPATHAMM 2022

Following the fixing of the dates for the 19th Annual Scientific Meeting, the Executive Committee of the CPathAMM Council has decided to hold our AGM on **22 June, 2022 at 5 pm.** Owing to the pandemic, the AGM will again be conducted online.

The meeting link will be given to all the members before the scheduled date of the AGM.

Virtual Workshop on Covid-19

CPathAMM with the support from McQAS has jointly organised a virtual workshop with the Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), entitled “Endemic Covid-19: Mutants, Diagnostic Testing and Rapid Screening”. Invited distinguished speakers who delivered their lectures included Prof. Dr. Yasmin from UMMC, Assoc Prof. Dr Zetti from UKMMC, and Prof. Dr. YF Ngeow from FMHS UTAR. After the lecture session, the participants had an opportunity to work on some practical exercises relating to the lectures and test their skills in interpretation of the test results, recognising the limitations of testing, false positive and false negative test results. Participants who had successfully completed the virtual exercises were given a certificate of achievement.

The format adopted by this virtual workshop could be a nascent example for evaluating the proficiency of a practising pathologist, as part of the requirement of maintaining competency in addition to gaining CPD points.



CPathAMM NEWSLETTER

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Academy of Medicine of Malaysia
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The Putrajaya Medical Academies Building

It is gratifying to learn that after the demolition of the previous Medical Academies Building in Jalan Tun Razak next to Kuala Lumpur Hospital, the new building has finally materialised. The construction earthworks were started on 18th October 2021 and completed by the end of November 2021. It is anticipated that the works on the Main Building will start in December 2021. The expected completion date of the new building is **in March 2023**.

We all eagerly look forward to this new home and for once we finally have our own office space.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Emeritus Professor Dr. S.K. Cheong

President

16th December, 2021

Established Chapters of the College of Pathologists, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (CPathAMM)

There are currently six (6) Chapters established under the College of Pathologists, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (CPathAMM), namely:

- Chapter of Perinatal and Paediatric Pathology
- Chapter of Medical Genetic Pathology
- Chapter of Transfusion Medicine
- Chapter of Chemical Pathology and Metabolic Medicine
- Chapter of Anatomic Pathology
- Chapter of Haematology

The following are the **Aims and Objectives** for a Chapter of a particular specialty:

1. To be an association for pathologists and trainees of *the respective specialty* in Malaysia.
2. To inspire, encourage and empower pathologists with interest in *the respective specialty* to achieve their professional and personal goals.
3. To collaborate with similar bodies within and outside of Malaysia.
4. To promote and maintain the highest moral, ethical and professional standards in the practice of *the respective specialty*.
5. To represent, express and give effect to the views and opinions of its members.
6. To represent the members at all relevant committees and sub-committees of the College, the Academy, the Ministry of Health of Malaysia, the universities and other government and semi-government agencies, on matters related to *the respective specialty*.
7. To promote education and training in *the respective specialty* amongst pathologists, trainees and prospective trainees.
8. To promote scientific research in the science and art of *the respective specialty* amongst pathologists, trainees and prospective trainees.
9. To promote publications of scientific papers in the field of *the respective specialty*.
10. To conduct professional programmes and activities pertaining to *the respective specialty*.
To educate the public on the role of pathologists of *the respective specialty* in wellness and illness.

As mentioned above, each Chapter is encouraged to collaborate with outside associations of similar interest to promote the specialty. Education and training are the Chapter's core business, not forgetting advocacy and reaching out to the public.



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To be eligible to join any Chapter of your interest, you will have to be a member of the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (AMM). Membership details and the application form for AMM can be found at <http://www.acadmed.org.my/index.cfm?menuid=61>.

Currently, there is no limit to the number of Chapters members wish to join. All members shall pay their annual subscription fee directly to AMM. **Hence, there is no additional fee to join a Chapter.** Please be informed that any professional or scientist with an interest in the Specialty, with a higher academic degree or relevant professional qualification who has been admitted to the Chapter can be recommended to AMM, for Associate Membership.

The Chapters are officially published on the CPathAMM website. If there is an interest to join a Chapter of CPathAMM, please visit <https://www.cpathamm.org.my/general-8> for the relevant application form.



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Academy of Medicine, Malaysia**

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Subashini C.Thambiah
Honorary Secretary

12th December, 2021

December 2021 Issue

Endemic Covid-19 Workshop: Mutants, Diagnostic Testing and Rapid Screening

(Report compiled by Prof SK Cheong, Dr Avneet Kaur and Dr Tan Yuen Fen)

Virtual Workshop

On December 8, 2021, the MCQAS, in association with Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) and College of Pathologists, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia, organized a virtual workshop, titled "ENDEMIC COVID-19: MUTANTS, DIAGNOSTIC TESTING AND RAPID SCREENING". This workshop provided a hands-on opportunity to learn about the identification of Covid mutants and interpret the rapid antigen and RT-PCR results. The moderated discussion also focussed on creating awareness about the pitfalls of various diagnostic and screening tests during this pandemic and scenarios where the verification of these results is necessary.

The panel of experts included Prof. Dr Yasmin Abdul Malik, Consultant Virologist, Universiti Malaya Medical Centre (UMMC), Prof Dr Ngeow Yun Fong, Consultant Medical Microbiologist, FMHS, UTAR and Associate Prof Datin Dr Noor Zetti Zainol Rashid, Consultant Medical Microbiologist, UKM Medical Centre. The workshop was moderated by Emeritus Prof. Dr Cheong Soon Keng, President, College of Pathologists, Academy of Medicine of Malaysia.



Figure 1: One of the Group Photographs



The Speakers

The first session was kicked off by Prof Yasmin, who elaborated on the *Detection of various Covid-19 wild type and variants* and provided an insight into the variants of concern and variants of importance. She also shared the available data about the raging Omicron variant and the diagnostic implications of Covid-19 variants. She emphasized that Variant identification via genetic sequencing is a way to provide epidemiology results and is not usually intended for diagnosis of infection. Prof Yasmin ended her session by mentioning the situations that warrant sequence testing include patients with reinfection(s), patients who develop breakthrough infections and patients who experience treatment failure.

The second speaker was Associate Prof Datin Dr Noor Zetti Zainol Rashid, Consultant Medical Microbiologist from the UKM Medical Centre. She presented *Interpretations of COVID-19 diagnostic testing and limitations*. In her session, she focussed on the various types of molecular tests available for Covid 19 and the limitations of RT-PCR testing. She also elaborated on the ways and means for checking the validity of the testing methods. Prof Zetti also introduced the participants to the concept of Ct value and its significance on the infectivity and treatment of covid patients. She ended the session by stating that the evolving data and evidence will continue to bring a new understanding of Covid 19 and diagnostics. Her session was followed by a rapid-fire true false quiz which many participants attended.

The third speaker for the workshop was Prof Dr Ngeow Yun Fong, Consultant Medical Microbiologist from FMHS, UTAR. She presented on the topic "*Covid-19 screening devices: applications and limitations*". She explained the facts about various types of rapid testing and the usefulness of rapid antigen testing to identify likely Covid-19 for triage and treatment. She gave an overview of the false positive and negative test results and how the mistakes can be avoided while perfecting the various sampling, collection, and testing techniques. Prof Ngeow ended the session on a hopeful note while mentioning multiple recent advances in the rapid Covid-19 testing, such as inhalation device, touch screen instruments, handheld analyzers & the use of smartphone apps for testing.

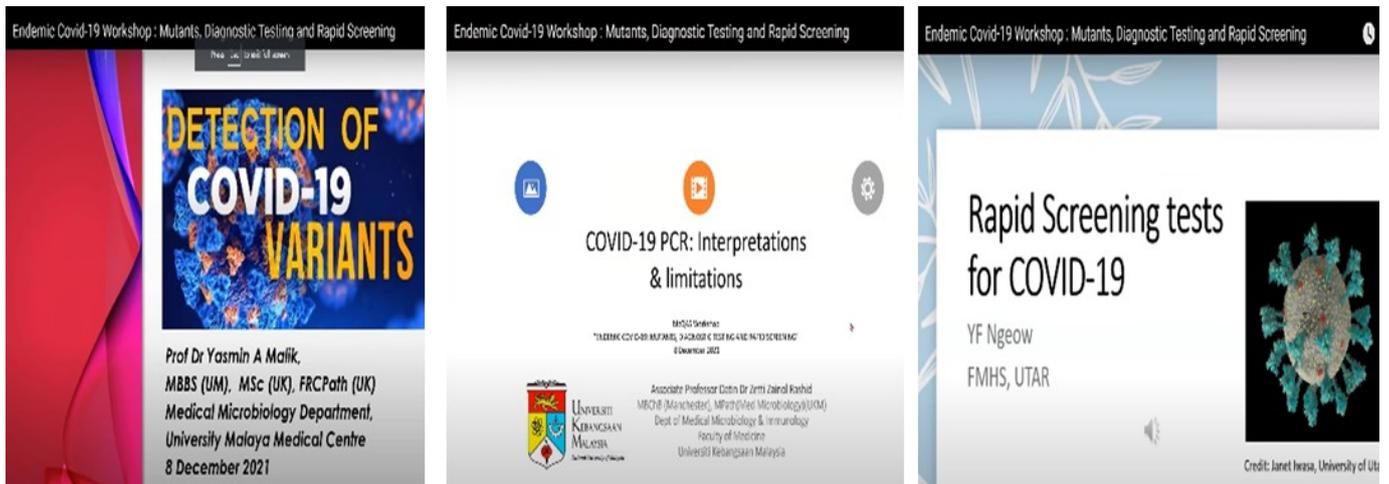


Figure 2: Screenshots of the Lectures

Virtual Exercises:

Dr Avneet Kaur, Lecturer in FMHS, UTAR, conducted the virtual hands-on exercises to test the interpretation skills and understanding Covid-19 testing of the participants following the speaker sessions. Participants who passed these virtual exercises were given a certificate of achievement. The virtual exercises were followed by an active discussion & a question-answer session with the panel of speakers, chaired by Emeritus Prof. Dr Cheong Soon Keng. There was much interest in the Omicron mutant. It was a relief that current testing could pick up the mutant without the need of sophisticated equipment.



Figure 3: Samples of the Virtual Exercises. On successful completion of the exercises, the participants were given a certificate of achievement.



Congratulations to the Winners of the Malaysia Toray Science Foundation Year 2021 Science & Technology Award

2021 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AWARD



Emeritus Professor Dr. Cheong Soon Keng

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Selangor

Qualifications

- MBBS, University of Malaya
- MRCP(UK) - Royal College of Physicians, United Kingdom (UK)
- DCP(London) - University of London, UK
- FRCPA (Australia) - Royal College of Pathologists, Australia

Designations

- Senior Professor, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)
- Emeritus Professor, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
- Honorary Professor, University of Malaya

Co-winners

- Professor Dr. Choo Kong Bung, UTAR
- Professor Dr. Alan Ong Han Kiat, UTAR
- Associate Professor Dr. Leong Pooi Pooi, UTAR
- Assistant Professor Dr. Teoh Hoon Koon, UTAR

Achievements

- Senior Fellow of the Academy of Sciences of Malaysia, 2021
- Foundation Fellow of the Faculty of Sciences, Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (FFScRCPA), 2011
- Fellow of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (FAMS), 2011
- Fellow of the Academy of Sciences of Malaysia (FASc), 2001
- Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, Scotland (FRCPE), 1990

RM 30,000

Medicine & Health; Stem Cells

Members of the group share a common interest in induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) and mesenchymal stem cells. The technology leading to iPSCs discovery was conferred the Nobel Prize in 2012. Over the last 10 years, the group carried out research on these two types of stem cells and had successfully produced iPSCs from various cancer cell lines and normal somatic cells. These iPSCs developed from primary cancer cell lines serve as a new model for our investigation into the pathogenesis of the respective cancer as well as drug discovery. While iPSCs developed from normal somatic cells serve as mother stem cells which are pluripotent, i.e. capable of differentiation into one of the two hundred plus cell types of the human body. We have now developed methods to make haemopoietic stem cells which can be used to treat blood cancers and mesenchymal stem cells to treat a variety of medical conditions.

As these cell lines are immortal and allow indefinite propagation, a biobank had been established in UTAR to cryopreserve these cell lines in liquid nitrogen to facilitate maintenance and distribution to fellow researchers. The new knowledge and skills acquired during research and development are shared with other researchers by regularly organizing conferences and workshops ourselves or in collaboration with other institutions. We believe our group is the first in establishing iPSC lines and also such a biobank in Malaysia.

Translational studies from bench to clinic were carried out for mesenchymal stem cells successfully with industry partners. The endeavour has contributed not only new knowledge, skills, products and patents in this field but also human capital development.



Representative microscopic image of iPSC colony that was taken using a light microscope. The iPSC colony shows typical colony formation with clear borders and small round cells densely packed within.



Liquid nitrogen storage facility for the UTAR Biobank on iPSC Lines. The biobank is located at the Postgraduate Research Laboratory in UTAR Sungai Long campus. It is currently available to fellow researchers free for collaborative works.

ANNOUNCEMENT

 **19TH ASM CPATH 2022**
22 - 24 JUNE

www.pathologyhm.com/19-asm/home
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Pathology and Laboratory Medicine:
Current, Advancement and
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(PD-L1: Programmed death-ligand 1, IHC: Immunohistochemistry; LDT: Laboratory developed tests, IVD: In vitro diagnostic; TPS: Tumor proportion score; CPS: Combined positive score; CDx: companion diagnostic).

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