

The EDITOR'S MUSINGS



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A few months ago, a doctor in one of our public hospitals made social media news for allegedly being negligent in the care of a young child. There was much public discourse on the matter. The hospital in question put forward a factual statement to defend their employee, another doctor's social media post went viral for his defence of the first physician (introducing the hashtag #targetzeroabuse), and the original posts with its allegations were eventually taken down (though the reasons why are unclear).

Although the furore has died down, this debate caused a stir in many of our hearts for various reasons. It is a given that healthcare professionals need to be treated with respect and this was briefly highlighted in last month's issue of *SMA News*.

In this issue, though, we want to take a more positive spin on things. What makes us all tick in our everyday work? How do we plough on despite the difficulties and disappointments we may face? Where and how do we find our joy when at work?

We've invited doctors from various fields; namely, emergency medicine, palliative medicine and family medicine, to talk about #joyatwork. A/Prof Eillyne Seow writes about the difficulties faced by emergency physicians, who battle at

the frontlines of our hospitals' A&E departments every day without fail. Dr Grace Yang submits a heartfelt piece sharing her work as a palliative medicine consultant and how she pushes on despite the nature of her job. As part of our GP column, Dr Ajith Damodaran talks about the joy he experiences in his work as a family physician, and in our President's Forum, Dr Wong Tien Hua writes about burnout among GPs.

This month, we feature Part 2 of the Hobbit's series on the modified Montgomery test, as well as the first in a series of articles by Dr Lee Ser Yee and colleagues on choosing a fellowship for specialty training. We've also reprinted Dr Wong Chiang Yin's letter to the *Straits Times* in support of the latest decision to reinstate medical fee guidelines (I believe the new term is "benchmarks").

Last December, I received a Christmas greeting from my senior colleague and fellow Editorial Board member, A/Prof Daniel Fung. His message spoke of taking joy and having hope, and in particular, "If we are to find joy at work, we must first have meaning and purpose. And in our work, this has to be the patients that we care for."

It was a timely reminder for me and I hope that this issue serves as a reminder for all to go about our busy, endless days, always remembering to find #joyatwork. ♦

Dr Tan is an associate 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.