

HISTORY OF MYANMAR MEDICAL PHYSICIST ASSOCIATION

S.S.Lin¹, O.M.Swe²

¹Department of Radiation Oncology, Pinlon Cancer Center, Yangon, Myanmar

²Department of Nuclear Medicine, Yangon General Hospital, Yangon,

Myanmar

I. RADIATION THERAPY MEDICAL PHYSICIST

The first medical physicist from Myanmar who trained in England assigned to work in radiation therapy department of Yangon General Hospital in 1958. Starting from 1958, the limited numbers of medical physicists who had a chance to take long-term training (more than 1 year) were allocated in Mandalay and Taunggyi General Hospital. From that time, the medical physicist training accomplished in local apprenticeship and some short course programs which supported by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and World Health Organization (WHO). The candidates for the training came from academic level or senior technologist who graduate from physics or equivalent subject. That will be the challenge for Myanmar medical physics field which has no proper academic education and training program for national level. The bachelor degree course for medical imaging technology was established by Ministry of Health in 1991 at Yangon. Currently, there are three universities which offer bachelor in medical imaging technology and two universities which give master degree in that field. Radiation therapy technologist undergraduate course was introduced in 2018 at University of Medical Technology, Yangon. The first medical physics two-year master program is expected to establish in 2021 at the same University.

II. NUCLEAR MEDICINE MEDICAL PHYSICIST

Nuclear medicine in Myanmar is an independent medical specialty which is now operated by seven departments. The first nuclear medicine department was founded at Yangon General Hospital in 1963. There is no medical physicist post in nuclear medicine till 2003.

The person who had got a Bachelor of Physics was assigned as a nuclear medicine technologist in 1965. Limited number of human resources were working in nuclear medicine at that time. Only one technologist worked at a time. The first three were trained in United Kingdom for one year each. Among them, the last technologist who was also trained in Thailand, Singapore and China for physicist training became a medical physicist in 2003. The second medical physicist who worked in Mandalay General Hospital was a former radiographer. The third one who worked in Yangon General Hospital held a Bachelor of Science (Physics). All of them were already retired.

Present situation, all medical physicist in nuclear medicine are graduated from University of Medical Technology and Postgraduate from Thailand. Two working at Yangon General Hospital, government sector and two are at Pinlon Hospital, private sector.

III. MYANMAR MEDICAL PHYSICIST ASSOCIATION

The Association of Myanmar Medical Physicist (MMPA) was set up in mid of 2016 with 30 members who were working as medical physicists and radiation protection officers from Myanmar. The number of memberships increased to 33 in current year. The percentage of male and female in the association is 24% and 76% respectively. The majority of the members are from radiation therapy totaling of 24 persons. The second lead is from nuclear medicine with 7 members and diagnostic radiology with 2 radiation protection officers.

MMPA was an official member of the International Organization for Medical Physics (IOMP), Asia-Oceania Federation of Organizations for Medical Physics (AFOMP) and South-East Asian Federation of Organizations for Medical Physics (SEAFOMP) at the end of 2016.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

IV. MMPA AND SEACOMP

In December 2016, MMPA participated in 14th South East Asian Congress of Medical Physics (SEACOMP) at Bangkok, Thailand with 9 delegates. Moreover, two members from MMPA joined the 16th SEACOMP at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2018 and one joined the 17th SEACOMP at Bali, Indonesia in 2019.

The first scientific meeting for the association was held on September 2016 at Pinlon Hospital, Yangon, Myanmar. About 50 radiation professionals from variety of branches around Myanmar joined in this meeting.

The second annual meeting was jointly organized with Thai Medical Physicist Society on January 2018 at Bangkok, Thailand. Around 25 delegates from MMPA attended this program.



Fig 1: The First scientific meeting of Myanmar Medical Physicist Association on September 2016 at Pinlon Hospital



Fig 2: The 2nd annual meeting jointly organized with Thai Medical Physicist Society on 2018



Fig 3: SPECT/CT Quality Assurance Workshop (1/2018) at Pinlon Hospital, Yangon, Myanmar

In the mid of 2018, MMPA conducted the SPECT/CT Quality Assurance Workshop (1/2018) in Yangon, Myanmar. This activity could help to strengthen the quality assurance knowledge of medical physicists who specialized in Nuclear Medicine.

Radiation Protection and Patient Safety Workshop (2/2018) was held at the end of 2018. This workshop

organized with the intention to provide the deep understanding of the radiation risk, protection and patient safety not only for radiation professionals but also for other medical staffs who are not the radiation workers. The workshop conducted in two hospitals, Shwe Gone Ding hospital and Pinlon Hospital, Yangon, Myanmar.

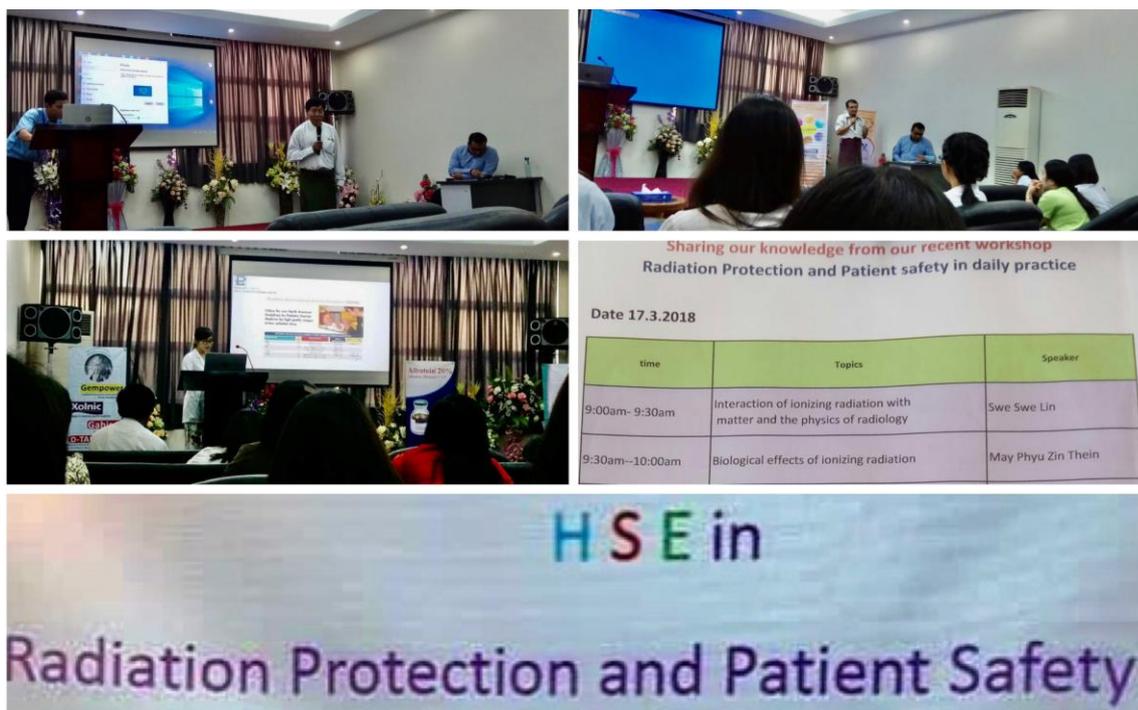


Fig 4: Radiation Protection and Patient Safety Workshop (2/2018) at Shwe Gone Daing and Pinlon hospital in 2018

VI. CONCLUSION

Compare to the past, there are more opportunities to share the knowledges through organizational activities for Myanmar medical physicists these days than those were in decade. More than that, the members can seize the chance of participating international medical physics conferences in each year. These all can be labelled as the benefits of setting up the Myanmar Medical Physicist Association.

In the near future, MMPA will develop the functional website of the association to offer an easy access with the medical physics community. The association is going to take part in more activities of both national and international levels.

The number of medical physicists in Myanmar would escalate in the foreseeable future, if the government initiated the graduate medical physics program in next year. Myanmar medical physicist community is anticipating for the compensation of the challenges what they are facing due to lack of medical physics education program in the country. They are hoping for the more promising future.

Contacts of the corresponding author:

Author: Swe Swe Lin, M. Sc.
Institute: Department of Radiation Oncology,
Pinlon Cancer Center
Street: Saya San Road, Ward 27, North Dagon
11421
City: Yangon
Country: Myanmar
Email: ssl.plgh@gmail.com