

A STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE

Endocrinology is indisputably one of the leading branches of medicine in the country. The link with general medicine is the most outstanding and unique feature of the subspecialty by making it close to the hearts of all the medical professionals. The high acceptance and popularity among the apprentices are to be admired and it is proof as to how tight the field is deep-rooted among the multitude of specialities. Hence, the steady progress of the field of endocrinology cannot be overlooked.

It is sensible to say that the founding of a society and thereby creating an umbrella for the scattered enthusiasts in the field would have been the inspiration and the key to the long journey of accomplishment. The inception of the Endocrine Society of Sri Lanka in 1979 was a landmark event in the history of medicine in the country. The renowned academic in physiology, Professor Carlo Fonseka was credited for pioneering the establishment of the Endocrine Society of Sri Lanka with the support of a few enthusiasts in the era. With all the determination and passion, the status of the field was raised to societal levels. The humble beginnings paved the path to giant strides towards advancement in the next few decades.

A notable event in the past which surrounded the formation of the society was the need to begin a growth hormone clinic to treat children with growth hormone deficiency. This exemplifies the true dedication and commitment shown from the very beginning by the pioneers of the speciality.

Thereon, the growth of the speciality was spectacular. The hard work of the forerunners needs to be respected and the handing-over of the sub-speciality to the younger

generation was quite gratifying. The role of the leading figures that created a platform for the endocrinologists to shine and sparkle was substantial. The stretched journey that took place with circumventing many obstacles is to be admired. Dr. Henry Rajaratnam, a legendary personality, has truly played a spirited and vital role in reinforcing the domain of endocrinology and bringing it to the limelight in the medical community; hence this literary work serves as an honour. This academic discipline has its roots in the early 2000s with the hard work and determination of Professor Devaka Fernando, marking the incorporation of the sub-speciality as a branch of postgraduate studies enabling future academic and carrier pursuits.

Among the historic events was the inauguration of annual academic sessions in 2009 under the headship of Professor Upali Illangasekera, which had since then been a highlight in the academic calendar. The speciality blossomed each year with the direction and wisdom shed by the leadership of the society since its very beginning. We are certain that the current prestige of the college is undoubtedly due to the unprecedented nature of the leaders who led the field in the early stages. Dr. Noel Somasundaram, the first board certified endocrinologist in the country, is an eminent figure who is committed with utmost meticulousness and passion to enrich and augment the speciality to keep abreast with the contemporary trends. Dr Prasad Katulanda, a leading academic, who shoulders the responsibility of uplifting the field splendidly adds glamour and supports the acquisition of cross-disciplinary acceptance.

The societal activities were ever-

expanding infiltrating into every nook and corner. The field of endocrinology which was then a novel field has become a leading speciality among the medical community. It truly has, without any exaggeration. The vitality of the society was truly exceptional and the contribution it made towards the development of the medical profession was extremely valuable. Professor Chandrika Wijeyaratne, a distinguished leader and erudite professor is credited for devoting towards enriching the teaching of endocrinology.

The rise of the society to a college was outstanding so that it started to function on a higher framework. This unique expansion to a college was a breakthrough in the history of endocrinology in Sri Lanka. This helped to bring all the key personnel under one umbrella to reach into the bigger world at large. The memorable event of the inauguration of the Sri Lanka College of Endocrinologists (SLCE) was unforgettable to its members with celebrations in a customary manner during the annual academic sessions in the year 2015. The college embraced a theme for the 21st anniversary, "Linking with the World" and it had the pride of hosting the event in partnership with the Endocrine Society of United States of America. Among the cascade of events that took place, the debut of the college at the inauguration ceremony was inspirational and touched almost every soul that had the slightest connection with the field.

This was just the beginning of a new era. A variety of novel introductions were made possible simply because of the devotion and perseverance of the fellow- men whose genuine interest is ingrained in the success of

the college. The inception of the Sri Lanka Diabetes Federation (SLDF), the public arm of the college was distinctive and it exemplifies further permeation and reaching out to the public. The ceremonial enunciating of the first fellow of the college marked yet another milestone and the awarding of honorary fellowships in appreciation of the services extended by the mentors and pioneers in the field was noteworthy.

The college mission and vision has to be the backbone of the college which should spearhead the future of the young endocrinologists. It has to provide a platform to the endocrinologists to lustre while enabling the expertise and abilities of each member to flourish. It should help create an environment conducive to achieve academic success and triumphs. It should provide scope to develop their professional competence and strengthen their bonds of friendship. The college should be a strength to all, be a director and a leader in all aspects to its affiliation and the sentiment that every member owns it, is the moral that we should abide by.

The college should also be the link between the endocrinologists and the professionals from other branches of medicine and at length, the public. The college ties should further be extended to the international arena. The current platform provides a great opportunity to strengthen the regional ties as the college collaborates with the South Asian Federation of Endocrine Societies (SAFES) to host the Endocrine Congress 2016. This event illustrates that the college at large is able to cater to the entire region expanding its span with the long-term intention of making it a sought after event.

The college has also embarked on several initiatives as part of the college stance since its inauguration. The Foundation Sessions which is an integral part of the college calendar serves the purpose of joining hands

with a wide array of medical professionals while commemorating the college foundation. The Diabetes Day celebrations with a special emphasis on the annual island-wide school competitions which is driven by the committed SLDF team needs to be stated. The college always provides an opportunity for continuous medical education to its members. The series of monthly clinical meetings focusing on the postgraduates in general medicine and endocrinology had been an uninterrupted educational event since the early 1990s. The outreach educational programmes had become second nature of the college tradition. A wide array of research takes place in the field and it provides an amiable platform to our fellow colleagues to show their aptitudes. The steady progress of the Sri Lanka Journal of Diabetes Endocrinology and Metabolism, the biannual official publication of the college which was launched in 2011 is a pillar of strength for this purpose.

The future of the college lies in the hands of the younger generation. The college, while looking back, should keep alive the enriching culture and values inculcated by the pioneers and while looking forward to the future where its pupils become leaders of tomorrow, should shape up for the better.

Despite its relative youth, there is concrete evidence that the future path of the college is visibly robust. There is no doubt whatsoever, that the future of the college will be in better hands as the younger generation blossoms. We are confident that the founders of the Endocrine Society of Sri Lanka could feel contented looking at the current position of the Sri Lanka College of Endocrinologists. We would like to reiterate the fact that the sense of teamwork is the essence of success and we should not forget that none of us is as smart as all of us. Taking a stroll down memory lane, we could

simply be happy...

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