



RUMC *Alumni*✿



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Malaysia Campus

alumni
e-Newsletter

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International Medical Practice Bulletin
A Clinician, a Researcher
or both?

Alumni Stories
Dr Jefferey Lee

Connect with Cochrane

Alumni Contribution
Dr Megat Kamaruzaman
Dr Ganesan Palaniappan

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President's Message

Thanks again to all PMC/RUMC alumni who have shown such a high degree of commitment during the pandemic. We as a university are proud of you and I know the public is similarly appreciative of your efforts. We recently carried out a survey of recent graduates from RUMC with the purpose of assessing how prepared they were for house jobs.

The survey indicated that RUMC alumni are to a large degree, well prepared clinically for their houseman jobs. Less than 8% of responders needed extensions to complete their 2 years of internship compared to 41% nationally. RUMC graduates scored well on most of the Preparedness for Practice domains, with only practical skills and patient management appearing to be less developed than published data.



Professor David Whitford
President & CEO

This area was highlighted in the free comments with many responders requesting greater 'hands on' in terms of practical skills to prepare them better for internship. Overall, the persons who responded were largely satisfied with the training they had received from RUMC in preparing them for houseman jobs. In particular, the access to patients in terms of clerking and examination was commended, as was the basic scientific knowledge, the clinical knowledge, the soft skills such as communication skills and the general approach of RUMC teachers.

The free text comments were helpful in identifying areas that the university should seek to improve, including:

- Greater access to practical procedures
- Building resilience and ability to cope with stress
- Research
- Junior internship (this has since become part of the final year curriculum)
- Careers advice
- Social support for patients
- Some specific areas (pharmacology, ultrasound, anaesthesiology)

These will all be incorporated and addressed in a future curriculum review.

There was also an underlying feeling that the university failed to prepare graduates for the harshness of the houseman years! Some respondents stated that RUMC faculty were too nice in contrast to the consultants they ended up working for! Future research may well examine the challenges facing interns/house jobs/medical officers.

We would be happy to print any reflections on your house jobs in future alumni newsletters.

A Clinician, a Researcher, or both?

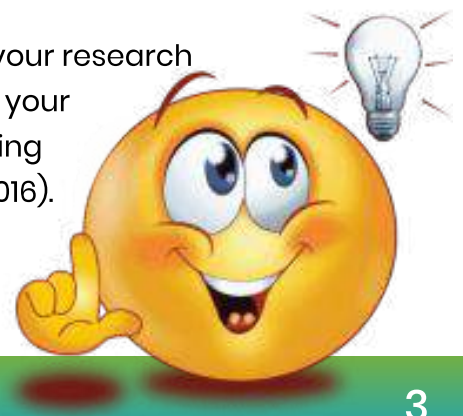
The days that one entered medical school just to become a “doctor” – basically a clinician – is long gone. Combined medical and postgraduate biomedical science training started at Case Western Reserve University in the 1950s, and the United States National Institute of Health established the Medical Scientist Training Program eight years later (Alamri, 2016). Similar intercalated programmes have since sprung up in other Western countries (Cox & Wakeford, 1993).

Why would one desire to spending extra time in school to undergo additional vigorous training? Indeed, combined medical-research training is not for everyone (Brass, 2018). These programmes are usually highly selective for well-qualified medical students. Those who have determined to include scientific research in their medical career early would be enticed to take the intercalated route. It is a relatively “fast-tracked” way to secure both medical and postgraduate research qualifications. Graduates from these combined programmes are usually more competitive in securing postgraduate training positions at prestigious institutions and startup opportunities towards further research. They tend to have relatively different career trajectories compared to their “non-intercalated” colleagues (Andriole, 2008; Brass & Akabas, 2019; Neul, 2010).

The “bigger” question is whether engagement in research is necessary for a fulfilling medical career. The quick answer is, of course, no! Being an academic clinician-scientist, my perspective might be biased, but do allow me to share. I have a curious mind and there are many unsolved questions in medicine. Answers to these queries will not only advance our knowledge, but also improve patient care – or even be “game-changers” (Mazzini et al., 2019). Designing and executing plans to solve puzzles are fun! Why not be a full-time researcher then? Without medical practice, one might not have the opportunity to identify the knowledge and practical gaps that warrant investigations. Being able to care for patients using our expertise and research findings is a privilege and immensely gratifying.

What if you are already close to finishing your undergraduate medical training, an early-career physician, or an established specialist? The intercalated pathway is no longer applicable, but there are still plenty of ways to become a clinician-scientist. Most, if not all, modern-day medical curricula would have teachings on health research methods, giving the fundamental understanding on the vocabularies and basic principles in conducting scientific studies. You may simply need to refresh your memory from your Dublin or Penang medical school days.

There is also a wealth of literature that can assist you to springboard your research endeavor (e.g., Balakumar et al., 2013). Depending on where you are in your medical career, you may even consider part-time postgraduate training if you can juggle your commitments (Byng-Maddick & Walker-Bone, 2016).



Unlike undergraduate studies, you can enjoy much flexibilities in pursuing master or doctoral research. Moreover, a number of prestigious medical schools, including the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, offer the higher Doctor of Medicine degree by research, similar to the Doctor of Philosophy, to their medical graduates. Another productive research approach to optimise patient care is by scrutinising available evidence using systematic reviews and meta analyses (Gopalakrishnan & Ganeshkumar, 2013). I would like to gently remind you that, your alma mater is the coordinating site for Cochrane Malaysia.

The saying “when there’s a will, there’s a way” is so true for those of you who are interested in becoming a clinician-scientist, no matter what stage of medical career you are at. If you want to know more about research opportunities in either Malaysia or abroad, I would be happy to assist.

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By Prof Andrew Law
Vice Dean (International Student Services)
Head, Department of Psychiatry,
RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus

*Prof. Andrew welcomes your thoughts, ideas, and contributions.
Feel free to email them to andrew.law@rcsiucd.edu.my*



ALUMNI STORIES



Name:

Dr Jefferey Lee Huang Shen

Class: **2012**

Current Attachment:

Hospital Pakar Sultanah Fatimah, Muar, Johor.

Life after RUMC

Upon graduation, I went on to complete my housemanship in Hospital Tuanku Jaafar, Seremban in 2014, I had the opportunity to gain invaluable skills and knowledge in Hospital Keningau and Hospital Queen Elizabeth Kota Kinabalu, Sabah for 5 years before completing my Masters in Orthopaedic in 2021.



Having served in the beautiful state of land below the wind, I have met wonderful people, climbed Mount Trus Madi and obtained my Advanced Open Water Diving Certification. As part of the Flying Doctor Service and Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) member, I traveled to the interior of Sabah where no land transport was available, and served the underprivileged in the water villages.

What do you like the most about RUMC's programme?

The variety of cases in Penang General Hospital is one of the best advantages we had. Be it surgical or medical-based disciplines, there were many interesting cases for us to learn from every day.

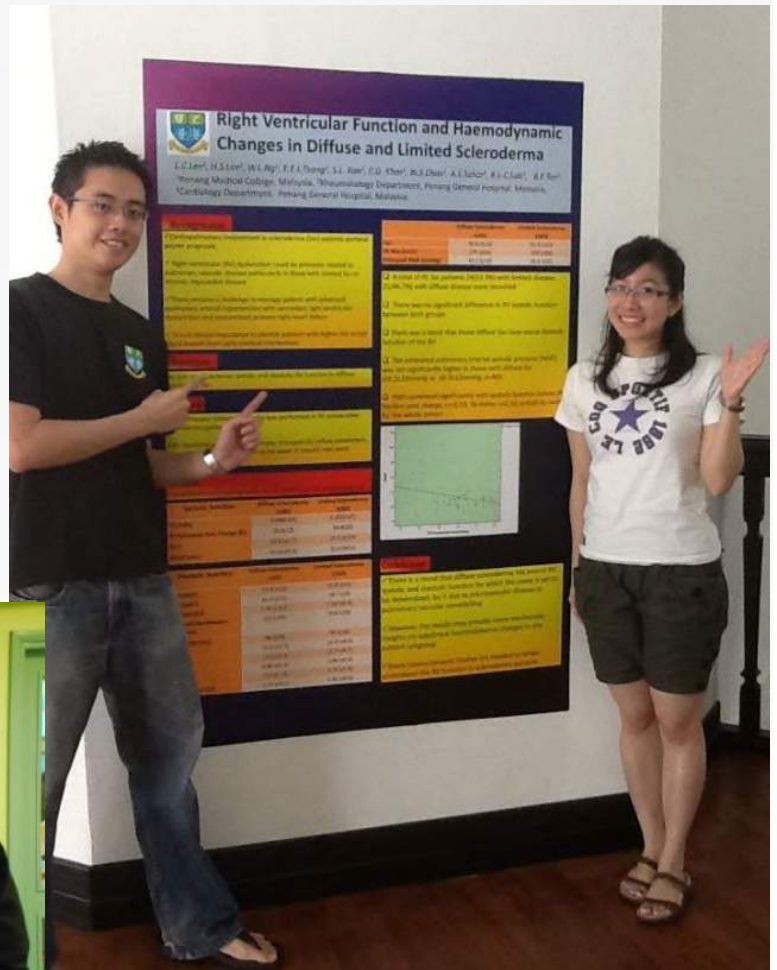




ALUMNI STORIES

Moments at RUMC.

My most memorable day in RUMC was when my research abstract was accepted for an oral presentation in Dubai.



My experience as rapporteur for Cochrane Malaysia

As part of my Junior Research Fellowship, I was honoured to be invited to participate in the Cochrane Malaysia-Ministry of Health Sector Evidence-based Healthcare Dialogue on 8 December 2021. As a rapporteur, I not only took down essential notes throughout the discussion, but I also obtained a deeper grasp of Cochrane Malaysia and the Ministry of Health Sector for Evidence-based Healthcare. It was amazing to learn from all the experts seeing the way they were problem-solving and finding solutions to current issues, which is something I never thought I'd have the chance to experience.



Not to mention that after the morning meeting, a draft plan was completed in under one hour. The value of teamwork and communication was simply astounding. I also learned that it takes a strong backbone to make things work. I also saw that Prof Jacqueline Ho and Dr. Tan May Loong, Co-Directors of Cochrane Malaysia, Datuk Dr. Nor Asiah Muhammad from the Ministry of Health Sector for Evidence-based Healthcare, and Professor David Whitford, President & CEO of RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus,

have a professional working connection. Thank you once again for providing such a fantastic learning opportunity.

Dr. Ng Su Wei, Class of 2021

Do you want to get involved with Cochrane Malaysia? We have other opportunities where you can help overcome misinformation out there by spreading trusted Cochrane evidence. You can be a volunteer translator as part of your contribution to the community. You can also learn more about understanding and using Cochrane Evidence by attending the upcoming Cochrane Protocol Development Workshop at RUMC in May 2022. Alumni rates are available. For more information, please contact Ms. Nila Pillai at nila@rcsiucd.edu.my

Alumni Contribution

RUMC Alumni Webinar Series

Practise Medicine with RUMC Degree.


Join this virtual panel discussion with our RUMC Alumni and get to know:

- ✓ some of the different pathways available to a career in Medicine
- ✓ practising Medicine in Ireland and Malaysia
- ✓ the value of the internationally-recognised RUMC Medical Degree


19 February 2022 (Saturday)

4:00 pm (Malaysia)
8:00am (Ireland)

SPEAKERS



Dr Megat Kamaruzaman
(Class of 2007)
Fertility Specialist,
Sims IVF,
Dublin, Ireland.



Dr Ganesan Palaniappan
(Class of 2013)
Medical Registrar,
Department of Internal Medicine,
Hospital Kuala Lumpur.

RUMC organised the Alumni Webinar session on 19 February 2022 (Saturday). Two of RUMC Alumni participated in this session and shared their experiences of studying Medicine at RUMC.

Dr Megat Kamaruzaman (Class of 2007) joined us live from Dublin. He took the audience through his journey at RUMC and life as a fertility specialist in Dublin. He also shared some information about the Irish internship pathway which gained the audience's attention during the session.

Public practitioner, Dr Ganesan Palaniappan (Class of 2013) shared about his experience as a medical registrar at Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL) and how RUMC helped him build his career in the field of Medicine.

Alumni Network



Dr Neong Shuet Ching
Class of 2017 (MSc Health Research)

Head of Quality Unit/ Senior Principal Assistant Director at Penang General Hospital

Stay in touch with your alma mater & fellow alumni.
Email alumni@rcsiucd.edu.my to update your contact details.



A unique Pre-University programme, offering students an early introduction to medical and clinical fields in a hospital setting. Upon conclusion of the programme, with a CGPA of 3.5-4.00, students are eligible to apply for the 5-Year Medical Degree Programme at RUMC.

Next Intake: June 2022



The University's flagship programme, the MB BCh BAO, is awarded by the National University of Ireland (NUI). Receive the best of both worlds with our transnationally delivered medical degree. RUMC is well-known for offering high-value tuition and exceptional quality in clinical training, as it continues to graduate high performing, industry-ready doctors.

Next Intake: Sept 2022

Malaysian doctors can now pursue the Family Medicine specialist training using the ICGP curriculum and assessment. Managed and delivered by RUMC, the curriculum of the programme is specifically adapted for the Malaysian healthcare scenario.

Next Intake: October 2023

For more information, visit rcsiucd.edu.my/programme/mintfm or email: mintfm@rcsiucd.edu.my



Career Opportunities @ RUMC

Available Academic Positions

Head of Department in:

- o Medicine
- o Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Lecturers in:

- o Psychiatry
- o Medicine
- o Surgery
- o Obstetrics & Gynaecology
- o Family Medicine
- o Orthopaedics

Structured PhD

This is a 4-year (full-time) & 5-year (part-time) programme which includes a 1-year pre-doctoral training year. The pre-doctoral training enables you to learn some core PhD skills such as research methods, research ethics & integrity and academic writing.

For more information, please visit our website at www.rcsiucd.edu.my

To apply & for more info:
email hr@rcsiucd.edu.my OR contact 04-217 1999