

## AICT-AsiaPCR: a new global platform in Asia Pacific for education, research and innovation in cardiovascular interventions



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We are all looking forward to attending the 14<sup>th</sup> “Asian Interventional Cardiovascular Therapeutics” (AICT) Meeting in Hong Kong in September this year. This official annual scientific and educational forum of the Asian Pacific Society of Interventional Cardiology (APSIC) also happens to be the last AICT in its present form. This is because next year will see the birth of a new landmark annual meeting for the Asia-Pacific region: “AICT-AsiaPCR” – the official meeting of APSIC. This fresh and exciting educational collaboration between APSIC and PCR will be launched with its first meeting in July of 2019 in Singapore. AICT-AsiaPCR is being designed to be the most valuable scientific platform to address the needs of healthcare professionals in the Asia-Pacific region with a mission to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes for patients. The far-reaching vision is “to provide for all professionals involved in interventional cardiology, a global platform in the Asia Pacific to share education, promote and present research and showcase innovation”. AICT-AsiaPCR is different from other meetings because it combines the ethos of APSIC and AICT – “the spirit of participation, ownership and support

from interventional cardiologists (IC) across Asia Pacific Region” with the strength of PCR – “a tradition of excellence, education, research and highly visible global networking”. AICT-AsiaPCR, under the passionate course directorship of Christoph Naber, Upendra Kaul, Ashok Seth, Mohd. Ali Rosli, and Huay Cheem Tan (there will a 6<sup>th</sup> Course Director who will be the representative of a national interventional society and the holder of the post will rotate yearly) and mentorship of William Wijns and Jean Fajadet, is expected to be the largest Pan-Asian interventional cardiology platform. Therefore, the future is not only exciting but has the potential to elevate the delivery of cardiac care in this region.

As we embark on this ambitious journey, I just cannot help reminiscing about the growth and development of interventional cardiology in this region over the last quarter of a century. I also feel fortunate to have been a part of that memorable journey and to have contributed to it in many ways.

APSIC was born out of informal discussion amongst 11 leading interventional cardiologists of this region, over evening drinks on 26 March 1993 during an intervention workshop in

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Sydney. Present were Drs Richard Ng, Arthur Tan, Dray Hong, John Ormiston, Upendra Kaul, Kenneth Chin, myself and others whom my memory fails to recall (**Figure 1** – courtesy Richard Ng). APSIC was formalised as a society in Singapore in July 1993 with Richard Ng as the first president and Arthur Tan (followed after two years by Y.L. Lim) as the secretary. The presidency of APSIC has rotated every two years with the post being held by representatives of 10 different countries from 1994 to 2018. In parallel, AICT was born independently from informal discussion in 2003 between Huay Cheem Tan, myself and some other leading interventional cardiologists (IC) of the region to create a participatory, practical, educational live demonstration interventional cardiology course for the Asia-Pacific region which could be free from the biases and politics of either a society-run or single-centre organised meeting. AICT grew through the interest, participation and contribution of every leading interventional cardiologist of the region. There was a highly successful first meeting in 2004 in Singapore run by Huay Cheem Tan and a second meeting in New Delhi run by myself in 2006, which was inaugurated by the Honourable President of India Dr Kalam. This set the stage for a highly valuable meeting, which has been organised in 12 different countries over the last 14 years. The Board of Trustees of AICT has, since its inception, included the leaders of the best centres of interventional cardiology in the region, the representatives of National Interventional Societies of the countries and office-bearers of APSIC. APSIC and AICT were brought closer together when the First Fellowship Ceremony of APSIC (FAPSIC) was held with great pomp and show at the 2<sup>nd</sup> AICT in New Delhi in 2006 and it has been held annually at every AICT thereafter.

It would be appropriate to acknowledge the transformational contribution of Huay Cheem Tan after taking over as President of APSIC in 2014, and the mentorship of Richard Ng. Dr Tan's futuristic and far-sighted vision of promoting education and knowledge through consolidation and partnership received support from the Boards of APSIC and AICT which had many members in common. Thus, in 2014 AICT became an official scientific meeting of APSIC with Europa Organisation Asia as the meeting organisers. Finally, early this year the educational partnership with PCR was cemented to create the largest interventional cardiology meeting for the region "AICT-AsiaPCR: the official meeting of APSIC".

As we move into this exciting transformational phase from 2019 onwards, we aim to bring into the fold a whole generation of



**Figure 1.** *The birth of APSIC.*

young IC by providing value in sharing of knowledge, promoting research and showcasing their expertise and talent.

The co-directors and associate directors of "AICT-AsiaPCR" are being meticulously selected across countries through their proven track records of being passionate about excellence, education, and organisational and innovative thought leadership in the field. A number of young-generation IC have been included in the programme-building committee, and cardiology fellows, nurses and allied professionals are being encouraged to contribute and participate in a most beneficial manner. The single factor which binds together the spectrum of course directors, co-directors and associate directors from countries across Asia Pacific is "commitment" towards the mission and vision of AICT-AsiaPCR and their willingness to devote their time and energy to elevate interventional cardiology in the Asia-Pacific region.

Yes, dear friends, we are ready to enter another exciting era in the historic and meteoric development of interventional cardiology in the Asia-Pacific region. AICT-AsiaPCR has been created by all of us together to be truly representative of the Asia-Pacific interventional cardiology community. It is a global platform emanating from Asia Pacific, a platform which will reflect our excellence to the world and one which we will be proud of in times to come.

### **Conflict of interest statement**

A. Seth is a founder board member of AICT and founder board member and President Elect of APSIC.