FIRST PAN-PACIFIC BUSINESS &
MEDICAL COMPUTING CONFERENCE

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Enclosed, at the request of secretary Dr Alfred Tang (Asia-Pacific Association
of Medical Informatics), minutes of inaugural meeting.

FIRST PAN-PACIFIC BUSINESS & MEDICAL COMPUTING CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Singapore 1st - 5th October 1988.

Wednesday, 5th October 1988

	LECTURES	WORKSHOP	HANDS-ON	BUSINESS
8.00 am	COMPUTERS IN HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT	COMPUTERS IN MEDICAL PRACTICE *Drs M Crampton & P Adkins*	OFFICE AUTOMATION *WP,SS,DB,Integ. S/W*	
9.00 am	FUTURE DIRECTIONS in INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY *Prof Gledhill*			DISABILITY INSURANCE - *Complete Analysis*
9.30 am		SUPPORT SOURCES *Drs A Tang & M Crampton* *Prof Z Ouyang*		
10.00 am	MORNING TEA			
10.30 am	TAXATION '88 *Timothy Wade, LLB*	DESKTOP PUBLISHING *Dr S Hodby*	INTRODUCTORY HANDS-ON *Peter Juliff*	PORTFOLIOS COMPUTERISED
11.00 am		MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS for the Doctor's Office *Commercial*	INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAMMING *Prof Gledhill*	
12.00 pm	**EXPERT PANEL** *Business*	**EXPERT PANEL** *Business*	**EXPERT PANEL** *Business*	**EXPERT PANEL** *Business*
12.30 pm	LUNCH			
2.00 pm	PLENARY SESSION *Dr Noel Hickson*			
3.00 pm	CLOSE			
4.00 pm	ASIA-PACIFIC ASSOCIATION of MEDICAL INFORMATICS			
5.30 pm	CLOSE			
8.00 pm	GALA DINNER			

A Message

As IMIA president, I would like to congratulate for the successful efforts of the medical computing group of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners led by Dr. Patrick Nugawela to organize the first Pan Pacific Medical Computing Conference.

The International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) is a Special Interest Group of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP), which was established in 1978 to serve the specific needs of the world in the application of information science and information technology in the fields of health care and biomedical research. This field is also referred to as Medical Informatics.

IMIA holds world conference on medical informatics,MEDINFO every third year and the sixth conference will be held in Beijing in October, 1989. This means that there are now many interesting activities of medical informatics in the pan pacific region. Since triennial conference does not satisfy the needs of rapid progress of this field, IMIA has field that a regional conference of medical informatics may be necessary in this region. The first Pan Pacific Medical Conference in Singapore will exactly meet this need. I hope that this conference is the beginning of international cooperation in this region in the field of medical informatics.

Shigekoto KAIHARA, M.D.
President, IMIA

*Address by AG Minister for Health, Mr Yeo Cheow Tong
at the opening ceremony of the first Pan-Pacific
Business and Medical Computer Conference and
Inauguration of The Asia-Pacific Association of
Medical Informatics on 1st October, 1988 at 2 pm.*

Introduction

I am very happy to be here this afternoon to officiate at the opening of the First Pan-Pacific Business and Medical Computer Conference, and the inauguration of the Asia-Pacific Association of Medical Informatics.

Let me first of all extend a warm welcome to our distinguished visitors from abroad. I trust they will find their visit here interesting, pleasant and fruitful. I am also happy that Singapore has been chosen as the venue for these two functions.

They complement our national efforts to promote the greater use of information technology which is expected to play a key role in helping us to achieve greater productivity and economic growth.

Advances in Medical Technology

Many of the advances in medical science and technology over the last two decades were results of innovations and new breakthroughs in micro-electronics technology. They have resulted in the development of the many new and sophisticated medical equipment for diagnosis as well as treatment of illnesses, such as Computer-Aided-Tomography, and Magnetic-Resonance-Imaging, both of which revolutionised the field of Radiology, and Electro Shock Wave Lithotripsy or ESWL, which offers a non-surgical treatment alternative for some medical conditions. And in the laboratory, tests can now be done quickly and accurately with the use of auto-analysers and other sophisticated instruments.

Medical Excellence and Computer Technology

While medical equipment and instrumentation have benefitted significantly from the micro-chip, we must ensure that the operational and non-clinical areas of health care and patient management are not left behind. These are areas where computer technology can play an increasingly significant role.

Management of Health Care Institutions

In Singapore the Singapore General Hospital and the National University Hospital, two of our Government-owned hospitals, are taking steps to utilise the power and advantages of computers more extensively. They will be investing about S$13 million over the next two years to upgrade computer hardware and software so as to further improve hospital efficiency and level of services. This will bring their total investments in computer systems to $21 million. Appointments with doctors can be made expeditiously and realistic schedules drawn up. Nursing Stations, Clinical Laboratories, Radiology Departments and Pharmacies will be linked together by computers so that orders can be transmitted instantly to the respective service departments. Doctors and patients will also be able to get the results of tests quickly. Bed reservations and information about availability of beds can be obtained quickly without having to make numerous phone calls to the different wards. Both patients and hospital staff will benefit greatly when both hospitals complete this phase of their computerisation programme. In addition, patients will benefit by having shorter waiting times for services and therefore shorter lengths of stay at the hospitals.

Management of Private Clinics

With the help of the Singapore National Computer Board, which is conducting a sectorial study of the private health sector, we are beginning to understand the information and computerisation requirements of the private clinics in Singapore. The National Computer Board is working closely with the Singapore Medical Association and the College of General Practitioners to develop generic software for clinics. This will afford private practitioners economies of scale and individual clinics will benefit from having a low-cost yet effective solution. With a sufficiently large installed base, these clinics will be assured of continued support and enhancement of their systems. To patients, computerised clinics will offer faster and more flexible appointments, shorter waiting times, and more clearly printed prescription labels. With better medical records keeping, medical care will also improve.

Long Term Future

In time to come, information technology will not only directly impact the health care providers and suppliers, but also the consumers. Our emphasis on health education and health promotion will be given a boost with the implementation of the Teleview project. We are now studying how to enable members of the public to obtain information and educational materials in the comfort of their own homes.

For example, they will be able to obtain advice on diet and exercise, and on how to deal with certain emergencies, obtain health education information, or to make enquiries about clinic opening hours and the scale of fees.

Collaboration of Efforts

However, to prepare for this future scenario, actions must be taken by all today. Instead of each doing its part for its own membership the various associations and professional bodies in the health sector in Singapore must join forces in the exploitation of Information Technology. There is room for more collaborative efforts in the development of generic software and systems for clinics, and for more liberal sharing of resources such as medical information and computer applications and computer training facilities.

Sharing of Knowledge

Stimulating interest in computerisation and application of information technology amongst the medical profession is but the first step. Information technology is changing at a very rapid pace. It is important to have regular international and regional conferences such as this to keep the medical profession updated on the latest developments in information technology and application in the health care industry. Just like in the clinical area, the sharing of information, experience and knowledge on computer and informatics is vital in advancing the use of computer technology to enhance medical excellence.

On this note, I wish all participants a fruitful exchange of information and a successful Conference. It is now my great pleasure to declare the First Pan-Pacific Business and Medical Computer Conference open.