



The EDITOR'S MUSINGS

Dr Tina Tan

Editor

Dr Tan is a psychiatrist with the Better Life Psychological Medicine Clinic and a visiting consultant at the Institute of Mental Health. She is also an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. Between work and family life, she squeezes time out for her favourite pastimes – reading a good (fiction) book and writing.

National Day 2021 was a quiet affair for my family. We looked out for the fighter jets in the sky and watched the ceremonial parade in the morning. I played this year's National Day Parade song on loop several times because my kids liked it so much.

This year's National Day is significant because Singapore has achieved and surpassed its targeted vaccination rate. It is at 70% and rising, whereas the Multi-Ministry Task Force had aimed for two-thirds vaccination rate by National Day. This is typical of Singapore – under-promise and over-deliver. And I mean that in the best way.

In line with the theme of celebrating our nation's accomplishments, we feature a variety of articles about one of the facets in the pandemic battle which

will help us to reopen and travel again: vaccination. There are various reasons why there is a segment of the population that isn't vaccinated – a significant chunk are below 12 years of age, another segment has severe allergies, and some continue to have fears of the available vaccines. The ethics of differentiated policies for those who are vaccinated and those who aren't are interesting to consider, though this isn't the platform to debate about it. Nonetheless, the Government's messaging is clear: for now, to protect the vulnerable among us, we have moved into differentiated policies, while preparing to transition into a new reality where COVID-19 is endemic.

Do look out for the articles by A/Prof Hsu Li Yang, who gives an update on the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines and objectives of mass vaccination, and Drs Wong Sin Yew and Loh Jiashen, both of whom have contributed a summary on vaccination in special populations.

I was also honoured to be able to interview Prof Leo Yee Sin, who has been an integral part of the National Centre for Infectious Diseases, and one of the early faces of our front-line fight against COVID-19. She reminds me a little of Dr Anthony Fauci from the US, actually, with the way she readily took to national television last year, speaking to the press and media about the virus, the disease and Singapore's strategy.

As Singapore prepares to reopen, I know many of us are looking forward to our next holiday. As it stands, travelling for leisure remains a mouth-watering dream for the moment. Will there come a day when vaccine passports are required? This is food for thought, and something that is not out of the realm of possibilities. Nonetheless, as we consider our end-of-year plans (which are unlikely to involve leisure travel for the time being) to lighten the mood, we asked some of our Editorial Board and Council members to write about their next travel destination. I hope this gives us all something pleasant to think about.

Last, but not least, I would sincerely like to thank Dr Ganesh Kudva, who will be stepping down from the Editorial Board as of this month. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Happy National Day to all. ♦