

## IN MEMORIAM

### DR CHONG YOON HIN Founding President, Nutrition Society of Malaysia

The Nutrition Society of Malaysia shares the loss of Dr Chong Yoon Hin, Founding President, who passed away on 30 January 2014, at the age of 82.

Dr Chong joined the Nutrition Division of the Institute for Medical Research in 1958. In 1965, he became the first Malaysian to be appointed as the Head the Nutrition Division in the IMR and took on the challenge of building up the Division with local scientists and technical staff. For almost 3 decades, he led the Division in conducting various nutrition investigations, ranging from undernutrition in the early days to the emergence of non-communicable diet-related diseases in the 1970s. His significant research contributions are clearly evident from the numerous publications on various areas of nutrition, notably in the area of lipid nutrition and community nutrition.

Recognising the need for a professional body in the field of nutrition in the country, Dr Chong initiated the formation of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia in 1985. He was elected the Founding President of NSM and led the promotion of nutrition science in the country. For the advancement of nutrition science in the region, Dr Chong led the NSM in organizing the 6<sup>th</sup> Asian Congress of Nutrition (ACN) in 1991. It was a remarkable success, recognising that NSM was a “young” nutrition society of less than 5 years old. Dr Chong is credited with setting the foundation for the growth and expansion of this professional body in the country, and in the promotion of nutrition science and community nutritional wellbeing.

The contributions of Dr Chong Yoon Hin to the birth and growth of nutrition in the country will always be remembered and valued. As founder of nutrition in Malaysia, he has paved the way for us to further promote nutrition in the country. We should continue the work that he has started and ensure that nutrition is strengthened and recognised as an important discipline in health promotion and maintenance by all health workers in the country.

**Tee E Siong, PhD**

President

*Nutrition Society of Malaysia*

**On behalf of**

**14<sup>th</sup> Council of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia**

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#### ***On a personal note...***

Dr Chong Yoon Hin became the first Malaysian to have the honour of heading the Nutrition Division at the Institute for Medical Research, a position which was hitherto held by British doctors. He led this division with great integrity and vision for twenty long years. A biochemist by training but nutritionist at heart, he envisaged a greater role for nutrition in the health status of the Malaysian population. To help carry out his visionary goals he developed a core group of nutritionists, some of whom are prominent figures in the Malaysian nutrition scene today. During this long tenureship, Dr Chong spear-headed several laboratory based and community nutrition studies that paved the way for nutrition research in this country.

One among his many projects that could be identified as a landmark for nutrition research in Malaysia was the Poverty Kampung Nutrition Survey. The findings of this study were published as a dedicated IMR Bulletin No 22, an honour bestowed only on selected IMR research with historic significance.

Dr Chong was also recognised for his professionalism by other national departments. He served in several advisory and technical committees pertaining to food and nutrition including the Prime Minister's Department, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture as well as international agencies such as the International Union of Nutritional Sciences. Under his leadership and his untiring dedication, the Nutrition Division in IMR came to be recognised as a leading centre of nutrition research in the country and in South-east Asia. In 1984, he was duly recognised for his remarkable contribution to the IMR and was promoted to the position of Deputy Director of IMR in 1984, a post he held up to his retirement in 1986. Dr Chong's vision to put nutrition on the health map for Malaysians led to the formation of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia and served as the founding President.

On a personal note, I had the pleasure of working under Dr Chong from 1979 to 1984. Dr Chong came across as a gentle, modest and caring person to whom one could go to seek solutions not only pertaining work but also for personal issues. A man of few but measured, soft spoken words, he carried himself with great dignity at all times. His mentoring approach was gentle but firm and I continue to remember his words, "publish or perish". If not for his mentoring and support, I would not have been able to get my first international publication which appeared in the *Journal of Tropical Pediatrics*. His desire to see his officers graduate with a PhD helped me to successfully obtain mine. On a final note, I am grateful that I had the opportunity to work with and learn from Dr Chong. The time spent in the Nutrition Division of IMR under his leadership was an invaluable experience that played a vital role in helping to shape my career.

**Prof Dr Mirnalini Kandiah, UCSI University**



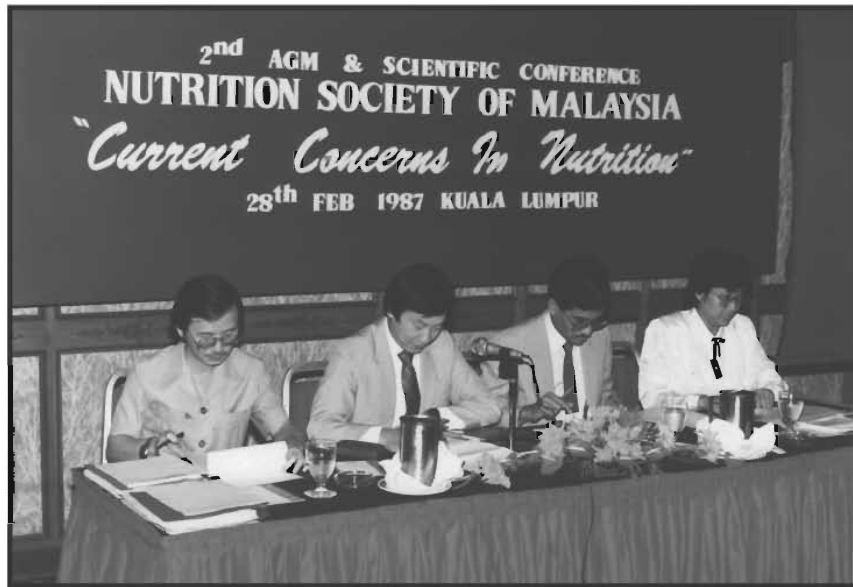
**IMR Nutrition Survey Team**

Dr Chong Yoon Hin, Head of Nutrition Division, Institute for Medical Research, headed a team to carry out a series of community nutrition surveys in different parts of the country in the 1980s.



**1<sup>st</sup> NSM Conference, 1986**

At opening of 1<sup>st</sup> Scientific Conference of NSM, 1 March 1986. From left to right, Mr Tee E Siong, Dr Chong Yoon Hin (founding president of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia), Dato' Mak Hon Kam (then Minister of Health), Prof JC Waterloo, Prof Dr Mohd Ismail Noor



**2<sup>nd</sup> NSM AGM 1987**

Dr YH Chong, President of NSM, chairing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of NSM on 28 February 1987 (left to right, Mr Tee E Siong, Dr Chong Yoon Hin, Dr Mohd Ismail Noor, Mrs Ng Soong Lek)



**4<sup>th</sup> NSM Conference 1989**

Dr YH Chong, President of NSM, receiving the guest of honour, Dato' Chiang Siang Sun, then Minister of Health at the 4<sup>th</sup> Scientific Conference of NSM, 18 March 1989



**9<sup>th</sup> NSM Conference 1994**

Dr Chong Yoon Hin, President of NSM, welcoming participants to the 9<sup>th</sup> Scientific Conference of NSM, 27 March 1994



**6<sup>th</sup> Asian Congress of Nutrition**  
Dr Chong Yoon Hin, President of NSM, welcoming participants to the 9<sup>th</sup> Scientific Conference of NSM, 27 March 1994



**NSM Conference 2011**  
Dr YH Chong, guest of honour at the launch of the NSM Nutritionist's Choice Cookbook, in conjunction with the opening of the 26<sup>th</sup> Scientific Conference of NSM, 24 March 2011