

## Editorial

### Kandang Kerbau Hospital— In Retrospect and in Prospect

The Guinness Book of Records describes the Kandang Kerbau Hospital in Singapore as a "Birthquake" Hospital and it holds first place amongst the world-wide institutions in handling a yearly number of deliveries. In a recent Annual Report of the Hospital for 1965 to be published, statistics show the turn-over rate at the Institution as follows:—

Year	Gynaecological	Deliveries
1963	6,154	39,436
1964	6,768	39,598
1965	8,591	38,849

Compared to ten years ago, these figures appear phenomenal for there had been no major extensions to the Obstetric Service ever since the new Obstetric Block and Gynaecological renovations had been completed over the years 1955 to 1957. To illustrate a point—the following figures bear out:—

Year	Total Singapore Deliveries	Kandang Kerbau Hospital Deliveries
1956	61,801	25,878
1957	63,655	31,724
1958	64,550	29,280
1959	64,948	35,406
1960	61,775	36,267
1961	59,930	36,590
1962	58,977	37,861
1963	59,530	39,436
1964	58,217	39,598
1965	55,736	38,849

It is clearly evident that despite a falling overall birth rate in the Republic of Singapore, there has been no decrease in the demand for Institutional Obstetric Services. The load has been steadily piling up since 1960. The fact that Maternal Mortality rates at the Institution had been kept at a very steady low satisfactory level viz. at 0.5 to 0.6 per 1000 deliveries can be considered miraculous.

A combined Consultant Staff of 5 including the University's Department of two consultants supervises the Obstetric and Gynaecological turnovers in the Hospital. The Hospital dealt with 10,886 gynaecological operations in 1965, of which 2,280 were major gynaecological procedures. A further 1,240 Caesarean Sections were also performed throughout 1965. A total of 127,389 patients attended at the out-patients' department of the Hospital and these were made up of 83,417 obstetric and 43,972 gynaecological patients. A total of 15,514 mothers attended at the Post-Natal Clinics of the Hospital during 1965 and 11,987 babies were brought for medical attention at the same time.

The bed-strengths of the Hospital in 1965 totalled 443 fixed beds and made up of 314 obstetric beds and 129 gynaecological beds but at times of stress, a further 40 to 60 emergency beds can be prepared to cope with increased admissions as and when they occur.

A total of 107 Medical Students from the University of Singapore, 65 Trained Nurses and 55 Pupil Midwives received their training at the Institution in 1965 and the Hospital has a combined total of 9 doctors in training at a time for the postgraduate diploma of the MRCOG. The Consultant rank made up of two Fellows and three members of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists is assisted by a team of 3 Senior Registrars and 3 Lecturers with the MRCOG. The rest of the medical staff is constituted by 14 Pre-Registration House Officers and 16 Post-Registration Medical Officers. Of the latter group, 2 Medical Officers trained in Gynaecological Cytology are full-time in the Cytology service of the Hospital.

Clearly, there is a mountain of wealth of clinical material that can be found at the Institution—and clearly much clinical material is going to waste as there is insufficient personnel and insufficient facilities to be directed towards aspects of clinical studies and research. Nevertheless the Hospital tries her uppermost. No less than 35 publications have been affected over the past 3 years over various aspects of research at the Institution and the Bulletin is adequate testimony of the scope and the struggles of the endeavours. The Trophoblastic Registry and Studies of the Hospital is second to none in the world and over the past two years, teams from the University of California sponsored by the Hooper Foundation had been researching into perinatal problems of Hyaline Membrane Disease and Hyperbilirubinemia in the newborn. At the moment no less than 20 clinical problems in Obstetrics and Gynaecology are being intensively studied—from aspects of Uterine functions to Cancer Gynaecology. The Hospital is currently involved in International family population problems and is a participant in a World Population Council Study on the use of Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Devices inserted during the immediate post-partum and post-abortion periods. The target of 10,000 cases has been reached at the half-way mark at this time. This study is financed by grants from the World Population Council. The perpetual grouse impeding proper consolidation and more highly developed research is the overload of routine work, the over-worked and under-staffed medical personnel and of course, the poor support in finance and equipments that are now required in proper modern day research.

Without resort to refined methods of assessment such as the "Critical Path Analysis"—the simple mind can readily see that urgent prospective measures must be invoked if at all the Hospital is going to be developed into one worthy of a teaching Hospital in the Republic. The field of Obstetrics and Gynaecology have part vested interests in the proposed Institute of Medical Specialisties that is being put up close to the General Hospital. Such of necessity include Endocrinology, Renal Physiology and Radio-Therapy. But there are many aspects of Obstetrics and Gynaecology which warrant research in the country and the base for an institution to be involved in aspects of such research has already been set at the Kandang Kerbau Hospital. There need be no argument now for Kandang Kerbau Hospital to be prospectively developed into a Teaching and a Research Institution, and it must be deliberately turned away from its slogan role of a "Babies Assembly Line" or a "Human Factory" or whatever equivalent name that it had been tagged with.

The Bulletin looks to this prospective future and pledges its unceasing efforts towards this end.

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