

The EDITORS' MUSINGS



Dr Tina Tan

Editor

Dr Tan is a consultant at the Institute of Mental Health and has a special interest in geriatric psychiatry. 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.

COVID-19 continues to dominate our lives with its widespread impact. As such, I hope readers understand *SMA News'* emphasis on related articles, from the clinically practical to the very personal. It is my desire to give a voice to as many doctors as possible, to hear their perspectives and to share lessons learned.

This month, we take stock and look back at how the pandemic has unfolded in Singapore. Looking forward, we anticipate much effect on the mental health of doctors, and we are glad to have worked with the Singapore Psychiatric Association to highlight this issue for our readers.

Last, but certainly not least, I am also delighted to welcome Dr Lim Ing Haan to the Editorial Board.



Dr Jipson Quah

Guest Editor

Dr Quah is a GP and pathology clinical officer in private practice. He enjoys music-making, fitness activities and editorial work in his spare time.

COVID-19 Avengers Assemble!

The COVID-19 pandemic has struck the world with unprecedented force and is a deadly challenge like no other in our generation. At this moment, there have been over six million cases and over 360,000 deaths. In comparison, during the 2003 SARS outbreak from November 2002 to August 2003, there were a total of 8,422 cases and 916 deaths.

As a result, governments have been scrambling to control the outbreak and treat the ill. Different countries have adopted a variety of approaches. Some of these measures include widespread lockdowns, closure of businesses, deploying and training medical personnel, and building temporary medical facilities. For the medical fraternity, this means increased personal protective equipment measures, deployment in COVID-19 facilities and cancellation of clinics, operations, leave, conferences and fellowships. We also have to adapt quickly to government policies and Ministry of Health (MOH) circulars.

In this issue of *SMA News*, we have invited colleagues to detail their unique experiences in fighting against COVID-19. If I may borrow references from the Marvel Universe, we (The Avengers) are battling COVID-19 (Thanos), a plague that threatens to wipe out swaths of the population and completely change the way we live.

Akin to The Avengers, we have the courageous public sector (Captain America) and private sector (Iron Man) doctor-heroes. MOH is the Strategic Homeland Intervention, Enforcement

and Logistics Division (S.H.I.E.L.D) and our MOH/Public Health leadership is Nick Fury. Our surgeons, especially the orthopods, are characterised by the mighty Thor (powerful lightning and mythical weapons) and Hulk (smash!). Our infectious diseases specialists and physicians are Vision and Hawkeye, due to their incredible clinical acumen and ability to provide life-saving care. Spiderman represents our eager young colleagues (house officers and junior residents). Doctors from the pathology and laboratory departments are like Doctor Strange! (They provide crucial diagnostic services which guide our diagnosis and policies). Radiologists are probably Black Panther (usually in dark rooms and very technologically advanced). Psychiatrists have got to be Scarlet Witch, with powers of hypnosis and telekinesis. The GPs and family physicians are the Guardians of the Galaxy, running public health preparedness clinics and Swab And Send Home schemes.

I hope you have an enjoyable read and would spend some time pondering about which Avenger you might be as we continue the fight against COVID-19. As part of a team, we all have different roles to play in order to complete the Infinity Gauntlet and eradicate COVID-19 from the world. ♦

Welcome ON BOARD

Dr Lim Ing Haan is an interventional cardiologist in Mount Elizabeth Hospital where she shares a clinic with her twin – Dr Lim Ing Ruen, an otorhinolaryngologist.

After her return from Duke University in 2005, she coordinated the set-up of the Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention Service in Tan Tock Seng Hospital in 2007, and remains on its Acute Myocardial Infarction Service till today.

She is committed to innovation and was the course director of a number of regional courses in cardiology intervention. She often gets invited to lecture at international meetings.

Dr Lim and her sister are the only set of twins to graduate from NUS School of Medicine (1995) and she was the only female interventional cardiologist in Singapore for 17 years. Her favourite pastimes are jogging and travelling. ♦



SMA News is looking for writers to contribute!

If you have a burning desire about a certain topic, or an intense passion for something you have to get out, send your thoughts to news@sma.org.sg and let them be seen by the world!