

APAMI

Asia Pacific Association for Medical Informatics

Vajira H. W. Dissanayake and Kyung-Hee Cho

APAMI Membership

APAMI's twelve active member societies include the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA), the China Medical Information Association (CMIA), the Hong Kong Society of Medical Informatics (HKSMI), the Indian Association for Medical Informatics (IAMI), the Japan Association for Medical Informatics (JAMI), the Korean Society of Medical Informatics (KOSMI), the Health Informatics New Zealand (HINZ), the Philippine Medical Informatics Society (PMIS), the Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka (HISSL), the Association for Medical & Bioinformatics Singapore (AMBIS), the Taiwan Association for Medical Informatics (TAMI), and the Thai Medical Informatics Association (TMIA). APAMI has a number of observer members including societies from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Nepal. Although Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Vietnam had APAMI member societies in the past, APAMI leadership has been unable to elicit any updates from these member societies.

APAMI Executive

The current APAMI leadership consists of: President: Vajira H. W. Dissanayake [vajirahwd@hotmail.com]; Immediate Past President: Kyunghee Cho [khcho@nhimc.or.kr]; Secretary: Oommen John [susheel.john@gmail.com]; Treasurer: CP Wong [cp@cpwong.com]; Directors: S B Gogia [gogia7@gmail.com], Klaus D Veil [Klaus@veil.net.au]

APAMI communicates with its members and stakeholders through the News@APAMI.org e-mail list. The executive group uses two groups [apami@googlegroups.com] and the APAMI president's letter to facilitate organizational and inter-member communications. Both lists are frequently used with regular activities and discussions. The APAMI website is <http://www.apami.org/>.

APAMI 2018 Conference

The APAMI 2018 conference was held during the digital health week organized by the Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka [Please see details below under HISSL]. The conference attracted 140 delegates from 26 countries. To facilitate the attendance of young researchers at the APAMI conference, in addition to the usual APAMI Bursary, 21 APAMI Southampton Travel Awards were awarded using a grant provided by the University of Southampton, UK.

The highlights of the inauguration were the keynote talks on “Clinical Decision Support to improve the Quality of Care” by Christoph U. Lehmann, President IMIA and “The world tomorrow: technology clinical trials and healthcare?” by James Batchelor of the University of Southampton, UK. The program consisted of six plenary talks [“Consumer Health Informatics” by Sabine Koch, President Elect, IMIA; “The DHIS2 Open Source eHealth Network in Asia: Collaboration and synergies. Examples from Sri Lanka, Lao PDR, India, and Indonesia” by Jørn Braa from the University of Oslo, Norway; “Nursing informatics – challenges and opportunities” by Patrick Weber, IMIA VP for MedInfo; “Innovations for future ready health systems: Moving beyond pilots and quick fixes” by Oommen John, President IAMI; “How digital technology can innovate the way NCDs are addressed and accelerate the achievement of UHC” by David J. Heard, Head of Digital Health Novartis Foundation; and “APAMI beyond 2019” by Vajira H. W. Dissanayake the Incoming President of APAMI. There were 24 symposia including the eight symposia in the Global Telehealth 2018 conference, which was held as a separate track of APAMI 2018. There were 118 presentations, which included free papers and invited talks. The program and abstract book of the conference can be downloaded at <http://dhw2018.org/apami2018/download/2588/>.

APAMI 2018 Symposium

A highlight of the APAMI conference is the ‘APAMI Symposium’ where member associations discuss the latest developments in their countries and regions. The Symposium was inaugurated by Kyunghee Cho, President APAMI. The discussions included recent advances in medical informatics by the member societies. “Recent development of medical informatics in Hong Kong” was presented by C.P. Wong, Hong Kong; “The Fourth Industrial Revolution and medical informatics” by Polun Chang, Taiwan; “Emerging Digital Health Ecosystem in Sri Lanka” by Vajira H.W. Dissanayake, Sri Lanka; “Big Data Project and international collaboration” by Dai Jin Kim (CUK) and In Young Choi (KOSMI) from South Korea and the final presentation on “Digital Health enabling Universal Health Coverage” in India by Oommen John from India. The symposium was well attended by a highly engaged audience.

2018 APAMI General Assembly Meeting



Fig. 1 A group photo of the leadership of APAMI, IMIA, AeHIN, GT and HISSL at the inauguration of APAMI 2018
Front Row [Left to Right] Shashi Gogia (India); Rohana Marasinghe (Sri Lanka); Vajira H. W. Dissanayake (Sri Lanka); K. H. Cho (South Korea); Christoph U. Lehmann (USA); Ruvaiz Haniffa (Sri Lanka)
Back Row [Left to Right] Rezi Sheriff (Sri Lanka); C. P. Wong (Hong Kong); Shyam Fernando (Sri Lanka); Jai Ganesh (India); Boonchai Kijisanayotin (Thailand); Dr. Petter Hurlen (Norway); Fazila Allaudin (Malaysia); Patrick Weber (Switzerland); Anne Meon (Norway); Alvin Marcelo (Philippines); Michio Kimura (Japan); Anthony Meader (Australia)

The APAMI General Assembly was held on the evening of 10 October 2018 during APAMI 2018. It was well attended by all the member associations. A wide-ranging discussion took place on the role of APAMI in the context of the rapid adoption of digital health around the world. Prof. Vajira H. W. Dissanayake, President, HISSL would assume duties as President APAMI and Vice President for Asia Pacific of IMIA for a two-year term on 1 January 2019. Dr. Oommen John, President, IAMI, would assume duties as Secretary of APAMI along with him for a two-year term.

Annual Reports from APAMI Member Societies

The China Medical Informatics Association (CMIA)

In 2018, the China Medical Informatics Association (CMIA) actively promoted the education, research, and technology development in medical informatics relevant fields. Especially, with the excitement from artificial intelligence and big data applications, the involvement has been coming from research societies, medical practitioners, industry, and different levels of the governments. Numerous meetings and activities were held around the country, such as Sino-US Health and Medical Informatics Forum (Guangzhou), China Medical AI Conference (Beijing), China Medical Imaging AI conference (Shanghai), and many others.

APAMI2018 was an important event that CMIA seriously promoted and attended with an 11-member delegation in Sri Lanka. CMIA gave 10 presentations and had productive conversations with colleagues from around the world. CMIA appreciates Professor Vajira Dissanayake and HISSL for hosting a very successful APAMI conference/Digital Health Week and their hospitality.

For the future, we continue promote the 17th World Congress on Medical and Health informatics (Medinfo 2019) in Lyon, France and APAMI2020 in Japan. As a satellite conference of the MedInfo2019, CMIA will host the 3rd World Chinese Health Informatics Symposium (WCHIS 2019).

The Hong Kong Society of Medical Informatics (HKSMI)

The Hong Kong Society of Medical Informatics continued to assist the Hong Kong government to roll out Phase 2 of the Electro-

nic Health Record Sharing System in Hong Kong with an aim to enable data sharing between public and private healthcare sectors. To date, more than 0.8 million individuals have enrolled into the Health Record Sharing System with more than 2,000 healthcare providers participating. Phase 2 of the project will embark on progress in radiology image sharing and enhanced medical records interoperability. Patient portal development is also in the implementation queue.

Open access to Hong Kong's huge data pool will be made available to educational institutions and worthy research projects and will allow analysis of the content of the data warehouse. Analytical skills in big data will be further enhanced and developed to harness new knowledge from the big data pool Hong Kong accumulated in the last 25 years.

The Hong Kong Society of Medical Informatics is also busy preparing for the Asia Pacific Conference on Electronic Health Records. The theme will be "The Next Big in eHealth" and the conference will be scheduled to be held in October 2019.

Indian Association for Medical Informatics (IAMI)

IAMI had excellent opportunities to provide thought leadership and professional input into the policy framework of the Government of India. IAMI submitted a detailed response to the draft Digital Health Information Security Act (DISHA) and also used the opportunity to showcase the professional capabilities of the association at a high level engagement with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of India.

Several IAMI members contributed their insights on the role of Electronic Health Records and a future road map of EHR in the context of the National Health Protection Scheme Ayushman Bharat, which is the flagship initiative of the Government of India towards Universal Health Coverage. The role of informatics for the implementation of the insurance companies led model to improve access to healthcare was discussed with the key stakeholders at the National Health Agency, which provides the operational oversight to the state governments for this landmark program.

IAMI continues to play a key and integral role at the subcommittee on health informatics standards at the Bureau of In-

dian Standards, Government of India. IAMI members are leading a separate thematic focus sub group on standards for improved and standardized clinician-patient communications leveraging innovative technology tools. This initiative has been well received by all the stakeholders at Bureau of Indian Standards.

IAMI partnered with several professional societies and International associations leading a strong advocacy for bringing evidence based informatics practices to the strategic initiatives being rolled out in India. IAMI members in their professional capacities have been invited as technical experts by the WHO for the development of the Digital Health Guidelines for Health Systems Strengthening, which is a testament to the recognition of the experts and thought leaders from India and a great honor for IAMI.

IAMI has been able to leverage the "Healthcare IT Experts Blog" to showcase the "Innovations" (Innovations from India) that many IAMI members have been developing to the international community and learn from the experts across the globe on this digital platform. Several IAMI members were invited to show their expertise through articles which received a wide audience through this platform.

Over 10 papers from IAMI members were presented at APAMI 2018 during the digital health week in Colombo, Sri Lanka. IAMI members continue to present at other landmark conferences in India and Internationally. IAMI members had the honor of chairing and leading the Global Telehealth track, the Nursing Informatics track, and the Clinical Outcomes track and the speakers included several IMIA board members and participants from the member countries of IMIA.

The Government of India led the tabling of the WHO Resolution on Digital Health at the 71st World Health Assembly, IAMI members along with other APAMI members were continuously engaged with the country delegations attending the World Health Assembly and provided technical and advocacy support including facilitating a ministerial round table as a side meeting during the World Health Assembly 2018.

The IAMI website has been revamped and updated and can be accessed at www.iami.org.in.

Japan Association for Medical Informatics (JAMI)

As of December 31, 2018, JAMI has more than 3,900 members consisting of about 2,560 regular members, 720 affiliate members, and more than 700 members in other categories.

Since 2016, the president Kazuhiko Ohe has been leading board members. Past three years have added another successful pages of JAMI.

Annual spring conference was held on June 21st – 23rd in Niigata prefecture. The theme of the conference was “Re-discovery of Medical Informatics”. More than 1,000 attendees from JAMI and other societies gathered and discussed on hot topics in biomedical informatics.

The 36th Joint Conference on Medical Informatics was held on November 22nd – 25th in Kagoshima prefecture. More than 2,600 attendees joined to the conference.

Regarding JAMI Healthcare Information Technologists, it was 16th cohort in 2018 and more than 1,500 were certified.

A new specialty of medicine, Japan board of public health and social medicine was established in December 2016. The board is consisting of the society of epidemiology, public health, occupational medicine, health administration, medical informatics and others. More than 3,000 physicians were certified by 2018. The fellowship programs accepted more than 100 fellows in 2018.

Korean Society of Medical Informatics (KOSMI)

As of December 31, 2018, KOSMI had more than 7,722 members consisting of 223 life time members, 435 full members, 136 student members, 6,922 Web members, and 9 institutional members. KOSMI is organizing biannual academic conferences, seminars on different topics, and publishing the Health Informatics Research (HIR), an official journal of KOSMI four times per year.

The spring conference was held at the Samsung Medical Center in Seoul from June 14 to June 15. The theme of the conference was “Evolving Data for Better Health” and 654 members participated in the conference. There were 3 tutorials, 15 symposiums, 20 paper presentations, and 54 poster presentations. Five papers and one poster were awar-

ded and recognized as the best papers and poster respectively at the conference. The fall conference was held at the Chonbuk National University Hospital from November 22 to November 23. The theme of the conference was “Real-World Data to Optimize Clinical Trials” and 740 members participated in the conference. There were 6 tutorials, 18 symposiums, 28 paper presentations, and 34 poster presentations.

KOSMI published the 24th volume of the Health Information Research (HIR) in 2018. The HIR publishes four issues in English including 4 editorials, 3 review articles, 32 original research articles, 6 case report, 2 tutorials, and 1 communications. The Journal was accredited by the Korea Research Foundation in 2006 and registered as one of prestigious academic journals in Korea.

Health Informatics New Zealand (HiNZ)

In 2018, Health Informatics New Zealand (HiNZ) developed and launched a digital magazine called eHealthNews.nz, which has been well received by the sector as a trusted source of New Zealand based digital health news. The magazine includes opinion columns from sector experts and accepts advertising from the industry.

Our annual HiNZ Conference in November received a record number of submissions (up 26% on the previous year). It was our largest-ever conference with 1,200 delegates meeting in Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand. We also achieved a record amount of sponsorship revenue, with 95 exhibitors taking part in the three-day event. The increased annual profit has enabled HiNZ to invest money in expanding our member services, including the development of a certification program and the provision of logistics support to clinical informatics networking groups.

The Philippine Medical Informatics Society (PMIS)

The Philippine Medical Informatics Society (PMIS) has increased its membership and now boasts 1,312 members as we continue to nurture the society through our connections via social media (www.facebook.com/groups/philmeginfo/).

PMIS members are involved with the academic institutions, clinical specialty

societies, the government sector, private sector companies, and organizations such as HL7 Philippines and the Standards and Interoperability Lab – Asia (SIL-Asia). Select members provide representation to the National eHealth Governance Structure as members of the National eHealth Technical Working Group (NeHTWG), which convenes on a monthly basis to develop, strategize, and provide recommendations to the National eHealth Steering Committee (NeHSC) to aid in the implementation of the Philippine eHealth Strategic Framework and Plan, which is now being revised from the original 2014-2020 plan to the proposed 2018-2022 strategy.

The NeHSC serves as the highest governing and decision-making eHealth body in the Philippines and is chaired by the Secretary of Health. This committee is comprised of the Secretaries of Science and Technology, Information, and Communications Technology, the President/Chief Executive Officer of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC), and the Chancellor of the University of the Philippines Manila. It sets the national eHealth policies and strategic directions as well as monitors and evaluates the progress of the National eHealth System and Services.

Several PMIS members have been officially appointed to the national eHealth experts' groups such as the Standards Experts Group (SEG), Privacy Experts Group (PEG), Electronic Medical Records Experts Group (EMREG), Health Enterprise Architecture Experts Group (HEAEG), Risk Management Experts Group (RMEG), and an Advisers Group.

Recently, Dr. Raymond Francis Sarmiento, current PMIS president and chair of the IMIA Health Informatics for Development working group, was also elected as the current chair of HL7 Philippines. Through his concurrent positions, including his role as health lead for SIL-Asia, he has been actively promoting the use of health IT standards for interoperability of health information systems. He has been in constant contact with international counterparts to discuss how to develop a more responsive peer-learning network and highlight the work done of fellow APAMI members, particularly those from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

Last March 2018, at least 20 APAMI colleagues in attendance (members were from Thailand, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and the Philippines) including PMIS members attended a Health IT Collaboration workshop held at the National Taipei University of Nursing and Health Sciences (NTUNHS) in Taiwan. PMIS members were also active in either leading the organization or facilitating regional workshops on intersecting topics such as health enterprise architecture framework development for LMICs (25 participants), health ICT governance architecture framework for LMICs (30 participants), health information systems interoperability using HL7 FHIR (60 participants), health terminology standards and setting up a terminology service (15 participants), among others.

In July 2018, the National Telehealth Center from the University of the Philippines Manila, under the directorship of Dr. Sarmiento, organized and hosted the 2nd UP-MIT-Stanford Big Data for Health conference and workshops at the Philippine Genome Center in Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines. With over 140 participants from all over the Philippines with mentors and workshop faculty from MIT and Stanford University in the United States as well as other experts from Singapore, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom, the two-day event successfully pushed forward the agenda of building capacity on health data science, machine learning, and artificial intelligence in health and medicine.

Finally, PMIS members, including AeHIN Executive Director Dr. Alvin Marcelo and Dr. Sarmiento, figured prominently in the conduct of the 6th AeHIN General Meeting held in Colombo, Sri Lanka last October 2018 with the theme “Interoperable Digital Health for Universal Health Coverage”. Dr. Marcelo, Dr. Sarmiento, and other APAMI colleagues also attended the APAMI meeting, which was held immediately after the AeHIN General Meeting in the same venue. PMIS members continue to collaborate and work harmoniously with other APAMI members such as AeHIN chair Dr. Boonchai Kijaysayanotin (Thailand), Dr. Anis Fuad (Indonesia), Mr. Jai Ganesh (India) and many others to support the national eHealth programs and strategic implementations of ministries of health in Asia.

Association for Medical and Bio-Informatics, Singapore (AMBIS)

AMBIS continues to support the local Bioinformatics and Biomedical Informatics community through a variety of events including the following public lectures during the ExCo term of 2017/18;

- Big Data Analytics, Mathematical Modelling, and Artificial Intelligence in Biomedicine by Dr. Vladimir Brusic
- Caveats and Recommendations for reuse of large-scale operational electronic health record data by Dr. William Hersh
- Digital Organism For Evolutionary Insights by Dr. Maurice HT Ling
- A series of outreach programs, conferences, and institutional partnerships are being planned for the next ExCo Term.

Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka (HISSL)

The year 2018 was a very active year for the Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka (HISSL). As the professional association of Health Informaticians in the Country, HISSL, continued to support the MSc in Biomedical Informatics and MD in Health Informatics programs of the University of Colombo that lead to Board Certification in Health Informaticians in Sri Lanka. In addition, as the main technical advisor to the Ministry of Health, HISSL, continued to coordinate several international donor funded projects of the Ministry of Health on health systems strengthening.

This year was also a busy year for HISSL internationally. As the main technical partner of the Commonwealth Digital Health Initiative of the Commonwealth Medical Association, HISSL contributed to the events leading up to the launch of the Commonwealth Center for Digital Health in London, UK on 20 April 2018 and the Ministerial Luncheon in support of the adoption of the World Health Assembly Resolution on Digital Health on 22 May 2018 in Geneva Switzerland. In addition HISSL administered the Commonwealth Digital Health Awards. The President of HISSL also served on the World Health Organization’s Guidelines Development Committee on Digital Health.

The main event organized by HISSL however was the Digital Health Week 2018 from 7 to 12 October 2018 (<http://www.dhw2018.org>) in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Digital Health Week 2018 consisted of

1. Conference on Interoperable Digital Health for Universal Health Coverage and 6th General Assembly of the Asia eHealth Information Network (AeHIN): 7 to 9 October 2018

2. Board Meeting and General Assembly of the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA): 7 to 8 October 2018
3. 10th Biennial Conference of the Asia Pacific Association for Medical Informatics (APAMI 2018): 9 to 11 October 2018
4. Global Telehealth 2018 (GT2018): 9 to 11 October 2018
5. Score for Health Data: World Health Organization’s Regional Consultation on Strengthening Country Health Information Systems and Capacities to Monitor UHC and Health SDGs, 10 to 11 October 2018
5. 3rd Commonwealth Digital Health Conference (CWDHC): 12 October 2018
6. Digital Health Sri Lanka 2018: 12 October 2018
7. 3rd Commonwealth Digital Health Awards 2018 (CWDHA): 12 October 2018
8. Commonwealth Digital Health Expo 2018: 9 to 12 October 2018

Over 600 participants from over 60 countries representing more than 175 organization’s attended the Digital Health Week 2018. The program book of the Digital Health Week 2018 can be downloaded at <http://dhw2018.org/download/1858/>.

Taiwan Association for Medical Informatics (TAMI)

The Taiwan Association for Medical Informatics supports research based on medical informatics, improving the quality of medical information, and augmenting international relations in the medical community.

The TAMI has been an active organizer contributing to several events enhancing the communication and collaboration with the worldwide medical organizations. With the international visiting faculty, TAMI has helped to develop more connections and achieved the exchange of a wide spectrum of medical information in the Taiwan community.

The events that took place in 2018 are listed below:

1. The Joint Conference on Medical Informatics in Taiwan and the Hospital Chief Information Officer Summit 2018 were organized by the TAMI, Tzu-Chi University, Hualien Tzu-Chi Hospital, and iThome, on 20 and 21st Oct 2018. The conference invited medical experts, researchers, and scholars from different countries and discussed the issues in medical information system and further aimed to develop a vision for the next generation of these systems.
2. The Taipei Medical University in collaboration with MIT organized the Hackathon which is an intensive three days program on Health IoT, aimed to advance projects from idea to implementation. It took place from 19 to 21st Oct, and had the topic: From Complex Healthcare Data to Serious Clinical Solutions - the AIoT approach. This hackathon is organized annually and brings participants and local clinicians together to share ideas and advance theory into practice while working in multidisciplinary teams to develop rapid prototypes and solve real problems.
3. TAMI was also a part of the "International Honors Program", a program to provide Indian students a unique two-week study experience at Taipei Medical University

from 4th to 15th June 2018. Along with the local faculty members, TAMI organized to have an international visiting professor from Spain, Dr. Luis Fernandez Luque. Dr. Luque has been doing eHealth research for the last ten years in Norway (Norut), Spain (Polytechnic University of Valencia), and the United States (University of Minnesota, and Harvard Medical School), and is also a founding partner of Salumedia. He specializes in eHealth, mHealth, health games, and health social media and currently serves as the Chairman of the Social Media Working Group of the International Medical Informatics Association.

4. On 5th Dec 2018, the IBM Watson for Oncology: The Opportunities and Challenges of Therapeutic AI conference was organized in Taiwan. Prestigious speakers from IBM and related fields joined this conference in Taiwan, which focused on how IBM Watson for Oncology can benefit patients and clinicians in cancer treatment, and the underlying challenges as well as potential developments in the future. The speakers included renowned professionals – Dr. Kyu Rhee, Dr. Edward H. (Ted) Shortliffe, Dr. Vimla L. Patel, and Dr. Chun-You (Jim) Chen.
5. Further, TAMI was organized lectures for another visiting professor from India in May 2018, Dr. Krishnan Ganapathy.

Dr. Ganapathy is a Past President of the Telemedicine Society of India, formerly an Honorary Consultant and Advisor in the Neurosurgery Armed Forces Medical Services. He is currently an Emeritus Professor at the Dr. MGR Tamilnadu Medical University, Chennai. A pioneer in introducing Telemedicine in India, Dr. Ganapathy has been working relentlessly from 1999 for the growth and development of Telemedicine in India.

In addition to the above events, members of TAMI have actively participated in international conferences on medical informatics and have promoted the advancing technologies in healthcare in Taiwan.

TAMI developed a Certificate for Medical Informatics Manager and Analyst in 2008. The assessment-based certificate is designed for information professionals, clinical personnel, and health care support personnel, who are willing to expand their knowledge of health information technology and prepare for the management of the complex social and organizational issues surrounding this technology in health care. Participants, who demonstrate that they meet the standards by successfully completing the assessment process, are granted official credentials. In past 10 years, there were more than 7,000 personnel certified, who improved revenue and better career opportunities for themselves.