

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.



Welcome to another issue dedicated to our hardworking doctors in training (DITs)!

This month, we have invited Prof Phua Ghee Chee to contribute his thoughts on being Singapore Health Services' (SingHealth) chief wellness officer since 2022. In his interview, Prof Phua touches on the role of his team and how his past experiences have led him to where he is today. These experiences include his own time as a junior doctor, guiding junior doctors while serving as the residency programme director for internal medicine, and the harrowing experience that was the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also invited Dr Caleb Luo and Dr Deborah Khoo to write a paired set of articles on this ever-present entity in the lives of all junior doctors and their supervisors – the 360-degree (360°) evaluation. What is it like being evaluated? What is it

like conducting the evaluations? What is the point? Dr Khoo sums it up best: "The truth is, being evaluated at some level... never stops." I think all of us, no matter where we are practising or how long we have been in medicine, can attest to this.

Special mention goes to Dr Cheong Cheng Jun, a Singaporean based in the UK, who was inspired to write about his thoughts as a practising doctor who does improv comedy on the side, and how his creative ventures have benefitted his clinical practice.

Lastly, our very own student correspondent, Joycelyn Soo, has graduated from medical school. As our newly minted Dr Soo embarks on her house officer year, she shares her reflections alongside others who are also about to embark on a year that will surely be a forging for all. Wishing you all the best, Joycelyn!

DR YAP QI ROU

Guest Editor

Dr Yap is a medical officer currently rotating through Khoo Teck Puat Hospital. In her free time, she likes to travel, watch Netflix and explore new cafes with her friends.



This issue focuses on our DITs, highlighting the stress that naturally accompanies the job and the measures that the medical community is taking to address this.

Having been a house officer myself not too long ago, I thoroughly understand the shock of being thrown headfirst into the job, oftentimes facing real-world challenges that were not taught in any of my notes or textbooks in medical school. The chaos of the transition from student to doctor can be seen in the reflections so kindly submitted by Drs Joycelyn Soo Mun Peng, Tang Haoming and Rachel Lam Hui Xin, but this new and scary experience also brings with it new knowledge, new experiences, and most of all, new mentors and friends.

The write-ups by Dr Caleb Luo Yang and Dr Deborah Khoo cover the 360° evaluation that all junior doctors in the public healthcare sector are subject to, as well as the shortcomings it comes with. I agree that

while this framework is still a work in progress, we can nevertheless view them as a way to continuously improve and upgrade ourselves!

Prof Phua Ghee Chee speaks about his efforts as SingHealth chief wellness officer to support the well-being of junior doctors while Dr Sean Ng and Dr Keith Yeo share about the peer support group system that they have created for medical students and junior doctors. There is still a long way to go for the medical community to optimise the system and minimise burnout, but it warms my heart to see the increasing awareness our society has on this important issue and the new measures being implemented to support our peers.

Whether you are a newly minted house officer still fighting fires in the wards or already at the peak of your career, I hope that everyone can find something in this issue that resonates with you! ♦