

The EDITORS' 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.

Let's talk briefly about trauma. Specifically, the re-experiencing of it.

This editorial comes on the heels of the ever-growing COVID-19 cluster at Tan Tock Seng Hospital.

Although we live in an era where rapid advances in medical science and technology have increased global average life expectancy greatly, there remain many unknowns and unanswered questions in the realm of western medicine. Hence, more people are increasingly looking to alternative medicine, be it for disease prevention, medical treatment or for health maintenance.

In this issue, we are delighted to have Dr Bernard Lee, interventional pain specialist and founder of Singapore Paincare Center, to share with us his insights into pain management. We also have Dr Tan Tee Yong, an anaesthesiologist who subspecialises in pain medicine, to shed light on his interesting journey of learning acupuncture and how his patients benefitted from it.

As we enter the second year since the COVID-19 pandemic hit us, many

Last year, just as western media sources praised Singapore's COVID-19 response, we were hit by a tsunami of dormitory cases and smacked with the circuit breaker.

Today, I feel the same eerie sense of déjà vu. Just one week prior to writing, *Bloomberg* listed Singapore as the "world's best place to be amid COVID-19". #premature

Honestly, I'm just waiting for the Prime Minister to appear on national television with that magical language-changing blue cup of his.

For better or worse, our days of reprieve are over. It is not ideal, but sadly not unexpected, given how other countries have

of us have leveraged on telemedicine to provide remote medical care for our patients. Mr Jansen Aw and Dr Alex Cheng touch on telemedicine and the legal aspects surrounding its use. Dr Kenneth Lyen also pens his reflections on taking the COVID-19 vaccine and the different types of vaccines available around the world.

Research has shown that the SARS-CoV-2 virus is linked to cardiovascular diseases and vice versa. Dr VP Nair, interventional cardiologist, shares with us more on cardiac biomarkers, how the virus causes damage to the heart and how having cardiovascular diseases increases the risk of a person contracting severe forms of COVID-19.

Finally, look out for the book reviews from our Editor Dr Tina Tan chronicling the journeys of medical students and doctors in their care of patients.

There is an old Chinese saying that goes, "学海无涯，唯勤是岸".

been struggling with this wily, elusive and evolving virus.

All I can say is this – vaccination remains to be our best shot (pun intended) at reducing COVID-19's impact. That, and stringent safe-distancing measures and appropriate border controls. Both require decisiveness on the Government's part, while adherence to safe-distancing measures the absolute cooperation of the populace. It is clear that things have been lax on the parts of many. We have gained invaluable experience in the past year dealing with COVID-19. Only time will tell whether that experience, wrought through the tireless efforts of many, will tide us through this current crisis.

Dr Chie Zhi Ying

Deputy Editor

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It means knowledge, like a sea, is boundless; only through hard work can one reach the destination. Only by keeping an open mind and zest for learning can we better the lives of ourselves and others. With this, I hope you enjoy the issue. ♦