

## THINKING ABOUT IMPROVING PATIENT CARE AND OUTCOME?

By A/Prof Goh Lee Gan

The practice of medicine has changed. What are the determinants of change and what are the resulting tensions? Can anything be done to reduce these tensions?

How good are ethical precepts and professionalism as guiding lights for 21<sup>st</sup> Century medicine? How do we deal with medical errors – classifying, reporting and preventing them? How do we disclose errors? How do we communicate effectively to improve patient care? What is the place of organisational ethics in strengthening the practice of medicine? All these and more will be discussed at the upcoming **Mini-Course on “Improving Patient Care And Outcome”**.

**Date** : Saturday, 9 November 2002

**Time** : 9.00 am to 12.00 pm

**Venue** : Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel

**Chairman** : Prof Chee Yam Cheng

Chairman, Medical Board, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

**Speakers** : (1) **The Practice of Medicine**

A/Prof Goh Lee Gan, NUS Dept of COFM

(2) **Medical Errors: its classification, reporting and prevention**

Prof Tan Siang Yong, Director of St Francis International Centre for Healthcare Ethics, and Adjunct Professor in Law

(3) **Disclosure of Errors/Effective Communication with Patients**

Dr Chin Jing Jih, Chairman of SMA Ethics Committee

(4) **Organisational Ethics**

Dr Suresh Sahadevan, Member of Ethics Committees of TTSH & SMA

**CME points** : 2



## MEDICATION ERRORS – WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

By A/Prof Goh Lee Gan

Medication errors are an area in law where *res ipsa loquitur* applies (the facts speak for themselves). Why do errors occur? Whose fault is that? How can we do better? A doctor in institutional practice, a pharmacist, and a doctor in private practice share their worldview of how we can get on top of things. Prevention is the key. Dealing with a medical error professionally, after it is discovered, is also of critical importance. All these and more in the Symposium on Medication Errors and Patient Safety, which is part of the SMA Ethics Convention (9 – 10 Nov 2002).

**Date** : Saturday, 9 November 2002

**Time** : 3.30 to 5.30 pm

**Venue** : Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel

**Speakers** : (1) **Perspective of a Doctor in the Institutional Practice**

Dr Ling Moi Lin, Director, SGH Quality Management Dept

(2) **Perspective of a Pharmacist**

Ms Ang Hui Gek, Assistant Director, SGH Allied Health Division

(3) **Perspective of a Doctor in the Private Practice**

Dr Lawrence Ng, General Practitioner in Private Practice

**CME points** : 2



## ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

By Dr Chin Jing Jih

Many people would like to have some control over their medical care, not only when they are alert but also when they are too sick to participate in decisions. Similarly, family members who have to make decisions for patients in this position would like to be guided by the patient's wishes.

Advance care planning has been advocated as a mechanism to ensure the respect of a patient's autonomy and wishes even when he or she is no longer mentally competent. It is therefore the process of planning ahead for future medical care, particularly when the patient suffers either a permanent or temporary loss of capacity to make decisions about his or her medical care. Advance care planning can take the form of medical directive, living will, value history or a combination of the above. In countries like the US, a medical directive usually includes the appointment of a health care proxy or durable power of attorney for health care, though there is as yet no legal provision for this in Singapore.

Advance care planning has the potential to benefit all parties involved in medical care – patients, their proxies or family members, and health care providers, especially the physicians. For patients, it gives them a sense of control and peace of mind that their autonomy and preferences will continue to be respected even when they become mentally incapacitated. It also helps them to explore and better understand values, goals and preferences that govern their lives, and to incorporate these in making medical decisions for themselves. For the proxies or family members, advance care planning helps to relieve anxieties and fears, and facilitates decision making on behalf of patients based on substituted judgement. For doctors, advance care planning helps to fulfill our legal and professional responsibility of assuring patients' right to decide on their own health care. The process of advance care planning helps to build trust and a sense of teamwork, thereby enhancing doctor-patient relationship, a cornerstone of our profession. It also promotes understanding of patients' values, goals and preferences. Finally, advance care planning is a form of preventive medicine as it helps to avoid future confusion and conflict.

It is important to appreciate that advance care planning is a process, not an event. It should therefore be a routine part of standard medical care that is integrated into clinical encounters. It fosters personal resolution for the patient, preparedness for the proxy, and effective teamwork for the health care professionals.

**Date** : Sunday, 10 November 2002

**Time** : 9.30 am to 12.00 pm

**Venue** : SingHealth Research Facilities Auditorium

(Former School of Nursing, opposite Blk 1 of SGH A&E)

**Speakers** : (1) **Its Importance and Usefulness to Patients and Clinicians**

Dr Chin Jing Jih, Consultant, TTSH Dept of Geriatric Medicine

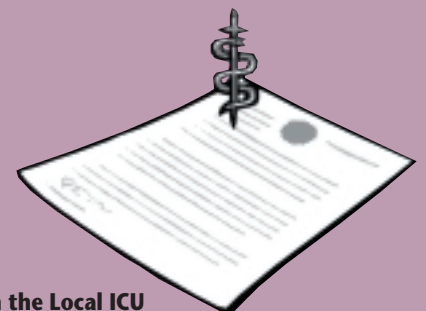
(2) **The Practical Steps**

Dr James Alvin Low, Consultant, AH Dept of Geriatric Medicine

(3) **Challenges in Executing an Advanced Medical Directive in the Local ICU**

Dr Lim Boon Leng, Director, SGH Surgical Intensive Care

**CME points** : 2



## DO NOT GET CHARGED FOR PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

By Dr T. Thirumoorthy

Any medical practitioner who has done something regarded as disgraceful, unethical, dishonourable or bringing disrepute to the profession, can be hauled to answer charges by the Singapore Medical Council (SMC).

The new SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines were released in January 2002, which outline what the SMC regards as the minimum standards required of all practitioners in the discharge of their professional duties and responsibilities.

### **Learn to understand the SMC Disciplinary Process**

How are you judged? Do you need to engage a lawyer to represent you? Will your Medical Defence Organisation assist you?

### **Learn about the SMA Ethics Committee**

How does it work? Why should you respond to letters requesting explanation for incidence of complaints by the public?

What is the link between the SMA Ethics Committee and the SMC?

In the present day climate of compulsory CME, doctors are not only expected to practise safely, but in addition, behave ethically and professionally. The Seminar on Updates of Professional Issues will be held as part of the SMA Ethics Convention 2002 (9 - 10 Nov 2002).

**Date** : Sunday, 10 November 2002

**Time** : 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm

**Venue** : SingHealth Research Facilities Auditorium  
(Former School of Nursing, opposite Blk 1 of SGH A&E)

**Chairman** : Dr Thirumoorthy  
Director, SMA Centre for Medical Ethics & Professionalism

**Speakers** : (1) **Case Management by SMA Ethics Committee**  
Dr Chin Jing Jih, Chairman, SMA Ethics Committee

(2) **SMC Disciplinary Process**  
By Dr Tan Chi Chiu, Chairman, SMC Ethics Committee

**CME point:** 1



## WHAT IS THE CLIMATE IN MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE LITIGATION?

By Dr T. Thirumoorthy

The storms of medical negligence claims have quietened down for the moment in Singapore, with 2 landmark cases of the Court of Appeal (James Khoo vs Gunapathy and Henry Yeo vs Lily Pai).

What are the pronouncements of the Court of Appeal in the 2 cases? What are the implications and precedents set for future cases? What are the roles of the judges and the court? How is the Bolam test to be interpreted in issues of diagnosis, treatment, consent and disclosure? What is happening in the US scene with regard to medical negligence? All these and more will be discussed at the upcoming seminar on Updates of Medical Negligence Laws, which is part of the SMA Ethics Convention (9 - 10 Nov 2002).

**Date** : Sunday, 10 November 2002

**Time** : 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm

**Venue** : SingHealth Research Facilities Auditorium  
(Former School of Nursing, opposite Blk 1 of SGH A&E)

**Chairman** : Dr Wong Wee Nam  
General Practitioner, Private Practice

**Speakers** : (1) **Mr Edwin Tong Chun Fai**  
Partner, Allen & Gledhill

(2) **Ms Kuah Boon Theng**  
Partner, Tan & Lim

(3) **Prof Jim Pietsch**  
Director, Richardson School of Law, Hawaii

**CME points** : 2

**Limited Seats – Please register early.**



**Look out for the registration form in this month's SMA mailbag  
or call the SMA Secretariat at Tel: 6223 1264.**