

# Education Opportunity between RTCOG and RANZCOG

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*The Royal Thai College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has proposed 4 components of collaboration with the RANZCOG as follow: 1. Continuing education of the members of the two parties; 2. Regular scientific meeting held between the two parties; 3. Accepting of the scientific papers to be published in either the journal of the RTCOG or that of the RANZCOG and 4. Collaborative research.*

*For the RTCOG, it is expected that the collaboration will provide the Thai member with more opportunity for training in either Australia or New Zealand. We may have research initiative either by the RANZCOG or the RTCOG. More scientific papers from the Thai college may be more acceptable for publication in the journal of the RANZCOG and that more meetings will be organized by our two colleges.*

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About a decade ago Professor Vitoon Osathanondh, the President of the Royal Thai College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RTCOG) at that time, signed the contract of collaboration between the RTCOG and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG). Thereafter, there has been no concrete collaboration between the two parties. Until recently when Professor Kamhaeng Chaturachinda, the present President of the RTCOG, along with the former and present Executive Board of the RTCOG has again initiated a collaboration with the RANZCOG in the light of the benefits of the bilateral parties. This has resulted in the forth coming meeting on Education Opportunity between the RTCOG and the RANZCOG to be held within the 19th Scientific Meeting of RTCOG and the First Collaboration with RANZCOG on Friday October 22, 2004 at Jomtien Palm Beach Hotel, Pattaya, Chonburi, Thailand. The speakers from the RANZCOG will be Dr. Ken Clark, the current Vice President and the future President Elect and Dr. Eleanor Long, the Chief Executive Officer. The Thai counterpart will be Dr. Pairoj Witoonpanich, who will be the moderator and myself as a speaker.

In the past years collaboration on education between the RTCOG and RANZCOG has been rare. Members of the RTCOG normally sought their further

or advance training in either USA or in some countries in Europe. Geographically, Australia and New Zealand are closer to Thailand than USA or Europe. Sciences and technology in both countries are, no doubt, compatible to those of the USA and Europe. Moreover, considering the expenses in terms of monetary, it can be said that less expenses are required to spend there. For this reason it will be a good opportunity for us to work with the RANZCOG more on education.

The following 4 components of collaboration will be discussed:

1. Continuing education of the members of the two parties;
2. Regular scientific meeting held between the two parties;
3. Accepting of the scientific papers to be published in either the journal of the RTCOG or that of the RANZCOG and
4. Collaborative research.

## **1. Continuing education**

Continuing education may focus on those who have already finished their training and those who are doing their training (residents or fellows). There are barriers impeding the opportunity of those who have finished their training and who would like to pursue the advance training outside the country, such as difficulty in obtaining the information about the prospective institute, not acceptance as a trainee because of the lack of understanding between the two

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institutes, priority of training given to trainees from other countries, which results in the long duration of waiting time for acceptance. I would propose that the two collaborative partners (the RTCOG and the RANZCOG) should coordinate the procedure of application of training, such as making a list of institutes where which areas of work are prominent, the readiness of such institutes to accept the trainees, their curriculum, procedure of work during training, number of patients they have, number of cases the trainees are required to practise including expenses surrounding the training and number of the existing staff at the institutes. I would also like to propose the facilitation of this by setting up a kind of special or fast track at each college where the members of each college can contact. Each college will act as a proxy to their members in order to obtain the required information. Each college will contact institute to meet the needs of their members. There should be more than one institute for the members to choose so as to meet their capacity and personal needs.

For residency or fellow programme in obstetrics and gynaecology each sub-specialty requires 2-3 years to finish. The elective period is required at least one month. From the past experiences, in general practice, the residents and fellows normally chose to be an elective at an institute in the country rather than going abroad. Only very few of them chose to work outside the country. One reason accounted for this was the financial issue, and the other was the complicated procedure of obtaining the fellowship and the lack of information about the host institute. The two colleges should act as a liaison to coordinate this matter as well as arranging the exchange of residents or fellows between the two colleges to sustain the continuing collaboration.

What the RTCOG will benefit from the above mentioned procedure are concepts, knowledge, capacity, and new technology. From our Thai part we have some resources where our counterparts, Australia and New Zealand, lack or scarce. For an example, cervical cancer women at different stages or patients with trophoblastic tumour. We expect that the members from the RANZCOG may learn about the above mentioned exchanged programmes including the HIV infected patients from our experiences.

## **2. Regular scientific meeting held between the two parties**

Each college has held their own annual meeting. The meeting between the 2 executive boards

of each college will not only enhance the better understanding between the two parties but also will strengthen the relationship among the members. Each will assist one another to help solve the problems and barriers for the good sake of the education between the two colleges. In addition, the meeting may render the opportunity for the members of both colleges to present their scientific work. This in turn has stimulated the development of knowledge gain as well as the prosperity of the relationship among the members. Also, it will enhance and promote the capacity of the members of the RTCOG to reach to the international standards in terms of sciences and technology.

## **3. Acceptance of scientific papers to be published in either the journal of the RTCOG or that of the RANZCOG**

Each college has their own scientific journal. We will develop our scientific journal to reach the international standard by the assistance of the editorial board of the RANZCOG in review of the work submitted to the journal. Also, we will accept the work sent by the RANZCOG to be published in our journal. This process will also help upgrade the work of our members as well as upgrading our journal to reach the international standard. Besides, in order to make our journal more acceptable to an international standard level, at this moment our official journal, the Thai Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, is being merged with the Journal of the Medical Association of Thailand, which is internationally recognized with the index medicus.

## **4. Collaborative research**

It is well recognized that compared with Thailand, Australia and New Zealand have a higher standard of knowledge and technology. This has rendered their capacity in more oriented research works, especially research programme with a huge amount of budget. In Thailand we have some good resources that can be offered to the members of our counterpart, Australia and New Zealand to run research. We will help coordinate and facilitate the procedure to assist in the collaborative research studies. In turn our members may learn from their experiences or our members may become parts of the research team. In this way it seems that we have been enhanced our potentials. In the future if some members of our college, residents or fellows, wish to carry out a research study in Australia or New Zealand, we hope that the RANZCOG would coordinate in this matter.

Societies and professional groups under the RTCOG and the RANZCOG may help coordinate and facilitate procedure for the bilateral benefits. For example, the Thai Gynaecologic Oncology Society (TGCS) where the some members of the executive board are the current members of the executive board of the RTCOG. This society has signed a contract of collaboration with the Australian Society of Gynaecologic oncologists and sent the members of the society for further training in Australia by the fast track. Recently, the societies of Thailand and Australia had their first off-shored academic meeting in Singapore during 11-13 May 2004, Australian Society of Gynaecologic Oncologists (ASGO). This had also resulted in the inaugural conference of such topic among participants in Asia and Oceania. Some members of the TGCS also played an active role in this meeting in participation as speakers and/or chairpersons in all sessions during the meeting. The meeting has not only strengthened our scientific knowledge it also promoted

the friendship and good understanding among members who have a mutual interest. It is also an opportunity for us to discuss about the possibility of exchange of members to work or to be trained for a short period of time or to carry out research work in the other country. This kind of work can be exercised by other sub-specialties that are under the RTCOG or RANZCOG

The RTCOG expect that the above 4 proposed components to the RANZCOG for the collaboration of the future work may provide members of the RTCOG more opportunity to be trained or to carry out research study in Australia or New Zealand. Moreover, we also hope that more of our scientific papers will be accepted to be presented in the meetings or to be published in the journals in Australia or New Zealand. We also hope that with this kind of collaboration the knowledge and capacity of the members of the RTCOG will eventually reach the international standard.