



# PeMSAA Newsletter

December 2021

Peradeniya Medical School Alumni Association

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- TRIAD OF PCOS
- THE PARACLINICAL BUILDING OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE -A SAGA
- WORLD TOP 2% SCIENTISTS FROM PeMSAA
- PERADENIYA'S FIRST LIVE DONOR PAEDIATRIC LIVER TRANSPLANT
- PROF. M. D. LAMAWANSA; THE NEW VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA
- PeMSAA STUDENT CRISIS FUND



## TRIAD OF PCOS

Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is the most common endocrine disorder affecting females with a prevalence of 8 to 13%. It is one of the main causes of female subfertility worldwide. Up to 70% of women remain undiagnosed. PCOS is a heterogeneous collection of symptoms and signs which gather to form a spectrum of disorder varying from mild to severe disease. In an individual, these symptoms and signs may vary across their life span.

The pathophysiology of PCOS appears to be multifactorial as well as polygenic. It reflects a strong and complex interaction of genetic, environmental and behavioral factors. The definition of PCOS has been much debated. International consensus definition of PCOS is the presence of two out of the following three criteria (Rotterdam criteria);

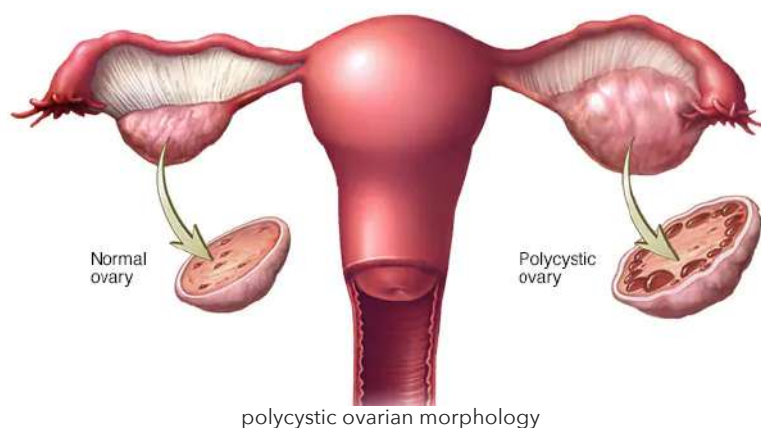
1. Oligo-ovulation and/or anovulation
2. Clinical or biochemical evidence of hyperandrogenism
3. Polycystic ovarian morphology in the pelvic ultrasound scan

Other causes of hyperandrogenism and menstrual cycle disturbances must always be excluded. The cysts are not true cysts and indeed are follicles whose development has been arrested. Polycystic ovaries can exist without clinical signs of the syndrome, expression of which may be precipitated by various factors, predominantly an increase in body weight. Clinical expression and comorbidities of PCOS significantly varies across the world depending on ethnicity and geographical location. South Asians have greater insulin resistance and more severe symptoms than white people with PCOS

**In PCOS there is endocrine, reproductive and metabolic dysfunction (triad of PCOS).** There are many extra-ovarian aspects to the pathophysiology of PCOS, yet ovarian dysfunction is central. **Endocrine dysfunction** in PCOS includes hyperandrogenism, insulin resistance, hyperinsulinemia, reduction in sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG), increase in luteinizing hormone (LH), oestrogens and prolactin. Higher free androgens occur following the stimulatory effects of LH on theca cells to synthesize androgens and the inhibitory effects of insulin on the synthesis of SHBG. Insulin resistance is due to post-binding abnormality in insulin receptor mediated signal transduction. Inter-menstrual interval correlates with the degree of insulin resistance. Increased androgens disrupt the FSH/LH balance. Ovarian volume correlates with the LH level and slim PCOS carries higher levels of LH than obese PCOS women. Higher the LH level, higher the risk of subfertility. Increased androgens upregulate anti-mullerian hormone (AMH) level which in turn inhibits folliculogenesis by inhibiting FSH effect. In the absence of ovulation and corpus luteal formation there is unopposed oestrogenic activity in the body.

**Reproductive dysfunction** in PCOS includes menstrual irregularities, subfertility, recurrent implantation failure and miscarriage. Intra-ovarian increased androgens arrest follicular development leading to anovulation and subsequently oligomenorrhoea or amenorrhoea. Longer the inter-menstrual period, poorer the outcome of the disease. Apparent cause for subfertility is anovulation due to multiple reasons. Increased levels of AMH inhibits folliculogenesis by blocking the action of FSH. Recurrent implantation failure and miscarriage is due to reduced endometrial receptivity and change in endometrial microbiota.

**Metabolic dysfunction** seen in PCOS predisposes to type 2 diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidemia, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease. Obesity in PCOS is due to central or visceral adiposity. Visceral adipose tissue exhibits low grade inflammation and releases pro-inflammatory cytokines. This is responsible for insulin resistance, metabolic dysfunction, dysbiosis in gut microbiome and disturbances in gut hormones. Increased incidence of



vascular events seen in PCOS is due to increased arterial stiffness, higher intima-media thickness, and atherosclerosis.

Obesity, hyperandrogenism, unopposed oestrogen activity and nulliparity predisposes to endometrial hyperplasia and malignancy as well as to breast carcinoma. Psychological morbidity allied with PCOS cannot be underrated. Low self-esteem from obesity, poor body image and hirsutism, frustration in attempts to lose weight, social stigma with infertility, obstructive sleep apnoea and mood disorders, all lead to impaired health related quality of life.



Ultrasonic appearance of polycystic ovary

The role of healthy eating and regular physical activity in the management of PCOS cannot be over-emphasized. Weight loss improves the endocrine profile, ovulation and pregnancy outcome. Anti-obesity drugs like orlistat and bariatric surgeries can be considered if the BMI is more than 30 and 35 kg/m<sup>2</sup> respectively. Combined oral contraceptive pills containing progestogens with anti-androgenic properties are suitable to counteract hyperandrogenic features and to regularize the menstrual cycle. Cosmetic and physical therapies can be incorporated in the management of hirsutism. To prevent endometrial hyperplasia, withdrawal bleeding should be induced at least every 3 months. If it fails to shed, endometrial sampling is required.

Objectives of managing anovulatory subfertility associated with PCOS are to achieve unifollicular ovulation minimizing ovarian hyperstimulation and multiple pregnancies. Clomiphene citrate was the first line of treatment. But due to anti-oestrogenic properties on the cervix and endometrium, as well as failure and resistance to treatment, letrozole has become the first line of ovulation induction in PCOS. Gonadotrophins can also be used and insulin sensitizing agents like metformin become the second line for ovulation induction. Surgical ovulation induction with laparoscopic ovarian drilling may be needed if ovulation fails with oral agents, especially in LH hypersecretors. IVF is indicated if the patients fails to conceive despite ovulation.

Inositol, glucagon-like peptide receptor agonists (GLP-1 RA) and Ceylon cinnamon are novel therapeutic agents used in PCOS. For centuries, Ceylon cinnamon has been a popular spice in Sri Lankan cuisine and it has wide applications in preparation of Ayurveda and traditional medicines for treating a variety of pathological conditions including diabetes mellitus. Cinnamon improves the insulin sensitivity in PCOS, lipid profile, odds of ovulation and reduces AMH and androgen levels.

### **Dr. M Champika Gihan**

MBBS MD MRCOG (UK), Diploma in Advanced Gynaecological Laparoscopy (France)

Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Teaching Hospital Peradeniya

Senior Lecturer in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

University of Peradeniya



## THE PARACLINICAL BUILDING OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA - A SAGA

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2021 the soft opening of the permanent Paraclinical building of the Faculty of Medicine Peradeniya took place. The outgoing Dean Medicine Professor Asiri Abeyagunawardena, The Vice Chancellor Professor M.D. Lamawansa and Professor Kapila Gunawardena officiated at this event. This complex will house the departments of Pathology, Forensic Medicine, Community Medicine, Microbiology, Parasitology and Pharmacology. The narrative of this saga will not be complete if the people who took special interest and played a key role in its evolution are not mentioned.

The foundation stone for this complex was laid way back in 2006 on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February. However, the efforts to obtain approval for this project started in late 2002 towards the end of the tenure of the Dean Professor Malini Udupihille. Numerous visits to the relevant Ministries proved futile. The process was at a standstill - "In Limbo". The Peradeniya Medical School was "Persona non Grata" as far as the higher authorities were concerned, because the expenditure for the preclinical building had overstepped the estimate. (the history of this is another story!!!!). It was at this stage in 2004 that Professor Manel de S Wijesundera the then Chair Professor of Parasitology made contact with Mrs. Rani Rajapakse, an alumna of Peradeniya and Manel's hall mate at Sangamitta. Mrs. Rajapakse was the additional secretary in charge of Universities and Tertiary education. I as chairman of the buildings committee was fortunate to be afforded the opportunity to meet with her. I explained the entire project to her along with the problems we were facing. She was most gracious and receptive to our plea. Although due for retirement very soon she promised to do her best to re-start the process of obtaining approval for the paraclinical building. This would be her last project. Thus the project was rejuvenated and moved forward anew. Professor Kapila Goonesekera the then Vice Chancellor was very supportive and spearheaded the start of the building and continued to do so during his entire tenure. Progress was slow. The ground floor for Forensic Medicine, and the 1<sup>st</sup> floor for Pathology was completed and these two departments shifted to these two floors in 2013. It was not a satisfactory arrangement because this was a building without a roof and had only concrete slabs for cover. But it was done in the hope that the higher authorities would consider financial allocations to complete a now occupied building. During rainy days the walls of the Pathology department were wet. Very soon they were mildewed. Former Dean Medicine Professor M. D. Lamawansa, and the next Dean Professor Asiri Abeyagunawardena ably assisted by subsequent buildings committee chairpersons Professor Kapila Gunawardena (Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology), and Professor Manoji Pathirage thereafter made tremendous efforts to obtain funds to complete the building, which bore fruition in the month of Binara 2021. A few finishing touches are required and then the permanent Paraclinical building will be ready for full occupation.



**A.** Laying the foundation for the new paraclinical building on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Front - L-R Hindu Priest, unknown, unknown, Mr. Eng. Ariyaratne, Anupa Herath ( MFSU president), Miss Sujatha Ramadasa, Dr. Pushpa Idirisinghe (PGIM trainee) Dr. Deepthi Edussuriya. Behind Deepthi, Mr, Eriyagama and Mr. R.L. Ranaweera. The VC Professor Kapila Gunasekera and Neelakanthi Ratnatunga (green and white saree) standing near the steps, planning the next strategy. Far back right tope - Prof PAJ Perera and Prof Malakanthi Chandrasekera (Back view). Far back - Members of the non academic staff.



I take this opportunity to pay tribute to those special people mentioned, without whose intervention this building would not have seen the light of day.



**B.** Opening of the new para clinical building on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021. L - R Prof. M.D Lamawansa (Vice-chancellor), Prof. Kapila Gunawardena and Prof. Asiri Abeyagunawardena (Dean, Faculty of Medicine).



**C.** Entrance of the newly opened new para clinical building.

### **Professor Neelakanthi Ratnatunga**

Emeritus Professor University of Peradeniya

(Former Chairman Buildings Committee, Faculty of Medicine Peradeniya)

## **WORLD'S TOP 2% SCIENTISTS FROM PeMSAA**

Four Peradeniya Medical Faculty Alumni are ranked among world's top 2% scientists in the 2020 list of outstanding researchers prepared by Elsevier BV, Stanford University, USA. Prof. Nimal Senanayake (Former Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya), Prof. SAM Kularatne (Chair Professor of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya), Prof. Channa Jayasumana (State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulations of Pharmaceuticals) and Prof. Suneth Agampodi (Chair Professor of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka) are honoured for their research and scientific contributions in their respective fields.

This ranking is based on the newest researchers' data-update for "Updated science-wide author databases of standardized citation indicators". This ranking has been standardized using information from number of citations, h-index, co-authorship adjusted hm-index, citations to papers in different authorship positions and a composite indicator. This time there are 24 Sri Lankan scientists listed as World's Top 2% Scientists. On behalf of PeMSAA, we congratulate our alumni on their achievements and wish them all the very best.



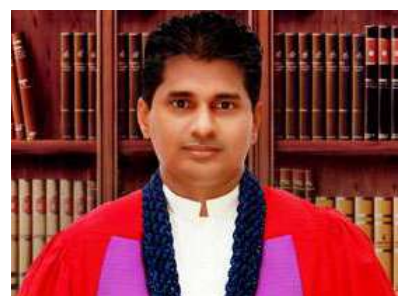
Prof. Nimal Senanayake



Prof. SAM Kularatne



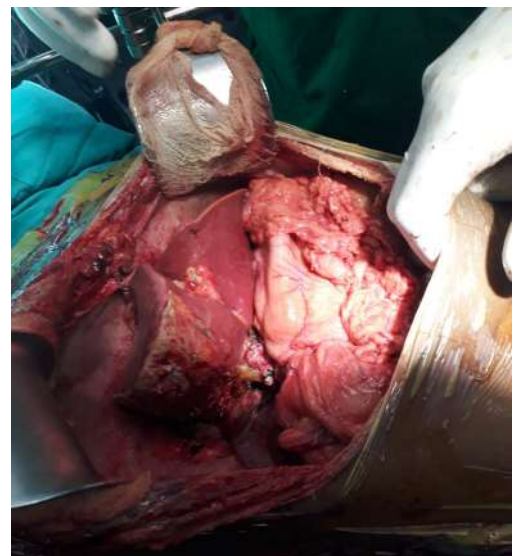
Prof. Suneth Agampodi



Prof. Channa Jayasumana

## PERADENIYA'S FIRST LIVE DONOR PAEDIATRIC LIVER TRANSPLANT

In late September this year, Peradeniya performed its first live donor paediatric liver transplantation with success. One of only three paediatric liver transplants in Sri Lanka, this is the first to utilize a full left lobe. The recipient was a 15 year old with severely decompensated cryptogenic cirrhosis who was referred to our Division of Hepatobiliary Surgery in August 2021. The child's mother volunteered as a donor. A large collective effort was required to organize an urgent transplant within this short period, in the teeth of a COVID-19 crisis. Over one hundred individuals, too numerous to mention in a brief, contributed selflessly to this endeavor. They ranged from University and Ministry of Health specialists at Peradeniya, overseas and other Sri Lankan hospitals, to administrators, ward doctors, laboratory technicians, nurses, ward and theatre staff. Other well-wishers contributed with much-needed financial donations for the family. Going into their third postoperative month, both the donor and recipient continue to do well.



As the flurry of excitement surrounding this landmark event abates, we thought it appropriate to delve into our history as a University Teaching Hospital and note the journey that Peradeniya has taken to arrive at this achievement. Paediatric surgery was pioneered at Peradeniya decades ago by Prof Arjuna Aluwihare. Professor Channa Ratnatunga added vascular surgery to our surgical armamentarium, which gave the necessary background to embark on the next logical service - Paediatric renal transplantation. This was taken up by the likes of Prof MD Lamawansa, Prof Chula Goonasekera, Prof Vasanthi Pinto, Prof Chandra Abeysekera and Prof Asiri Abeygunawardena. Contemporaneously, Prof KB Galketiya and Dr Arinda Dharmapala were instrumental in making Peradeniya a tertiary referral center for Hepatobiliary Surgery. Peradeniya therefore had a fully-fledged team of experienced Hepatobiliary and Vascular Surgeons, Anaesthetists, Paediatricians, Physicians, Radiologists and numerous other specialties ready to take up this challenge.

The thought that a single patient lives today thanks to a collective effort spanning half a century is a humbling one. To paraphrase Isaac Newton's famous missive, *if we have seen further it is indeed by standing on the shoulders of giants*.

**Dr. Buddhika Dassanayake** (2000/01 batch)

**Dr. Senani Samarasinghe** (2003/04 batch)



## **PROF. M. D. LAMAWANSA; THE NEW VICE- CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA**

Prof M D Lamawansa was appointed the 22nd Vice Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2021. He is the Professor of Surgery and former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Peradeniya. He served as the Head of the Department of Surgery from 2009-2012 and also serves as a Consultant Surgeon (General surgery and Renal Transplantation (adults and children)) at the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya.

Meegahalande Durage Lamawansa was born on the 08th of December 1959. Having entered the Faculty of Medicine University of Ruhuna, he excelled in his undergraduate career graduating with Second Class Honors. He pursued his postgraduate studies in Surgery and obtained MS (General Surgery) from the University of Colombo. Subsequently he obtained his PhD from the University of Perth, Western Australia and Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) (Edinburgh).

Having joined the Department of Surgery at the Faculty of Medicine in 1991, Prof. Lamawansa embarked on his career at the University of Peradeniya. After obtaining training in transplant and vascular surgery as a Postgraduate Scholar in the Department of Surgery, University of Western Australia in 1992 he went on to training in Renal Transplant Surgery at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Perth, Western Australia in 1998. He has also served as a senior Clinical Fellow in Renal Transplant Surgery, from January 2005 to June 2006 at the Royal Free Hospital in London. Using the skills and experience he obtained he pioneered the paediatric renal transplant programme at the Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. To date, the hospital has transplanted more than 120 patients.

Prof Lamawansa is a member of the Board of Study in Surgery, Post Graduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo as well as a trainer and examiner in Master of Surgery (now MD), Master of Surgery (Otolaryngology) and an examiner MD in Transplant Surgery of the Post Graduate Institute of Colombo. He is also an examiner of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh since 2010.

After serving as a committee member in the council of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka he later became the President of the College in the year 2017. The College of Surgeons saw many achievements during his tenure including many overseas collaborations which continue to inspire the surgeons to date.

Over the years he has been instrumental in establishing and enhancing the prestigious reputation of the Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, in the field of postgraduate education in Sri Lanka. He developed a tutorial and practical course for the doctors planning a surgical career which many of the currently practicing consultant surgeons have gone through prior to entering post graduate training in surgery.

Prof. Lamawansa is a well known academic with visionary management and administrative capability. Following his tenure as Head of the Department of Surgery he became the Dean of the faculty and made significant changes to the system in his own effective way. He changed the research culture of the faculty and markedly improved its research output. The clinical research complex he pioneered in the faculty was a big step forward in that respect. He promoted career progression of academics and currently the faculty boasts of one of the highest number of professors in the university.

Recognizing that his skills and experience could help represent the country on the global stage, he was appointed Ambassador to the Russian Federation. He served in that capacity until he was appointed to the post of Vice Chancellor University of Peradeniya. At the ceremony organized to welcome him as the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Lamawansa stated that it is the duty of the university to ensure that all graduates are not only competent, but also well-rounded professionals who can contribute to national development and the advancement of global society, finding solutions to the problems of today and tomorrow.

On behalf of PeMSAA, we heartily congratulate Prof. Lamawansa on his achievements and wish him all the very best in his endeavors as the new Vice Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya.

**Prof. Thushara Kudagammana**, President, PeMSAA

## PeMSAA STUDENT CRISIS FUND

Our esteemed council member, Prof. Kapila Gunawardena, suggested that the PeMSAA start a fund that could be utilized to help students during an acute personal crisis. This suggestion came based on his experience with students requesting help when faced with extreme circumstances in their personal lives. These include but are not limited to, serious personal health problems, serious health problems of parents or guardians including sudden death or permanent disability, loss of houses due to natural disaster etc. His suggestion was well received and the council immediately setup the fund and a team comprising the President, Secretary, Treasurer and senior advisory members laid down the guidelines under which this fund would function.

It was decided that any student faced with acute personal crisis could apply to the Dean, Faculty of Medicine and only applications that were highly recommended by the Dean would be considered by the Subcommittee for application evaluation. This subcommittee comprising the President, Secretary, Treasurer, a member of the Advisory board and a member of the Council, would decide the avenues of assistance to be offered including the amount of financial assistance.

The details of the fund are as follows.

**Name of account: 'PeMSAA Student Crisis Fund', Account number: 87997354, Bank name: Bank of Ceylon  
Bank branch: Super Grade Branch Peradeniya, Swift code: BCEYLKX**

We welcome donations, either as one-off donations or as regular monthly sums to the fund. We sincerely hope our alumni will generously donate to this cause, remembering how difficult life could sometimes be during our undergraduate years.

### **"MEDICINE AND MUSIC GO HAND IN HAND IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE."**

A connection that created a balanced human with science and aesthetic values. Dr. Nihal Weerasooriya- The current Provincial Director of Health Services, Central province. A prestigious appointment for a Medical Administrator par excellence. Dr. Nihal Weerasooriya is a proud alumnus of the Peradeniya Medical School from the 87/88 batch.

His path started as a Medical officer at the District Hospital Dickoya in 1997 and thereafter was appointed the Regional Director of Health Services Nuwaraeliya in 2005 which paved the way to a successful career as a medical administrator. He has served as the Medical Superintendent of the District Base Hospital Dickoya, Deputy Director Sirimavo Bandaranaike Specialised Childrens Hospital (SBSCH) Peradeniya, Director SBSCH Peradeniya, Director, General Hospital Nawalapitiya, and Director, General Hospital Negambo. Dr. Nihal Weerasooriya was the National Health Officer for UNICEF from 2008 to 2009. He has been involved in numerous health services improvement projects and currently is the Deputy Director of the *Health System Enhancement Project* (HSEP) Central Province which is funded by the *Asian Development Bank (ADB)* in Sri Lanka. He is the head of the implementing authority of the *Primary Health Care System Strengthening Project* in the central province sponsored by the World Bank. With a passion for both oriental and western music since childhood, and a gift of a violin from his father at the age of 15 years set the stage for a musical journey for this doctor. His foray into the music scene was at Dharmaraja College Kandy where he became a member of the "Beat Band musical group" .



At the Peradeniya Medical School, he participated in several musical programs as a vocalist, guitarist, and performer. He was a member of the "Gandarwa Sabawa" and played the Base guitar. He was famously known amongst his batchmates as 'දවුලා'. Since then he had been in the field of music for nearly 30 years as a Bass guitarist in the band "Silver Wings". His very first CD was released in 2007 with 10 new songs as "මායිමි ගල්" and since then several more songs have been released.

You can listen to the most recent song " නුරුණු විස සමු අරක් " through the YouTube link below. ([https://youtu.be/vQ5gxj\\_pUOw](https://youtu.be/vQ5gxj_pUOw)). His passion for music will not end here. He hopes to release a couple of new songs soon. As Dr.Nihal says "It is music that leads me in my career in medicine". The health of doctors and medical staff is an ongoing concern. Music is one way help relieve some of the stress that goes with being a medical practitioner.



## PeMSAA CASE-BASED DISCUSSIONS

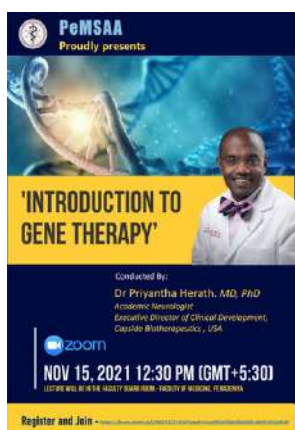
PeMSAA has started a series of Case-Based Discussions and Invited Talks by Alumni to uplift the knowledge among medical students through the online platform zoom. Staff members of the faculty and alumni specialised in different fields actively contribute to this teaching programme. The student participation has been around 400 - 500 with highly enthusiastic discussion. PeMSAA expresses its sincere gratitude to the following academics, invited speakers and clinicians who actively contributed to the "PeMSAA Case-Based Discussions and Invited Talks".

- Dr Inosha Bambaranda - [2003/04] CBD; A couple who is unable to conceive
- Dr Priyanga Dematawa - [1998/99] CBD; A neonate presenting with a convulsion
- Dr Wasula Rathnaweera - [2002/03] CBD; A patient presenting with rectal bleeding
- Dr Neranjan Dissanayake - [1996/97] CBD; A case of the crackling lung
- Dr S. M. Fahim - [2005/06] CBD; Approach to large fundus in obstetrics
- Dr Kamal Walgama - [1997/98] CBD; A patient presenting with confusion
- Dr. Vasana Kiridana - [1990/91] CBD; A child with joint pains
- Dr Vipula Wijesiri - [1999/2000] CBD; A young man with social withdrawal



## PeMSAA INVITED TALKS

PeMSAA organized an invited talk under the title of "Introduction to Gene Therapy" delivered by Dr. Priyantha Herath, Academic Neurologist and Executive Director of Clinical Development, Caspida Biotherapeutics, USA.



## ALUMNI GIVING HEALPING HANDS

PeMSAA conducted a session for the first year medical undergraduates on "Getting Ready for the First Examination at the Medical Faculty" on 9<sup>th</sup> November. Prof. Shirani Ranasinghe, Dr. Indu Nanayakkara, Dr. Ruwan Premathilake and Dr. Waruni Kosgallana were the resource person of the session.



## FACULTY BEAUTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME BY PeMSAA

A significant proportion of the faculty premises has been developed under the programme. The task ahead is to maintain what is already developed. The faculty has obtained the services of three labourers from the university for this purpose and the maintenance will gradually be handed over to them.

The faculty roads are being carpeted through an RDA project and a major part of the road network has been carpeted. Carpeting the sides and addition of curbs is awaited. PeMSAA was actively involved in the process and the input of Prof Manoji Pathirage, Prof Vasanthi Pinto, past Dean Prof Asiri Abeyagunawardena and Prof Chandra Abeysekera is highly appreciated.



Replacement of old students notice board with a new noticeboard by PeMSAA



## PeMSAA-UK ACADEMIC AWARD FOR THE BEST UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH - 2021 AND BOOK DONATION EVENT

The Presentation Ceremony of the inaugural PeMSAA-UK Academic Research Award 2021 was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2021 at the "Latha Mandapaya", Faculty of Medicine. The award consisting of plaques, certificates and a cash prize of Rs. 70000.00 was awarded to the best research project carried out by the undergraduates of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya. It was won by the research study titled "Effect of L-Theanine on Selective Attention in a Traffic-Related Reaction Task in Sleep-Deprived Young Adults: A Double-Blind Placebo-Controlled, Crossover Study", conducted by the team led by Ms. Umangi Karunaratne under the supervision of Prof. Tharaka Dassanayake.

Donation of textbooks to the Medical Library by PeMSAA-UK, as requested by the Faculty of Medicine, was also part of the event, and Senior Assistant Librarian Mrs. Kamani Dambawinna accepted the donation on behalf of the Faculty. Representing PeMSAA-UK, Dr. Ashan Gunaratne (President Elect) graced the occasion.



## PeMSAA WEBSITE

The PeMSAA website is being given a facelift thanks to Dr Ruwan Prematilake, our assistant secretary. It is now becoming more user friendly and further developments are awaited.



## NEWS FROM OVERSEAS PeMSAA CHAPTERS; PeMSAA - UK

Warm greetings from the UK. As the current President of the PeMSAA - UK, I am delighted and honoured to send this message to the Newsletter.

We have a dynamic Management Committee with a few of the earlier members staying on and we shall strive to honour our commitments to the Faculty in spite of COVID curbing most of our social and fund- raising activities. Recently we concluded our Academic Awards for undergraduates for 2021, generously funded by an alumnus. Advertisements calling for submissions for the Academic Awards for both postgraduates and undergraduates for 2022 will appear soon. We feel strongly that this is a way to encourage research among the younger generation and will welcome abstracts of work done. The guidelines for submissions are on our website.



Following a request for books from Professor Channa Ratnatunga and the then Medical Faculty librarian Ms. Dilini Abeyratna, we managed to donate the majority of the books asked for, thanks to generous donations from alumni and other well-wishers. We will continue to raise funds and hope to purchase the remaining four books in the near future. Our webinar series is continuing and the next one is planned for the spring. Please look out for the notifications and we welcome all of you to this virtual meeting. With hopes of COVID suppression and a return of "normality", we have planned a social event in the Spring to help with much needed fund raising, which I sincerely hope will go ahead in spite of the new variant Omicron.

Let me conclude by stating that this partnership with the Faculty of Medicine, Peradeniya is beneficial to both parties. We like to think that we are giving back something good in return for the education we had, so that the current students can reap the benefits.

**Dr. Padma Samarawickrama** MBBS (Cey.), MRCP (UK), President PeMSAA - UK

## NEWS FROM OVERSEAS PeMSAA CHAPTERS; PeMSAA - Australasia

It was with great pleasure that I am sending this message to PeMSAA Peradeniya newsletter. It has been a difficult and extraordinarily challenging two years for all us due to the COVID pandemic. I have had events planned during that period, unfortunately had no choice but to have them cancelled, and among them was our Biannual PeMSAA conference which was due to be held in October 2020. However we have been able to keep our PeMSAA Australasia membership engaged, by virtual meetings using Zoom technology and keeping them informed about the PeMSSA's decisions.

At present we are planning to hold our PeMSAA Sydney Conference in April 23-25, in the coming year 2022. We are closely monitoring the situation with the Pandemic, especially the new challenge with the Omicron spread across the States. We will keep you posted regarding the Conference details and the registration dates, open to all Peradeniya Medical graduate Alumni.

PeMSAA Australia will continue to foster our support to our PeMSSA Peradeniya & the Faculty in every way into the future.

Best wishes and seasons greetings from PeMSAA Australasia.

**Dr Anura Thalagala,**  
President PeMSAA  
Australasia



**PeMSAA - Australasia**  
Peradeniya Medical School Alumni Association





# PeMSAA

## Peradeniya Medical School Alumni Association



# Memorabilia



Now available for purchase at the PeMSAA office and via online orders

<https://www.pemsaa.org.lk/more/publications-merchandise/memorabilia.html>

## Becoming a PeMSAA member

The eligibility for membership is from two main categories; past graduates of the Faculty of Medicine, Peradeniya and academic staff members of the Faculty of Medicine. All the consultants (extended staff) irrespective of their faculties, who are involved in teaching of medical students of the Faculty of Medicine, Peradeniya and at the teaching hospitals are welcome to join.

Details of the membership is available at: <https://www.pemsaa.org.lk/membership/how-to-become-a-member.html>

## Contact PeMSAA

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