

# The EDITOR'S MUSINGS



*Dr Tina Tan*

Editor

Not long ago, I had the privilege of speaking to the Duke-NUS Medical School class of 2020 on behalf of the SMA before they graduated. With me was fellow Council Member and former classmate, Dr Lim Kheng Choon. We spoke to the class through Zoom, and the class graduated over that weekend, also through Zoom. It really was a sign of the times to be graduating in the midst of the havoc of COVID-19.

In the past few months, as trainees found themselves abruptly deployed or unable to change postings due to cross-institution concerns, many of our juniors were left asking whether they could still take their examinations, how examinations would be conducted, and whether traineeship would be delayed. Similarly, when medical student postings came to a sudden halt, students were left pondering whether they could progress through medical school or even graduate properly (although the answer to that last question has pretty much been a resounding yes).

There is no doubt that educators and residency programmes all around the globe have had to scratch their heads and think out of the box, in

order to come up with safe and sustainable solutions to the training of doctors and education of medical students. And all of this had to be done as quickly as possible. It has been no easy feat that the class of 2020 from our medical schools has graduated, and is now working in the wards as Post Graduate Year 1s.

This issue's focus is on our doctors in training, and in more ways than one. Dr Liang Zhen Chang, Dr Jipson Quah and A/Prof Nigel Tan have written about changes that have been made in training and medical education as a result of enhanced infection control measures. Our COVID-19 snippets continue with reflections from doctors, who've experienced changes to their professional lives, some more directly than others.

We are very pleased to feature articles from Dr Denise Au Eong and Dr Clement Sim as they graduate and enter the wards during this time. Dr Sim's contribution is accompanied by a special response from Dr Agnes Tay, as she reflects on her experience during SARS.

Closer to my heart, of course, is the mental well-being of healthcare workers during this time. We have

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published a continuation of the Singapore Psychiatric Association's series of comics, as a reminder to look after ourselves and each other as we trudge on through this pandemic.

It goes without saying that COVID-19 has brought disruption, inconvenience and heartache for all of us. And yet, the same can be said of any new and unexpected change. The remarkable thing that the pandemic has shown me is that humans are resilient, and we can adapt – for better or worse. Let's make it better, and turn this new normal to our advantage. ♦