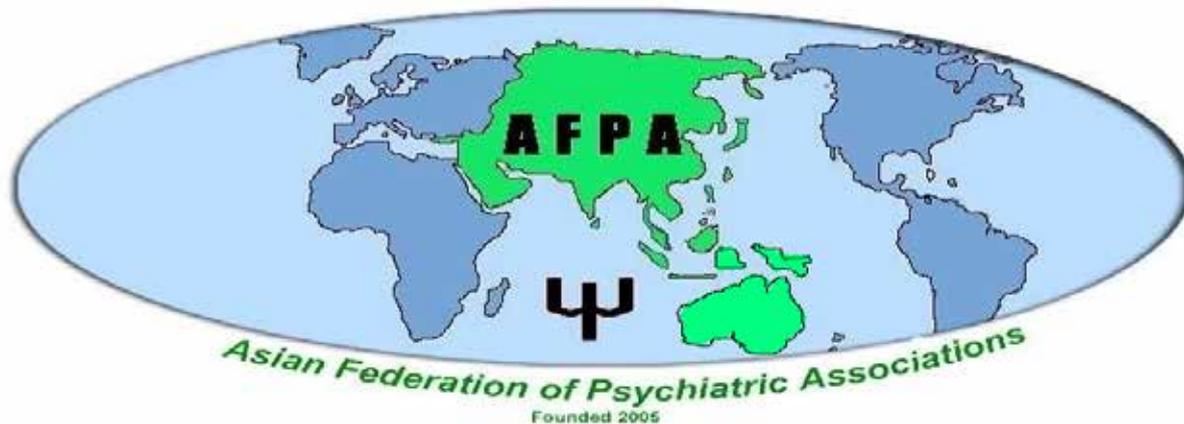


The Bulletin of the AFPA

The Summer 2022 Issue



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FROM THE OFFICE OF AFPA

Current National Psychiatric Societies of the AFPA

Asian Federation of Psychiatric Association (AFPA) is a federation of national societies and associations on the continent of Asia and South Pacific countries who support the goal to achieve the excellence in Asian psychiatry:

South East Asia

- Indonesian Psychiatric Association
- Malaysian Psychiatric Association
- Myanmar Medico-Psychological Society
- Philippine Psychiatric Association
- Psychiatric Association of Thailand
- Singapore Psychiatric Association
- Mental Health Association of Cambodia (MHAC)
- Vietnam Psychiatric Association

Eastern Asia

- Chinese Society of Psychiatry
- Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists
- Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology
- Korean Neuropsychiatric Association
- Mongolian Mental Health Association
- Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry
- Macao Psychiatric Association

Southern Asia

- Bangladesh Association of Psychiatrists
- Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS)
- Psychiatrists Association of Nepal
- Sri Lanka College of Psychiatrists
- Psychiatric Association of Bhutan

Central and Western Asia

- Emirates Society of Mental Health
- Armenian Psychiatric Association (ArPA)
- Iranian Psychiatric Association
- Pakistan Psychiatric Society
- Iraqi Society of Psychiatrists

South Pacific

- Papua New Guinea Psychiatric Association
- The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists

Please refer to national society presidents 2022 for the details at the website at afpa.asia.org. (The author declares no conflicts of interest in writing this report.)

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The Asian Federation of Psychiatric Associations (AFPA®) was
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Gundugurti Prasad Rao (India), New AFPA President

AFPA

Executive Board Members, 2022-2024

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FROM PRESIDENTS OF AFPA NATIONAL PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETIES

The 118th Annual Meeting of the JSPN Was Held in Fukuoka, Japan, 16-18 June, 2022

The 118th annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology was held at the Fukuoka International Congress Center for three days, 16-18 June, 2022. The timing of the conference was fortunate in that it coincided with the end of the sixth wave of novel coronavirus infections, and we were able to conduct all planned meeting in person. Participants could also participate in each programme on in real time during the conference. Under the theme “Psychiatric Perspectives of the Changing World and Minds,” of the JSPN annual meeting took place as scheduled in-person and on-line to meetig took.



Hiroaki Kawasaki gave the presidential address at the annual meeting on 16 June, 2022

Of about 150 symposia, the most common theme was on psychotherapy and COVID-19. Two special lectures were “A 33-year Pursuit in Gambling Disorder,” by Nariakira Moriyama, and “Afghanistan Led by Doctor Tetsu Nakamura: Peace Is Not an Idea, But a Reality” by Masaru Murakami. Sixteen educational lectures were given on various topics by leading experts in their fields. About 8,400 registrants who attended this annual meeting in-person and those on-line in the real time of the programme or who watched the recorded videotapes on-demand.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to invite speakers in-person from abroad for the past three consecutive years. But we had speakers from five international psychiatric societies to give on-line presentations in English on the theme “Post-COVID-19 and Child, Adolescent and Youth Mental Health.” The speakers were Rebecca Brendel, the president of the

president of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists; Adrian James, the president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists; Winston W. Shen, from the Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry, and Kumiko Ando from the JSPN. Tsuyoshi Akiyama did the discussion. The symposium was chaired by Chiyoko Uchida and Kumi Aoyama. We realized that there are many common aspects in each country, such as the problem of eating disorders, and that online medical treatment is behind in Japan compared to other countries.

In the fellowship award symposia, the JSPN invites young psychiatrists from around the world each year. At this annual meeting, we had 12 speakers from 11 countries including Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, and USA (X 2). All international young psychiatrists were invited to participate in symposia in English under the themes “Efforts to ensure continuity of psychiatric care under the COVID-19 pandemic,” “Mental health of healthcare workers under the COVID-19 pandemic,” “Mental health of the general population under the COVID-19 pandemic: including a brief case description,” and “Efforts to maintain mental health in the general population under the COVID-19 pandemic.” Japanese JSPN counterparts also participated in presentation and discussion on those four symposia.



A photo of a fellowship award symposium at the JSPN annual meeting. Standing on the left: Daichi Sone (Japan) standing in front of the next speaker seat, and Tomohiro Shirasaka (JP, chairperson) sitting in the next moderator seat

Upper panel on the screen (from L to R): Tomohiro Shirasaka (JP), Daichi Sone (JP) and Eugene Boon Yau Koh (Malaysia), who joined the symposium on-line.

Lower panel on the screen (from L to R): Sagun Ballav Pant (Nepal), and Chelsea Rose Youngmans (USA). Both international fellowship awardees participated in the symposium on-line.

Although various events had to be given up due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, we are pleased that we were able to hold the event on site. (The author declares no conflicts of interest in writing this feature.)

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(Editor's note: Ichiro Kusumi is the president of the JSPN. Hiroaki Kawasaki is the president of the 118th annual meeting of the JSPN, 2022. The 119th JSPN annual meeting will take place in Yokohama, 22-24 June, 2023.)

A TSOP Press Conference Advocating Treatment for Patients with Schizophrenia on 28 July, 2022

The Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry and Ministry of Health and Welfare of Taiwan held a press conference on 28 July, 2022. The theme of the press conference was “New Tactics for Treating Patients with Schizophrenia.”

This conference was aimed at enhancing the awareness and knowledge of schizophrenia among general population in Taiwan, and also at strengthening the social security with comprehensive mental health services. The messages at the press conference were to stress on early diagnosis and early intervention for patients with schizophrenia, to symptoms and function.

The press conference also highlighted effective ways to maintain the treatment of mental illnesses using long-acting injection therapy with antipsychotic drugs and emphasised on communicating mental health information to the public and de-stigmatize mental illnesses.



A press conference “New Tactics for Treating Patients with Schizophrenia,” 28 July, 2022

Everyone carried a banner of messages to advocate the care for patients with schizophrenia.

From left: Jen-Pang Wang, Lawrence Lan, Li-Chung Shen, Jui-Yuan Hsueh, Chang-Jer Tsai, Claire Wanyu Wang, Lian-Yu Chen, and Cheng-Ta Li

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(Editor's note: Claire Wanyu Wang is a congresswoman of Taiwan. Her four-year-daughter, “the tiny sparkling light bulb,” was randomly murdered by an untreated patient with schizophrenia in 2016 before she was elected as a congresswoman. Rui-Yuan Hsueh is a gynecologist-obstetrician who is minister of Ministry of Health and Welfare of Taiwan. Authors Tsai and Chen are president and secretary, respectively, of the Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry. The rest of them in the photo are members of the TSOP.)

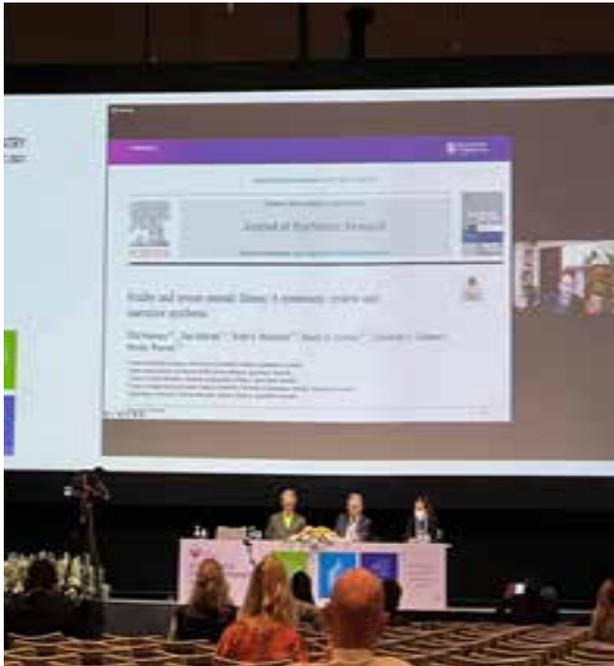
The PAT Hosted the 22nd World Congress of Psychiatry in Bangkok in August 2022

The Psychiatric Association of Thailand is delighted about the success of the 22nd WPA World Congress of Psychiatry in Bangkok on 3-6 August, 2022. This hybrid congress provided us with great experience and an excellent opportunity to meet mental health experts from around the world.



Registration area of the 22nd WPA World Congress of Psychiatry, in Bangkok, Thailand

Your presence helped make this congress a great success, especially since the world has only recently reopened post-pandemic. The PAT wishes you all the best and hopes to meet you again soon elsewhere to enhance our cooperation. (The authors declare no conflicts of interest in writing this feature.)



Speaker on the screen: Dan Siskind (Australia)

From the left: David Richard Leslie Cawthorpe (Canada), Norman Sartorius (Switzerland), and Kamonporn Wannarit (Thailand)

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*(Editor's note: Wannarit, Supanya, and Charnsil are
chairman for international affairs, secretary-general,
and president, respectively, of PAT.)*

World Suicide Prevention Day in Bangkok, Thailand, 10 September, 2022

The Department of Mental Health, the Psychiatric Association of Thailand, the Thai Society for Affective Disorders (TSAD), TERO Music, and Janssen-Cilag Ltd. organized a talk show on September 10, World Suicide Prevention Day. The talk was aimed at increasing

awareness and knowledge of depression and suicide among Thai people with the concept of "mind voice" (listening to other people by heart).

The event highlighted effective ways to communicate mental health information to the public and de-stigmatize mental illnesses. Many platforms that provide mental health services and promote accessibility were also promoted in this event, including hotlines, apps, websites of the Department of Mental Health, and home visits by the village health volunteers. (The authors declare no conflicts of interest in writing this feature.)



From the left: Paul Manatthaworn, Nuttorn Pityaratstian, Amporn Benjaponpithak, Prakarn Thomyangkoon, and Weerawat Meekaew

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*(Editor's note: Wannarit, Supanya, and Charnsil are
chairman for international affairs, secretary-general, and
president, respectively, of PAT.)*

RANZCP Held Its Annual New Zealand Conference in September in Queenstown

The RANZCP held its annual New Zealand Conference in September in Queenstown, New Zealand. Coinciding with Mental Health Awareness Week 2022, 477 delegates joined the sold-out conference in person

and online to hear international and local speakers. (The New Zealand Conference is different from the annual Congress. The RANZCP holds “Conferences” in all Australian states and New Zealand each year in addition to the annual Congress. The annual Congress was held in Sydney this year, and was announced in the winter 2022 issue (volume 9, number 2) of *the Bulletin of the AFPA*.)

Notable highlights included Sophia Vinogradov’s (Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Minnesota Medical School, Minneapolis, USA) discussion of cognitive training methods and neuroplasticity in the context of schizophrenia and RANZCP member Caroline Bell and Ruqayya Sulaiman-Hill’s (both Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand) presentation of early findings from their project examining the psychological sequelae of the 15 March 2019 terror attacks on the Muslim community in Christchurch.

The conference also heard RANZCP member Ben Beaglehole (Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand) discuss the psychological effects of disaster and Suresh Muthukumaraswamy (School of Pharmacy, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand) delivered a sceptical look at the use of psychedelic drugs in medicine, dissecting the methodologies applied in the existing literature. We look forward to another successful event next year in Rotorua.



A group photo of RANZCP board members at the New Zealand conference

From left: Neeraj Gill, Nick O’Connor, Melanie Turner, Vinay Lakra, Elizabeth Moore, Sue Mackersey, Mark Lawrence, and Pramudie Gunaratne

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(Editor’s note: Lakra is the president of RANZCP.)

The Wrap-up Report of the 11th ICP and the 13th SAARC IPC Was Held in Chattogram, Bangladesh, 29-30 September, 2022

The 11th International Conference of Psychiatry in Bangladesh and the 13th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) International Psychiatry Conference, took place in Radisson Blu Bayview, Chattogram, Bangladesh, 29-30 September 2022. SAARC has eight countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.



Inauguration ceremony of the 11th ICP and 13th SAARC international psychiatric conference 2022

From left: Muhammad Zillur Rahman Khan, Md. Golam Rabbani, Afzal Javed (Pakistan), M A Aziz, Md. Waziul Alam Chowdhury, Gautam Saha (India) and Md. Azizul Islam

The 11th ICP Psychiatry in Bangladesh and the 13th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) International Psychiatry Conference, took place in Radisson Blu Bayview, Chattogram, Bangladesh, 29-30 September 2022. SAARC has eight countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Under the theme “Mental Health Care in Today’s World: Challenges and Preventive Strategies”, the Bangladesh Association of Psychiatrists (BAP) hosted a two-day conference in Chattogram, Bangladesh which was co-sponsored by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA), SAARC Psychiatric Federation (SPF), and the Asian Federation of Psychiatric Associations (AFPA).

Over 650 delegates participated in the conference, including over 350 psychiatrists and mental health professionals from Bangladesh, UK, Australia, Sweden, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nepal present in person or on-line. The event was graced with the presence and participation of many iconic personas of psychiatry including the president of WPA, Afzal Javed (Pakistan); president-elect, Danuta Wasserman (Sweden); immediate past president, Helen Herrman (Australia); president of Royal College of Psychiatrists, Adrian J B James (United Kingdom); president of Royal Australian



and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP), Vinay Lakra (Australia); president of SAARC Psychiatric Federation (SPF), Gautam Saha (India); general secretary, advisor, office member, other SPF executive committee members; and several other prominent faces of psychiatry were present in the conference.

The event was further complemented by launching of the two national guidelines, BAP guidelines for the management of depressive disorders and BAP guidelines for the management of anxiety disorders. A part of the conference was also recognizing young talented psychiatrists as well as honoring the legends of psychiatry in Bangladesh. SPF fellowship award, gold medal award for recognizing young talented psychiatrists in Bangladesh, research grant award for psychiatric trainees and students, best poster presentation award, lifetime achievement award, posthumous award and outstanding contribution in the conference award were among the many awards given. The congress had other events as well, including inauguration ceremony to welcome the delegates, a grand cultural night full of music, dance and entertainment shows and exciting raffle draws. (The author declares no potential conflicts of interest in writing this report.)



Crest giving ceremony at the launching ceremony of BAP guidelines for the management of depressive disorders

From left: Mohammad Tariquul Alam, Md. Golam Rabbani, Afzal Javed (Pakistan), Gautam Saha (India), and Md. Waziul Alam Chowdhury



Launching ceremony of the BAP guidelines for the management of anxiety disorders

Working committee members (from left): Nasir Uddin Ahmed, Ahsan Aziz Sarkar, Md. Faruk Hossain, Mohammad Tariquul Alam, Hasinatul Zannat, M M Jalal Uddin, Sultana Algin, Muhammad Zillur Rahman Khan, Mekhala Sarkar, Avra Das Bhowmik, Rubina Hossain, Shahana Parveen, Fatima Zohra, Md. Raisul Islam, Md. Zahir Uddin and Niaz Mohammad Khan

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(Editor's note: Alam is the general secretary of Bangladesh Association of Psychiatrists and an executive committee member of SAARC Psychiatric Federation (SPF). He is the executive editor of Archives of NIMH [the official journal of NIMH] and also an editorial board member of the Asian Journal of Psychiatry.)

The Wrap-up of the Fall Congress of the KNPA, 7-8 October, 2022

Korean Neuropsychiatric Association (KNPA) succeeded fall congress in Kimdaejung Convention Center, Gwangju, 7-8 October, 2022. The theme of this fall congress was "Psychiatry, for happy life and healthy world."

Since the COVID pandemic situation had been controlled in some extent, the KNPA offered an in-person congress after few years of on-line and hybrid congresses. The theme of this event was "Psychiatry, for happy life and healthy world." At the congress, we covered topics from basic neural science and psychotherapy to digital therapy for mental illnesses and recent social problems in Korea.



A photo taken at the KNPA fall congress

Almost 1,200 psychiatrists in Korea gathered this off-site meeting. We had 1 plenary lecture, 2 special lectures, 24 symposia, 2 continuing medical educations, and 1 workshop in six congress rooms. Also 59 e-posters and 4 oral presentations were presented.

Hyun-Seung Chee, past president of the KNPA gave a plenary lecture on body dysmorphic disorders. The

special lectures were on psychoanalytic understanding of development and maturation and machine learning and mathematical modeling for psychiatry. (The authors report no conflicts of interest in writing this report.)

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RANZCP Updated Four Practice Guidelines

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) has recently updated four Clinical Memoranda to reflect up-to-date evidence to guide practice when using treatments for which evidence is emerging. The information is intended to provide general guidance and reflects regulatory settings in Australia and New Zealand.

• Use of ketamine in psychiatric practice

RANZCP acknowledges that interest in using ketamine for depression is rapidly increasing, although recognises that gaps in knowledge remain. The Clinical Memoranda relies on recently published models of care and meta-analyses and presents an overview of the issues and risks and advises on use of ketamine within carefully defined parameters.

• Therapeutic use of psychedelic substances

RANZCP maintains that further research is needed to assess the efficacy, safety and effectiveness of psychedelic therapies to confirm initial promising results and to inform future potential clinical use in psychiatric practice.

• Deep brain stimulation (DBS) in psychiatric practice

RANZCP reflects current research relating to DBS use for treatment refractory obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) acknowledging that it may be appropriate to use DBS for OCD outside of formal research trials only in very specific circumstances and in specialised hospital settings.

• Transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS)

RANZCP reflects current research relating to use in depression and a more recent focus on cognitive enhancement. Its use is recommended only in clinical settings with appropriate governance and oversight. (The author declares no conflicts of interest in writing this report.)

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The 2022 TSOP Annual Meeting To Be Held in Kaohsiung, Taiwan 5-6 November, 2022



Kaohsiung Medical University, the venue of the 2022 TSOP annual meeting (Photo courtesy of Kaohsiung Medical University)



The Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry (TSOP) originally planned to hold its 60th annual meeting at Kaohsiung Medical University, 6-7 November, 2021. Due to the worsened pandemic condition, the in-person annual meeting was canceled. It was taken placed totally on-line.

This year, the Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry again plans its 60 + 1 (the 61st) annual meeting again at the same venue at Kaohsiung Medical University in-person, 5-6 November 2022. The theme of the TSOP annual meeting this year is “Mental Health in the Era of COVID-19 Pandemics.”

At this 2022 TSOP annual meeting, we will have 29 symposia, 5 workshops, 4 plenary lectures, 1 special lecture, 2 forums, 7 industry-sponsored lectures, and 124 poster presentations. The evening banquet is to be held at Marriott’s Hotel on 6 November. One tour to visit National Kaohsiung Center of the Arts (Wei-Wu-Yin)

for social program is offered. (The authors declare no conflicts of interest in writing this announcement.)

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respectively, of the Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry.)*

FROM PRESIDENTS OF AFPA-AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

The Second TSfN Took Place in Taiyuan City, Taiwan, 1-4 September, 2022

The Taiwan Neuroscience Alliance (TNA), which is established in 2020 and is gathered 16 neuroscience-related societies. The TNA includes 16 society members of Taiwan Neuroscience Society, Taiwanese Society of Biological Psychiatry and Neuropsychopharmacology (TSBPN), Taiwan Pain Society, Taiwan Society for Neuro-Oncology, Taiwan Society of Cognitive Neuroscience, Taiwan Dementia Society, Taiwan Magnetic Resonance Society, Taiwan Society for Nutritional Psychiatry Research, Taiwan Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Taiwan Neurological Society, Taiwanese Society of Biomedical Engineering, Society for Neurological Rare Disorders-Taiwan, Taiwan Society for Stereotactic Functional Neurosurgery and Radiosurgery, Taiwanese Society for Computational Neuroscience, Taiwan Neurosurgical Society, and Taiwan Neurotrauma Society.

The second biennial Taiwan Society for Neuroscience (TSfN) meeting, took place 1-4 September, in Linkou Chang Gung Medical Foundation, Taoyuan City, Taiwan.

TSBPN as a society member of TNA, joined the meeting actively. At the 2nd TSfN, Ya-Mei Bai introduced Liu, who gave an excellent talk on the topic of neurofilament light chain and neuropsychiatry. Cheng-Ta Li introduced Shan H. Siddiqi (Beth Israel Hospital/Harvard University, Boston, USA) who reported the newest research knowledge related to deep transcranial magnetic stimulation.



A photo of a TSfN symposium on 3 September, 2022
From left: Cheng-Ta Li (Taiwan) standing, Shan H Siddiqi (USA) on the screen; Ya-Mei Bai (Taiwan) standing, and Yu-Li Liu (Taiwan) sitting

By the way, TSBPN decided to have a spring meeting on 18 March, 2023 at Evergreen International Convention Center in Taipei. (The author declares no potential conflicts of interest in writing this report.)

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(Editor note: Chen and Bai are the secretary and president, respectively, of the TSBPN. Li and Liu are members of the TSBPN.)

Newly Elected First Executive Committee Members of the PASP

The first executive committee meeting of the newly elected cabinet of Pakistan Association of Social Psychiatry (PASP) was held on Saturday, 24 September, 2022, in Pearl Continental Hotel, Rawalpindi, under the leadership of newly elected president, Mazhar Malik.



A photo of the first executive committee members of the PASP
Standing from the left: Muhammad Usman Ghani, Muhammad Abbas Khan, Muhammad Usama Bin Zubair, Widad Mazhar Malik, Sobia Haqqi, Nargis Munir, and Samia Sarfraz.
Sitting from the left: Hamid Rashid Khawaja, Anwar-ul-Haq, Mazhar Malik, Mohammad Ahmed, Khalid Mehmood and Anees Sial.

The meeting highlighted the rôle of Pakistan Association of Social Psychiatry (PASP) towards creating awareness of social psychiatry in Pakistan and need of developing standard social services for psychiatric patients. During this meeting, oath-taking



ceremony was held and the chief guest, Mohammad Ahmed, took oath from the new cabinet members of PASP.



A photo of oath-taking ceremony from the chief guest.

From left: Hamid Rashid Khawaja, Muhammad Abbas Khan, Anwar-ul-Haq, Mazhar Malik and Mohammad Ahmed

The office bearers pledged to play their part in developing social welfare services in the field of social psychiatry in Pakistan and are committed to work at both national and international forums to achieve these objectives. (The author declares no conflicts of interest in writing this report.)

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(Editor's note: Malik is a past president of Pakistan Psychiatric Society and an international distinguished fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. Ahmed is the dean of Watim Medical and Dental College, Rawalpindi, Pakistan.)

The 20th Course for Academic Development of Psychiatrists by JYPO in Will Be Held in 2023



We, Japan Young Psychiatrists Organization (JYPO), would like to congratulate on the successful completion of the Nineth Congress of Asian Psychiatry (9th WCAP) in Hyderabad, India.

This type of international conference is the foundation for expanding people-to-people exchanges, creating memories, and boosting international research and projects. We hope that the impact of COVID-19 will lessen and that there will be more opportunities for us to actually interact face to face. For the past three years, JYPO's social gatherings have been mainly online, but this year we are planning to start having social gatherings onsite to promote academic exchange and study.

The Course for Academic Development of Psychiatrists (CADP) is a 3-day/2-night academic gathering for young psychiatrists that has been held since 2002. The course participants practice giving presentations at international conferences, learn to create group projects, and expand international exchange. Through this course, we have been expanding our international exchange.

After a three-year inactivity since the 19th CADP in 2020, we are pleased to announce that we will hold the 20th CADP in Japan in March 2023. We are planning to have Norman Sartorius (Switzerland) and other renowned doctors give lectures to motivate young psychiatrists to become more involved in psychiatry.

For the record, I would like report that we had 37 (30 Japanese and 7 oversea) participants joined 19th CADP at Kyoto University on 14 February, 2020.

We would like to start accepting applications for overseas participants after considering the status of COVID-19. We hope that you will wait for the JYPO announcement to give the exact information of dates, venue, and traveling support. JYPO will continue to support the progress and development of psychiatry in Asia under the WCAP and the Asian Federation of Psychiatric Association. I am looking forwards to receiving your application from young psychiatrists (The author declares no conflicts of interest in writing this report.)

A group photo of the 19th CADP at Kyoto University on 14 February, 2020
Standing from the left: N. Viravan (Thailand), C. Nakayama, S.

Fukushima, A. Ogawa, R. Kawagishi, S. Nakano, K. Deriha, I. Kuramochi, K. Tan (Australia), A. Michalska (Poland), S. Kobayashi, A. Nishimura, H. Fukushima, M. Masuda, K. Moriimoto, H. Imagawa, A. Eakamornpan (Thailand), R. Asada, A. Okuma, F. Koizumi, T. Iemura, T. Yamaguchi, Y. Sumi, M. Wallies (Germany), and N. Toshino
Sitting from the Left: C. Noel (Belgium), F. Rachma (Indonesia), N. Oya, A. Iriki, K. Aoyama, T. Ii, M. Aki, Y. Satake, J. Kitaoka, A. Iba, and H. Nakano

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*(Editor note: Aki and Oya are current president and
immediate past-presidents, respectively, of the JYPO.)*

PRCP Congress Is to Be Held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 13-15 October, 2023



The Pacific Rim College of Psychiatrists (PRCP) is an Association of psychiatrists from countries and territories around the rim of the Pacific Ocean as well as the Asian region (<https://www.prcp.org/>). Since it was founded by academic psychiatrists on May 15, 1980, the membership is opened to all psychiatrists working in clinical, administrative, or academic practice. The PRCP aims to foster the development of quality mental health services, and to support the improvement of education and research in psychiatry through greater professional collaboration in the region. The PRCP also organises a biennial conference to provide a formal setting for communication among its membership, which currently consists of nearly 225 psychiatrists from 15 countries.

In recent years, the Asian Federation of Psychiatric Associations (AFPA) has joined The Asia Pacific Psychiatry (APPSY) journal as their official journal together with the PRCP. The journal, published by Wiley, is now in its 14th year of publication. The APPSY's impact factor for 2021 is 3.788, which places the journal 64/142 in the psychiatry (social science) category and 84/155 in the psychiatry category, thus emerging as one of the leading psychiatric journals focused on the Asia and Pacific region. We strongly

encourage psychiatry and mental health colleagues from AFPA to submit research articles and reviews in mental health, as well as clinically and educationally focused papers on current best practices at www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/17585872.



A photo taken at the PRCP Pre-Congress Workshop at the 26th Malaysian Conference of Psychological Medicine in Kuala Lumpur
From left: Mian-Yoon Chong (Taiwan), Ahmad Hatim Sulaiman (Malaysia), Chee Ng (Australia)

The PRCP would like to warmly welcome you all to join us in the 20th PRCP Congress in Kuala Lumpur, 13-15 October 2023. The Congress will deliver a high-quality scientific programme to promote academic exchange and professional networking in our Region. The theme of the Congress is "Building Mental Health Resilience Across the Lifespan." We look forward to your participation in the notable range of plenaries, symposia, topics and workshops offered by the Congress. The programme would benefit psychiatrists and mental health professionals from multidisciplinary backgrounds. On-site participants can anticipate a unique social and cultural programme, and the opportunity to visit many sights and experience the cultural hub in this beautiful city.

We look forward to your participation in the rich academic exchange and cordial networking among colleagues during this congress in multicultural Malaysia. (The author declares no conflicts of interest in writing this announcement.)

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*(Editor's note: Ng is the current president of the PRCP, 2021-2023.
Chong is a past president of the PRCP, 2018-2021.)*



COMMENTARY

(The opinions expressed here are author's personal opinions, and they do not necessarily reflect on those of any organisations.)

Development of Preemptive Drug against Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is regarded as the most challenging disease in the 21st century, with a huge impact on society in number of patients, severity of impairment, and long duration as well as reduced productivity, increased social costs, and increased concern about the disease. Since the launch of donepezil (Aricept) in the U.S. and Japan in the late 1990s, it has been approved in more than 100 countries around the world and has been delivered to people living with dementia and their families. Donepezil and other acetylcholine esterase inhibitors (including rivastigmine and galantamine) and, an NMDA antagonist (memantine), are effective to delay the cognitive decline of the patients to a certain period of time. The patients under prescription of these drugs, however, show continued deterioration of their cognitive decline. Almost 25 years have passed since the launch of donepezil without success of disease-modifying drugs or preemptive drugs against AD.

Partial success of aducanumab

Aducanumab is a recombinant human IgG1 monoclonal antibody produced from a peripheral blood lymphocyte library of elderly individuals with normal cognitive function. Its epitope is the A β 3–7 region and is thought to selectively bind to oligomers and fibrils. A P1a clinical trial (NCT01397539) was conducted in 2016, and a P1b PRIME trial (NCT01677572) was conducted with patients with prodromal to mild Alzheimer's disease, monthly aducanumab administration continuing for one year. Brain A β reduction was dose- and time-dependent. It significantly delayed the progression of clinical symptoms after 1 year, as assessed by Scale-Sum of Boxes (CDR-SB), compared with placebo. With these results, two large Phase III trials, "ENGAGE" (NCT02477800) and "EMERGE" (NCT02484547), were conducted in mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and mild dementia due to Alzheimer's disease with CDR-SB as the primary endpoint. The initial plan was to file in 2020, but in March 2019, Biogen announced from the interim results of both trials that, while the EMERGE trial showed encouraging trends, the ENGAGE trial was not meeting its primary endpoint, and the trial was discontinued. However, in October 2019, Biogen

re-analyzed data from 3,285 controls and found that the high-dose aducanumab (100 mg/kg) was useful in both trials, and announced to apply for FDA review. Biogen filed for approval of aducanumab with the FDA after concluding that high-dose aducanumab had a significant effect on slowing the progression of symptoms in patients with early-stage Alzheimer's disease. The results of the aducanumab analysis were submitted to an FDA expert panel on 6 November, 2020, and many panel members were of the opinion that the results of the analysis were inadequate.

A public hearing on aducanumab was held on 5 December, 2020. The UK Alzheimer's Association questioned the usefulness of aducanumab, but the American Alzheimer's Association urged the FDA to approve it.

After this public hearing, the FDA announced its conclusion of accelerated approval for aducanumab on 8 June, 2021. Needless to say, the FDA has made decisions in the past that differed from the opinions of expert committees, but this was an unusual decision. Although the FDA decided to grant accelerated approval, there were many doubts about this decision.

The expedited approval granted by the FDA is a conditional approval. The expedited approval is a mechanism for approving drugs for serious or life-threatening diseases based on alternative endpoints that are predictive of clinical usefulness. In the case of aducanumab, the accelerated approval was concluded based on the dose- and time-dependent reduction in brain A β deposition as assessed by amyloid PET in two Phase III trials. But the reduction of brain amyloid β is only a surrogate endpoint, not a clinical endpoint of suppression of cognitive decline. In granting expedited approval for aducanumab, the FDA said it expected that amyloid-beta reduction would provide clinical benefit to patients, but would impose a confirmatory study as a requirement for approval to confirm its clinical benefit. The approval will be revoked if clinical efficacy is not demonstrated in confirmatory trials by February 2030.

Big news of lecanemab

On 28 September, 2022, President and chief executive officer (CEO) Haruo Naito of Eisai and CEO, Michelle Vonassos of Biogen announced that they have developed an anti-amyloid- β (A β) protofibril antibody lecanemab (development code: BAN2401) in a large global phase III clinical trial in patients with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and mild AD (collectively defined as early stage AD) with confirmed amyloid pathology in the brain.

The clarity AD validation study met its primary endpoint (CDR-SB: Clinical Dementia Rating Sum of Boxes) and all key secondary endpoints with statistically highly significant results. Based on the results of the study, Eisai will hold discussions with the regulatory authorities in each country with the aim of submitting a full marketing authorization application in the United States in fiscal 2022 and marketing authorization applications in Japan and Europe.

The results of the intent-to-treat (ITT) population analysis of this study showed that the CDR-SB score, a measure of overall clinical symptoms at 18 months of treatment, was significantly lower than the CDR-SB score at 18 months of the placebo group. The mean change in the CDR-SB score was -0.45, or 27% reduction in deterioration, for patients treated with lecanemab compared with placebo at 18 months of treatment ($p = 0.00005$). The CD-RSB showed a statistically highly significant reduction in deterioration at all endpoints ($p < 0.01$ for all endpoints).

The study included important secondary endpoints: amyloid accumulation in the brain as measured by amyloid PET, ADAS-cog14 (Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Scale-cognitive subscale 14, ADCOMS (Alzheimer's Disease Composite Score), and ADCS MCI-ADL (Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study-Activities of Daily Living Scale for Mild Cognitive Impairment) at 18 months of treatment. The results were highly statistically significant compared to placebo ($p < 0.01$) in all of the secondary endpoints.

The adverse events associated with anti-amyloid antibodies, amyloid-related imaging abnormalities (ARIA), were statistically significant at 18 months compared to placebo ($p < 0.01$). The incidence of ARIA-E (edema/eosinophilia) was 12.5% in the lecanemab group and 1.7% in the placebo group. The incidence of symptomatic ARIA-E was 2.8% in the lecanemab group and 0.0% in the placebo group. The incidence of ARIA-H (ARIA-induced cerebral microbleeding, major hemorrhage, and surface hemosiderin deposition) was 17.0% in the lecanemab group and 0.0% in the placebo group. The incidence of ARIA-H was 17.0% in the lecanemab group and 8.7% in the placebo group. The incidence of symptomatic ARIA-H was 0.7% in the lecanemab group and 0.7% in the placebo group.

This study was a placebo-controlled, double-blind, parallel-group, randomized global phase III clinical trial of 1,795 patients with early-stage AD. Subjects received either 10 mg/kg bi-weekly of lecanemab or placebo in a 1:1 ratio. Subject characteristics at baseline were similar and balanced between the lecanemab and placebo groups.

Subject enrollment criteria included the ability to tolerate a wide range of comorbidities or concomitant treatment (e.g., hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, kidney disease, concomitant anticoagulation, etc.). Eisai's recruitment strategy also took into account the ethnic and racial diversity of the U.S. population. As a result of these comprehensive subject enrollment criteria and the ethnic and racial diversity of the U.S. population, the distribution of U.S. enrollees is generally similar to that of Medicare enrollees.

For further detailed descriptions and references of this commentary, the readers are advised to read "Takeda M: Development of monoclonal antibody therapeutics for Alzheimer's disease. *Taiwanese Journal of Psychiatry* 2022; 36 (4): now in press in the December 2022 issue of *the TJP* at www.e-tjp.org. (The author declares no potential conflicts of interest in writing in this commentary.)

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(Editor's note: Takeda is an immediate past-secretary for meetings of the executive council, the World Psychiatric Association. He is a past president of the Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology. He is also the editor of *Psychogeriatrics*, the official journal of Japanese Psychogeriatric Society.)



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