

SLACPT

The Official Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Association of Clinicl Pharmacology and Therapeutics
June 2023 Volume 8 Issue 1





In this issue...

- Annual General meeting
- <u>SLACPT joins IU</u>PHAR
- WCP 2023
- IUPHAR World Smart Medication Day
- CME activities
- A Challenging Case of Polymyositis
- Wall of Fame

SLACPT Council 2023-2024

President

Prof. Priyadarshani Galappatthy

President Elect

Prof. Chandanie Wanigatunge

Vice-president

Prof. Pradeepa Jayawardena

Secretary

Prof. Priyanga Ranasinghe

Assistant Secretary

Dr. Chiranthi Liyanage

Social Secretary

Dr. Amodha Medagedara

Treasurer

Dr. Sujeewani Kurukulasuriya

Assistant Treasurer

Dr. Leonard Wanninayake

Editor

Dr. Rameshkumar Thevarajah

Council Members

Prof. Raveendra Laal Jayakody

Prof. Rohini Fernandopulle

Prof. Shalini Sri Ranganathan

Prof. Gayani Liyanage

Dr. Kumuthini Sanchayan

Dr. Thilanka Seneviratne

Dr. Roshini Murugupillai

Dr. Namal Rathnayaka

Dr. Supun Wedasinghe

Dr. Asanka Eriyawa

Ex-officio members

Prof. Asita De Silva

Prof. Chamila Mettananda

SLACPT Theme 2023-2024

Equitably available, affordable, safe and quality use of medicines for challenging times

CONTENTS

President's Message

Message from the Secretary

Annual General Meeting

SLACPT Joins IUPHAR

WCP 2023

IUPHAR Smart Medication Day

CME Activities

Joint CME with CSRRSL

Wall of Fame

SLACPT

Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo. No. 25, Kynsey Road, Colombo 8.

> Tel: 0112697483 Fax: 0112697483 Email: office@slacpt.lk Web: http://slacpt.lk

> > Follow us on 😝 🕒



SLACPT Council 2023/2024



Seated (L to R) – Prof. Chamila Mettananda, Prof. Priyanga Ranasinghe, Prof. Rohini Fernandopulle, Prof. Chandanie Wanigatunge, Prof. Priyadarshani Galappatthy, Prof. Asita de Silva, Prof. Laal Jayakody, Dr. Sujeevani Kurukulasuriya and Prof. Shalini Sri Ranganathan

Standing (L to R) – Dr. Chiranthi Liyanage, Dr. Amodha Madagedara, Dr. Namala Rathnayake, Dr. Rameshkumar Thevarajah, Dr. Leonard Wanninayake, Dr. Supun Wedasinghe, Dr. Pradeepa Jayawardena and Dr. Roshini Murugupillai

Absent - Prof. Gayani Liyanage, Dr. Kumuthini Sanchayan, Dr. Thilanka Seneviratne, Dr. Asanka Eriyawa

President's Message



Dear Members and Friends of SLACPT,

It is my distinct honour to send this message as the 5th President of SLACPT to our first newsletter for 2023. As we embark on this journey together, I am excited to share some significant developments and other initiatives that SLACPT is taking forward during our tenure in office.

Our theme we have selected, "Equitably available, affordable, safe and quality use of medicines for challenging times," underscores the importance of clinical pharmacology in addressing the unprecedented challenges currently facing our country's pharmaceutical landscape. The need for accessible, affordable, and high-quality medicines has never been more critical, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that every citizen benefits from the advancements in the field. SLACPT is also dedicated to playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics in Sri Lanka.

At the outset I want to extend my gratitude to the previous council under the leadership of Professor Asita De Silva for the contributions to the SLACPT, through a period of pandemic followed by an economic crisis, which has paved the way for us to continue the journey towards improving the medicines situation during these challenging times.

I am delighted to share that SLACPT has taken a significant step forward by joining the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR) in 2023. I had the privilege of attending the IUPHAR General Assembly during the World Congress of Pharmacology 2023 in Glasgow, where I participated as a speaker in the WHO session on medication safety. This affiliation with IUPHAR opens new avenues for collaboration and knowledge sharing on a global scale.

In our commitment to advancing the field of pharmacology, SLACPT is actively engaged in organizing joint sessions with other colleges and Associations to foster interdisciplinary discussions and learning. You will see the information on the sessions organised so far in this newsletter.

We are currently undertaking an important project focused on identifying challenges and barriers in the effective supply of pharmaceuticals. This initiative has been undertaken at the invitation of the Secretary to the Ministry of Health, reflecting the recognition of our expertise in this vital area. A team from SLACPT has been engaging in this project from March 2023, conducting desk review of relevant documents, analysis of data with many meetings held involving all categories of stakeholders including members of Medical Supplies Division (MSD), National Medicines Regulatory Authority (NMRA), State Pharmaceuticals Corporation (SPC), State Pharmaceuticals Manufacturing Corporation (SPMC), Pharmaceutical chamber, manufacturers, the treasury officials, hospital directors, pharmacists and representatives of the all the specialist colleges. The planning unit of the Mistry of Health under the leadership of Dr S Sridharan was the focal point of the project from the Ministry of Health providing all logistical support for the meetings and the Director MSD Dr Kapila Wickramanayaka also fully cooperated providing all the necessary information and data requested for analysis. The data is being analysed and the report will be presented to the Ministry of Health shortly. We believe this is an opportunity for us to make a meaningful impact and contribute to the betterment of our healthcare system.

We are also dedicated to implementing various activities outlined in the National Action Plan on Medication Safety, launched in 2021. Our aim is to ensure the safe and effective use of medicines across the country, ultimately improving healthcare outcomes for all Sri Lankans, aligning with the strategic action plan proposed by the WHO on the 3rd Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our members for your continued support and dedication to the field of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics. Together, we can make a significant impact on healthcare in Sri Lanka, and I look forward to working collaboratively with you all.

Please stay tuned for updates on our upcoming activities and initiatives. Your active participation is essential to our success.

Wishing you all good health and prosperity.

Warm regards,

Professor Priyadarshani Galappatthy, President, Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics

Message from the Secretary



Dear Members and Friends,

It is my pleasure to send this message as the Secretary of the Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (SLACPT). As highlighted by our President, Professor Priyadarshani Galappatthy the association has embarked on numerous activities and initiatives during 2023 in line with our theme "Equitably available affordable quality use of medicines for challenging times". It is no secret that Sri Lankans are currently navigating through numerous hardships. Access to quality assured and affordable medicines are becoming a challenge. As an association we have been able to engage with responsible authorities, including the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka in this regards. In fact one of the first activities of the association in 2023 has been to undertake a situation analysis on challenges and barriers for the effective supply of medicines to the state sector, commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka. This multi-stake holder engaging detailed situational analysis will help shed light and provide recommendation on how to overcome barrier and ensure efficient supply of medicines to state sector institutions.

I am also delighted to highlight that the association has joined as a member of the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR) in 2023, opening new avenues for collaborations and knowledge sharing. Furthermore, we have planned to engage in regular CME activities with other professional colleges in Sri Lanka, and three such activities have already been completed with the Sri Lanka College of Dermatologist (SLCD), the College of Specialists in Rheumatology & Rehabilitation Sri Lanka (CSRRSL) and the Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA). Numerous other activities are lined up for 2023/24 and I invite all of you to join hands with us in these endeavors.

Thank you, Best Regards,

Professor Priyanga Ranasinghe, Secretary, Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics

Annual General Meeting 2023

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (SLACPT) took place on the 27th of February in a hybrid format. The meeting was held in the Seminar Room of the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Colombo. The meeting was chaired by the President SLACPT, Prof Asita de Silva. Minutes of the AGM 2022 were confirmed. Annual report for the year 2021/2022 was presented by the Secretary Prof Chamil Mettananda. She highlighted the main events of the period. The Treasurer's report for the year 2021/2022 was presented by Dr Sujeewani Kurukulasuriya, Treasurer SLACPT. Prof Asita de Silva addressed the gathering thanking the council members, staff of Department of Pharmacology, University of Kelaniya for the support given and wished the new council for year 2023/2024 for greater success and invited President Elect Prof Priyadarshani Galappaththi to chair and elect the new council for 2023/2024.

The new council members for the years 2023/2024 were proposed and seconded. Prof Priyadarshani Galappaththi, the president of the new council thanked the outgoing council members and the president Prof Asita de Silva for their excellent and dedicated work and service rendered for the past two years.





SLACPT Joins IUPHAR

In May 2023, a significant milestone was achieved by the Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (SLACPT) as it attained full membership status within The International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR). This remarkable achievement marked a pivotal moment in SLACPT's history and its journey toward becoming a recognized and influential entity within the global pharmacological community. By gaining full membership in IUPHAR, SLACPT unlocked a multitude of opportunities and benefits for its members and the broader field of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics in Sri Lanka.



World Congress of Basic & Clinical Pharmacology 2023



The 19th World Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (WCP) took place this year from July 2nd to 7th in the vibrant city of Glasgow, Scotland. The WCP is held every four years by the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR) in different parts of the world organised by the pharmacological society of the host country and this year it was hosted by BPS in the United Kingdom. The Congress served as a global platform for researchers, clinicians, and experts to converge and exchange ideas, insights, and innovations in the ever-evolving realm of pharmacology.

It was attended by over 2000 delegates from 84 countries and was a momentous event that showcased the global significance of pharmacological research with six parallel sessions of symposia, workshops, research presentations, common plenaries and keynote addresses, bringing pharmacologists from around the world together after the pandemic.

Professor Priyadarshani Galappatthy attended the World Congress of Pharmacology 2023 as a speaker at the WHO symposium on the third WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm.

As the conference was held after SLACPT joined the IUPHAR in March 2023, professor Galappatthy had the opportunity to join IUPHAR General Assembly, held during the conference, for member societies, representing SLACPT as its current president. Professor Galappatthy was also able to take forward the discussions that SLACPT has initiated on the feasibility of introducing the prescribing safety assessment (PSA) to Sri Lanka with BPS officials and participate in many symposia held on PSA during the congress and learn in detail about the PSA and how it is administered in the UK.









Page 9 of 18

IUPHAR International Students' Poster Competition

IUPHAR announced third annual World Smart Medication Day 2023 on 4th of May 2023 to foster clinical pharmacology development and raise awareness on the safer and more effective use of drugs. The theme for the year 2023 is "Precision Medicine". An international students' poster competition was held this year as well along with the event. Two undergraduate students from Sri Lanka also submitted their posters and were included in the top ten posters submitted to the competition.





Kasuni Siriwardana University of Moratuwa



What is precision medicine?

A novel approach in medicine which take in to the count about one's **genetics**, **environment** and **life style** in treatment and prevention of diseases. otherwise tailoring the management plan according to the patient.

why?

The current approach in management of a patient is "one size fits all".

In precision medicine, Doctors and researchers are able to plan treatments and prevention strategies according to variables in each individual, which will provide high yield results.

Platforms

Cancer Detection

• Early diagnosis of cancer using biomarkers in asymptomatic individuals results in increased rate of cure with less aggressive, less toxic and less costly therapy.

Cancer Treatment

 Stratification of the need of therapy or the type of therapy by gene expressing profiling is used in patients with early stages of cancer.

Pharmacogenetic testing

 study the differences in drug response due to genetic factors and include the prediction of response to therapy, susceptibility to adverse effects and toxicity.

prenatal testing

• To identify structural integrity and sequence variation of fetal genes, cell free fetal DNA in maternal blood is widely used.

Benefits



- Medical decision making become effective.
- Delivered therapies are tailormade for patients.
- Disease prevention strategies are optimized.
- Unnecessary prescriptions are avoided
- The exposure to potentially toxic medications are avoided, limiting the side effects and complications caused by them.

Other platforms

- Proteomics
- Metabolomics
- Lipidomics
- Epigenomics
- Exposomics
- Microbiomics

Limitations

- High cost for genetic studies.
- Lack of reliable biomarkers for certain conditions.
- Lack of therapeutic alternatives.
- Lack of knowledge and experience among many clinicians regarding genetics risk prediction and genetic counselling.







Example

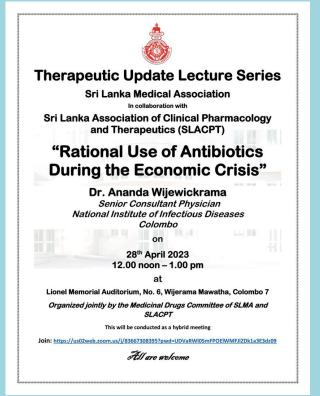
Asthma is a disease entity which has multiple etiologies and risk factors like environmental, genetic and lifestyle factors. with pharmacological treatment assessing other entities like obesity, dust exposure, smoking the outcome of the patient become good. Also the use of biologics for asthma is a benefit in practicing precision medicine for asthma.

Tharindu Daham Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

CME Activities

Our association organized several CME activites jointly with other professional societies as hybrid events. The recordings are available in the YouTube channel of SLACPT.









Joint CME with the College of Specialists in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation Sri Lanka

Joint hybrid-CME activity in collaboration with the College of Specialists in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation (CSRRSL) was held on 23rd June 2023, at the ClinMARC Auditorium, National Hospital of Sri Lanka. The session was chaired by Professor Priyadarshini Galappatthy, President, SLACPT and Dr Gunendrika Kasthuriratne, President, CSRRSL. It was well attended by both in-person and virtual participants.

The programme consisted of a case discussion on a challenging case of polymyositis, presented by Dr Udari Kulasinghe, Senior Registrar in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation, Rheumatology and Rehabilitation Hospital, Ragama. This was followed by a discussion on rheumatological aspects by Dr Duminda Abeysinghe, Consultant in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation, Rheumatology and Rehabilitation Hospital, Ragama, following which Dr Chiranthi Liyanage, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology and Consultant in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation discussed about the therapeutics in polymyositis. The programme concluded with a talk on "Prescribing in special situations in Rheumatology" by Dr Sujeewani Kurukulasooriya, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology and Consultant in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya.

Given below is a summary of the case and discussion on therapeutics in polymyositis.

A Challenging Case of Polymyositis

Case Summary

A 23-year-old female presented with proximal muscle pain, tenderness and proximal weakness with power of 3/5 in all 4 limbs for 8 months. Her creatinine phosphokinase (CPK) was 10,400 U/L. She was negative for ANA, Rheumatoid factor and Anti Jo1 antibodies. EMG and muscle biopsy was revealed features in keeping with of polymyositis. She was treated with intravenous methylprednisolone 1g for 3 days followed by oral prednisolone tapering off course according to response. Steroid sparing agents, methotrexate and subsequently azathioprine had to be discontinued due to drug induced liver injury. These replaced with cyclosporin. One year later, she developed a severe myositis flare, which was treated with rituximab for which she developed anaphylaxis. Afterwards intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) 2g/kg was for which she showed a good response also had to be discontinued due to a severe allergic reaction in the second cycle. She did not consent for cyclophosphamide therapy due to concerns regarding its adverse effect profile. She is currently on a trial of tocilizumab for which there is a suboptimal response with a proximal muscle power of 4/5 in all 4 limbs and CPK persistently above 1000U/L.

Therapeutics in Polymyositis

· Polymyositis is a rare disorder and there are limitations in evidence for treatment

recommendations due to small sample size of randomised controlled trials and disease heterogeneity.

- Early diagnosis and prompt treatment is vital to limit damage accrual and interrupt the inflammatory cascade.
- High dose glucocorticoids are used to treat active muscle inflammation at time of treatment induction.
- Disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (methotrexate, azathioprine, tacrolimus, cyclosporin or mycophenolate mofetil) are used to reduce muscle inflammation, achieve clinical remission, and reduce steroid burden during long-term maintenance therapy.
- Of these, azathioprine and calcineurin inhibitors (tacrolimus and cyclosporin) are acceptable during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- Causality assessment is necessary if drug induced liver injury is suspected and other causes for liver disease should be excluded.
- Second line therapies for severe and/or refractory disease include cyclophosphamide, rituximab and intravenous immunoglobulins.
- Therapeutic decisions should be personalised taking evidence of therapeutic efficacy, safety, availability, cost and patient preference into consideration.

Full recorded lectures of CME programme can be viewed on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7ZApVi-0nY







Wall of Fame

The Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics is very pleased to announce the following accomplishments of its members:

Professor Priyadarshani Galappatthy was appointed as consultant in medication safety to the Patient Safety Flagship Unit of the World Health Organisation, Headquarters, Geneva to support the implementation of third WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm. She is supporting the development of many technical resources on medication safety to promote countries in implementing many components of the strategic action plan of the WHO 'Medication Without Harm' Challenge.





Dr. Namal Rathnayake, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka delivered the SLMA Oration 2023 at the 136th Anniversary International Medical Congress of the Sri Lanka Medical Association on the title 'Contribution made to advances in knowledge on the Snakebites.

Dr. Leonard Wanninayake, Lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo and the assistant treasurer of SLACPT has successfully completed MD Medicine in Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo.

He is currently working as a Senior Registrar in Cardiology at National Hospital of Sri Lanka.





Dr. Rameshkumar Thevarajah, Lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo and the editor of SLACPT has successfully completed MD Medicine in Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo.

He is currently working as a Senior Registrar in Endocrinology at National Hospital of Sri Lanka.

MCQ Course on Pharmacology for MD Selection Examinations

A two day online MCQ course on Pharmacology for the MD Selection examinations is organized by the SLACPT and will be held on 29th July and 05 the August.

MCQ Course Targeting MD Selection Exams Organized by the



SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY & THERAPEUTICS (SLACPT)

29th July and 5th August 2023

	29th	July
9.00 - 10.30 am	Pharmacology of gastrointestinal and liver diseases	Professor Anuradha Dassanayake Professor in Pharmacology and Specialist in General Medicine
10.45 am - 12.15 pm	Pharmacology of anti-infectives	Professor Shalini Sri Ranganathan Professor in Pharmacology and Specialist in Paediatrics
1.00 pm - 2.30 pm	Cardiovascular pharmacology	Professor Priyanga Ranasinghe Professor in Pharmacology
2.45 – 4.15 pm	Basic pharmacology	Professor Chamila Mettananda Professor in Pharmacology and Specialist in General Medicine
	5th Au	ıgust
9.00am - 10.30 am	Prescribing in rheumatology	Dr Sujeevani Kurukulasuriya Senior lecturer in Pharmacology and Specialist in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation
10.45 am - 12.15 pm	Pharmacology in special populations	Dr Thilanka Seneviratne Senior lecturer in Pharmacology and Specialist in Paediatrics
1.00 pm – 2.30 pm	Antidiabetic agents	Professor Sachith Abeyratne Professor in Pharmacology and Specialist in Endocrinology
2.45 pm - 4.15 pm	Respiratory and Autonomic nervous system pharmacology	Professor Channa Ranasinha Professor in Pharmacology and Specialist in Pulmonology

Course fee: Rs.2,500/= (to be paid on or before 27th July,2023)

(Reserve your place by paying the fee since only a limited number will be registered)

HOW TO REGISTER?

- By filling the google form. https://forms.gle/kePDwuJFgMDxNkUz8
- Please upload payment slip to the google form.
- Payments to be made to the following account.

A/C Name - SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS

A/C Number - 167200180013901

Bank - Peoples' Bank

Branch - 00167 Colombo Town Hall



Will be conducted via

ZOOM

Scan QR code to register

FOR MORE INFORMATION : 0112961139

Ms. Sanduni(<u>sanduni@kln.ac.lk</u>), Ms. Eshani (<u>achilaranasinghe1@gmail.com</u>)

WHO Assignment Evidence Synthesis on Essential Medicines Policy Reform Options for Sri Lanka

SLACPT undertook an assignment from the WHO on Evidence synthesis on essential medicines policy reform options for Sri Lanka in the year 2022. The final report was submitted to WHO in April 2023. We thank Prof Asita de Silva the lead consultant and the other members of the association who contributed to the report.

Upcoming Events

Induction Ceremony of the President of Sri Lanka Association of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics on 12th August, 2023 at Auditorium, UCFM Tower, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo.

219	PROGRAMME
6.00 pm	Guests take their seats
6.20 pm	Arrival of Chief Guest and Guests of Honour
6.25 pm	Ceremonial Procession
6.30 pm	National anthem
6.35 pm	Lighting of the oil lamp
6.40 pm	Welcome address – Senior Professor Asita de Silva
	President, SLACPT 2021/2022
7.00 pm	Induction of the President SLACPT
7.05 pm	Award of Past President's medal to Professor Asita De Silva
7.10 pm	Address by Guest of Honour
	Senior Professor Vidya Jyothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayake
	Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo
	President, Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC)
7.25 pm	Address by Guest of Honour - Dr Asela Gunawardana
	Director General of Health Services , Ministry of Health
7.40 pm	Address by Chief Guest - Mr. S. Janaka Sri Chandraguptha
	Secretary, Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka
7.55 pm	Presidential Address - Senior Professor Priyadarshani Galappatthy
8.25 pm	Vote of Thanks - Professor Priyanga Ranasinghe
	Secretary, SLACPT
8.30 pm	Reception

Write to Us!

SLACPT welcomes suggestions from readers towards improving the image of the Association and the newsletter. Please send your suggestions to:

Email: office@slacpt.lk