

The Editors' Musings

DR TINA TAN

Editor

Dr Tan is a psychiatrist in private practice and an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. She treats mental health conditions in all age groups but has a special interest in caring for the elderly. With a love for the written word, she makes time for reading, writing and self-publishing on top of caring for her patients and loved ones.



It is that time of the year where we look back on the preceding 12 months and wonder how the days and months managed to fly past us. At least, that is what I am thinking because honestly, I have no idea where 2023 went.

This time of the year is traditionally known in some cultures as "the season of giving". Therefore, it is appropriate that we are featuring a host of local organisations whose primary mission is to serve the needy. The landscape of healthcare in Singapore, especially in the field of step-down care, would not be where it is today if not for these charitable organisations.

On an added note, I wish to extend my personal thanks to fellow Editorial Board member (and the co-editor for this issue) Dr Lim Ing Haan for her tireless efforts in

linking the SMA News team with the various authors who have made their contributions for this issue's theme.

One more thing. There is no doubt that the holiday season is also a time of reflection. Hence, on reflection, I realised that Dr Lim Baoying's article on running in last month's issue raised a few eyebrows given the circumstances of a certain incident that occurred in 2019. Despite this, I invited Dr Lim, in good faith, to share her passion for running, which is not to say that we condone what was done, but that we recognise people make mistakes, and allow for second chances.

With that, I hope it has been a wonderful end to the year, and here's to a good start to 2024.

DR LIM ING HAAN

Guest Editor

Dr Lim is the first female interventional cardiologist in Singapore. She is an early adopter of new technology and is a key opinion leader in international cardiology conferences. She shares a clinic with her twin, Dr Lim Ing Ruen, an ENT surgeon in Mount Elizabeth Hospital. Both believe in the power of food, travel, laughter and loyalty in forming strong family bonding.



The pandemic years passed by in a blink of an eye. After the initial frenzy of travelling for leisure and for conferences, my twin's family and my own decided to end the year with a mission trip. It was not just fulfilling but inspirational, bringing to mind these words from an oath we took while donning the white coat.

"Dedicate my life to the service of humanity; maintain due respect for human life; use my medical knowledge in accordance with the laws of humanity." - Singapore Medical Council Physician's Pledge

This issue of SMA News hopes to honour a few of the charitable organisations in medicine that have exemplified the words of the Physician's Pledge.

In as early as 1901, the local Chinese businessmen community started the Sian Chay Medical Institution to provide medical care to the needy. Doctors back then even rode bicycles as far as Johor to attend to patients.

In 1910, a group of Cantonese merchants founded Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital to provide free medical services to poor Chinese immigrants. Today, it offers both traditional Chinese and Western medicines in their two nursing homes.

Around the same time in 1913, St Andrew's Mission Hospital was started by Dr Charlotte Ferguson Davie, with significant financial contributions from the Chinese community. It offered free medical care to the migrants in the slums of Bencoolen Street.

Then in 1969, the Assisi Hospice was founded by the Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood. The Catholic mission provides palliative care for its patients.

More recently in 1989, Christian doctors started the St Luke's Hospital to bridge the gaps in the care of the elderly and frail, especially those who stay alone.

These are only a few of the many charitable medical organisations in Singapore set up by the concerted efforts of many generous individuals. I would like to conclude with another quote for our readers and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a better year ahead.

"I will remember that there is art to medicine as well as science, and that warmth, sympathy and understanding may outweigh the surgeon's knife or the chemist's drug."

– Hippocratic Oath ♦