



YORK MEDICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES OF MEETING OF YORK MEDICAL SOCIETY Friday 12th March 2021

1. President's welcome
2. Minutes of the previous meeting
3. Apologies: Greg Richardson
4. New members: None
5. Deaths: Dr Robert Nigel Peel
6. Guest Speaker: Dr Suranga Dolamulla

This meeting was all held virtually on Zoom, with Sarah Anderson co-ordinating the IT

Tackling of Covid 19 in a Universal Healthcare System - Dr S Dolamulla, MBBS, M.Sc., MD

The development of the Universal healthcare system in Sri Lanka was described, from its rudiments during British colonisation between 1796 and 1815, to the present day via the British military, international organisations such as WHO, UNICEF and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Other social policies have helped improve life expectancy, infant and maternal mortality rates and literacy.

Today Sri Lanka spends 3.8% of its GDP on health (compared to 10% in the UK).

Traditional medicine still exists alongside free universal healthcare. The Universal Healthcare System is now divided into Preventive and Curative care, and administered from the Ministry of health to Provincial Directorates, thence to Regional Directorates and then devolved to Divisional (Ministry of Health) Units.

In January 2020 the first Covid case was identified in a Chinese tourist, and in mid-March the first local case. Immediate curfew and lockdown followed, and a Task Force established by the President. Military and Police oversaw quarantine and curfew, and had a role in contact tracing. Small villages were isolated and inbound and outbound flights were stopped.

The first wave affected mainly younger people in Colombo, and deaths were low. Initially quarantine of those infected, and contacts, was 28 days, but has been finessed over time.

The media has been mainly constructive in public education, but has been accused of scare-mongering over testing and quarantine, and has stigmatised some ethnic minorities.

In early February 2020 the vaccination programme was started in Public Health workers and Parliamentarians. The over 60s were next and others have followed. There was never a policy of herd immunity.

There is less testing available than in the UK, and Government is informed by weekly reporting of cases from regions. To Date (12th March 2021) there have been 87,104 confirmed cases, 2,626 active cases, 115 daily new cases, 609 in hospital under investigation, 83,958 recovered cases, and 525 deaths.

7. Vote of Thanks: Mr Andrew Grace

8. Any other business:

9. Date of Next Meetings:

Friday 19th March – BMJ Editor to global health influencer; a conversation with Dr Richard Smith CBE

Friday 16th April – Dr Neil Metcalfe – *100 Notable Names from General Practice*

Friday 30th April – Dr Stuart Calder – Spring Wine Tasting

Friday 14th May – Annual General Meeting

Meeting attended by 30

Minutes taken by Susan Reaney