

MEDIA RELEASE

“THE ASIAN CHILD: RESILIENCY IN THE FACE OF EVOLVING CHALLENGES”: REGIONAL CONGRESS IN SINGAPORE, 29 – 31 AUGUST 2008

The 5th Congress of the Asian Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (ASCAPAP), themed “The Asian Child: Resiliency in the Face of Evolving Challenges”, will be held in Singapore for the first time at the Suntec Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre (SICEC) from 29 to 31 August 2008. Discussions will centre on the biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors contributing to the development of resiliency in our youth.

Hosted by the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), this regional platform will see world-renowned child psychiatry and psychology experts like Professor Sir Michael Rutter and Dr William Yule (UK), Prof Felice Lieh-Mak (HK), and Dr Katharina Manassis (Canada) presenting on topics such as “Resilience in Children and Adolescents”, “Trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Children and Adolescents”, and “Resilience in the Young in the face of Stress and Anxiety”.

Prof Sir Michael Rutter, who will deliver the Distinguished Speaker Lecture at the Opening Ceremony, explained, “Resilience is not just a fancy way of re-inventing concepts of risk and protection. Universal findings have shown huge individual differences in response to all kinds of adversities, beyond what the summative effects of risk and protection factors can account for. There is room for greater scientific and clinical understanding of resilience and I am glad for this ASCAPAP, which will examine pertinent issues related to resilience.”

Dr Daniel Fung, President of the Organising Committee and Chief of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in IMH, said “Resilience can be defined as the ability to recover from trauma, respond to stress, and maintain a sense of meaning, hope, and identity. The theme is timely and relevant as we live in a stressful world, and the stresses are constantly changing. Psychiatrists in Asia, like the rest of the world, grapple with this daily in helping children and their families cope with such evolving challenges.”

Mr Leong Yew Meng, Chief Executive Officer of IMH, commented, “Hosting this year’s ASCAPAP is yet another initiative commendable in our mission to promote mental health and pursue continuous learning and research, even as we celebrate our 80th anniversary this year. We are advancing beyond primary and secondary care towards tertiary functions and we are no longer merely a hospital, but an institute which places emphasis on a global exchange of knowledge and on doing significant research.”

The 457* delegates in this 5th Congress will include medical and allied health professionals involved in child and adolescent mental healthcare, researchers, and educators from the different Ministries, hospitals, voluntary welfare organizations and educational institutions of Singapore, the Asia Pacific countries and the world. 159* (or 34.8%) of the delegates are foreign delegates.

* - Figures as at 28 August 2008

The Guest-of-Honour for the Opening Ceremony on 29 August is Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of National Development and Ministry of Education. Ms Grace Fu will be making a speech. Guest-of-Honour for the Gala Dinner on 30 August is Prof Satkunanantham s/o Kandiah, Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health. Prof Satku will be presenting the awards for Best Paper and Best Poster.

Highlights of the Congress programme are attached at Annex A. For more information, please visit <http://www.ascapap2008.com.sg/>.

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Background of the ASCAPAP

The ASCAPAP was birthed by several far-sighted child psychiatrists during the 12th International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (IACAPAP) meeting in Tokyo, when the need for an Asian regional organization that could understand and meet the mental health needs of Asian children, the world's largest population of children, was recognised.

The first Congress of the ASCAPAP was organised in 1995 and subsequently held triennially in Seoul, Taipei and Manila.

About Institute of Mental Health/Woodbridge Hospital (IMH/WH)

The Institute of Mental Health/Woodbridge Hospital (IMH/WH) is a leading mental health centre in Asia offering a multi-faceted and comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and counselling services designed to meet the needs of namely (i) children & adolescents, (ii) adults and (iii) the elderly. IMH/WH's multi-disciplinary approach to patient care is supported by the departments of Nursing, Clinical Psychology, Occupational Therapy, and Medical Social Work. Offering inpatient care and outpatient care, it has also established various satellite clinics around Singapore. IMH/WH provides community education and supports corporations in the promotion of mental health and wellness. As a specialist centre, it integrates research in the best interest of patient-care. For its outstanding contribution to research in health promotion, IMH's Early Psychosis Intervention Programme won the World Health Organization's inaugural State of Kuwait Prize in 2006 as well as one of the inaugural National Medical Excellence Awards conferred by the Ministry of Health in 2008. IMH/WH is the first mental health institution in Asia to receive the Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation, an award that represents a worldwide consensus on quality patient care and international best practices.

ANNEX A

1. Highlights of the Congress

a. Keynote Address: "The Asian Child: Resiliency in the Face of Evolving Challenges"

Event: Opening Ceremony
Date: Friday, 29 August 2008
Time: 0930 – 1030hrs
Venue: SICEC Theatre, Level 3

Professor Felice Lieh-Mak from the Department of Psychiatry in the University of Hong Kong will discuss recent research in neural growth and brain plasticity, and case studies on how society and culture can influence resiliency in children. She will also provide some directions on how to maintain and to bolster this resilience for the future.

b. Distinguished Special Lecture: "Resilience in Children and Adolescents"

Event: Opening Ceremony
Date: Friday, 29 August 2008
Time: 1100 – 1200hrs
Venue: SICEC Theatre, Level 3

Professor Sir Michael Rutter is a Professor of Developmental Psychopathology at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, London, U.K. Widely recognised as an important contributor to the establishment of child psychiatry as a medical and biopsychosocial specialty with a strong scientific base, Prof Rutter will share an in-depth analysis on the concept and nature of resilience, which is more than the summative effects of risk/protection factors. He will elaborate on the circumstances from which resilience may derive and discuss the key implications of resilience concepts and findings in relation to scientific understanding, to the clinical implications in promoting resilience, to research lessons, and to policy/practice issues.

c. Workshop 2: Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) - Highlights

Date: Friday, 29 August 2008
Time: 1430 – 1600hrs
Venue: MR302

Professor Luke Tsai, Director of the Developmental Disorders Clinic at the University of Michigan, will speak on the Management of ASD with a literature review on the medical and non-medical treatments or interventions, as well as the adult outcome studies of ASD. Suggestions for the future direction of more effective treatments and/or interventions of ASD will also be presented.

Dr Sung Min, Consultant in the Department of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, IMH, will share preliminary findings from a study *done for the first time locally* on the effects of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on children with High-Functioning ASD, with whom interventions are usually difficult. The preliminary findings have been promising, with evidence of the effects of CBT for high-functioning ASD children in reducing child anxiety and parental stress.

d. Workshop 4: Bullying - Highlights

Date: Friday, 29 August 2008

Time: 1430 – 1600hrs

Venue: MR305

The Singapore Children's Society will present results of surveys which examine the nature and extent of bullying in primary and secondary schools in Singapore. The forms of bullying behaviours experienced, sources of support for victims and perceived effectiveness, and the effects of bullying will be discussed. Profiles of victims and their bullies, as well as self-admitted bullies in the two different school standards will also be shared.

e. Workshop 12: Community Mental Health Services

Date: Saturday, 30 August 2008

Time: 1430 – 1600hrs

Venue: MR305

Find out more about YouthReach, a community-based programme of the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) which draws on a team-based, strength-focused model in working with youths identified with emotional and psychological challenges. The aim of YouthReach is to partner with youths and their families to empower them to achieve their goals and to live in a safe, caring and inclusive community.

The programme is a good example of the management of youths with mental conditions in stepped-down community care, and also an instance of a community-hospital based interface under the National Mental Health Blueprint.

f. Public Forum: "Understanding Tourette Syndrome — Tic Disorder"

Date: Saturday, 30 August 2008

Time: 1600 – 1800hrs

Venue: MR303 – 305

Organised by the Tourette Syndrome (TS) Care Group, this public forum aims to raise public awareness about TS and its co-morbid conditions (e.g. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Attention Deficit Disorder) through presentations by sufferers, caregivers, teachers and a psychiatrist. Attendees will also learn how to help children/teens/adults with these special needs.

g. Plenary 3: Internet Addiction: A Vulnerability in Post-Modern Society

Date: Sunday, 31 August 2008

Time: 1000 – 1100hrs

Venue: MR303 - 305

Prof Kang-E Michael Hong from the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, College of Medicine, Seoul National University Hospital, Korea will review the current status of internet addiction of children and adolescents in Asian countries. He will also present strategies of prevention and intervention for internet addiction in accordance with the findings of a 3-year project developing intervention measures and a nationwide network for serious internet addiction in Korea.



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2. Launch of First Child Psychiatry Textbook in Singapore

“ A Primer of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry” is the first textbook on Child Psychiatry published in Singapore. Clinical experiences and histories covering a wide range of childhood and adolescent mental health conditions are discussed from a multidisciplinary team perspective. This book will be useful for medical students, doctors, and allied health professionals involved in the mental healthcare of children.

The textbook will be launched during the Congress Gala Dinner on Saturday, 30 August 2008.