

The EDITORS' MUSINGS



Tan Yia Swam

Editor

Dr Tan is learning new skills and stretching new boundaries in her private practice. Meanwhile, she still juggles the commitments of being a doctor, a wife, the *SMA News* Editor, the Vice-President of the SMA and a mother of three. She also tries to keep time aside for herself and friends, both old and new.

My first December out in private practice: it's been an exciting and tiring eight months for me, learning how real life (and business) works! I'm feeling especially contemplative because I will be turning 40 and have been reflecting on how my life has been, how it is now and what may lie ahead.

I am thankful for the many new friends I have met, and wonderful seniors and colleagues who have given invaluable and practical tips on how to build a good, sustainable practice, provided excellent medical care for the non-breast conditions I picked up, and even made time to have lunch or coffee!

Join us as this issue's writers also reflect on their respective medical careers; I am especially glad for the many young and enthusiastic doctors and medical students I have met. Congratulations to A/Prof Kenneth Mak on his new position as Director of Medical Services designate – read about his training years in this issue. I wish you all a blessed Christmas!



Jonathan Tan

Guest Editor

Dr Tan is currently an associate consultant at the Division of Spine Surgery, National University Health System. He is grateful for the opportunity to pursue his dreams, and is thankful for the love and support of his parents and wife, without which none of this would be possible.

Season's greetings to one and all.

By some quirk of fate I am writing the editorial for the last edition of *SMA News* for the year after doing the same the year before. The end-of-year holiday is a great time to relax, spend time with your family and take stock of the year that has gone by. It has certainly been an eventful year of change for me – the most stressful examination of my life, a change in title, an end to residency and a new subspecialty to learn and explore. I am still getting used to not introducing myself as a resident.

The transitional years between leaving medical school and starting our medical career are certainly a time of trial and challenge, and each generation of doctors faces a different set of unique challenges! In this edition's Feature, we have invited doctors from different decades to share their respective experiences and the struggles they faced in the early years of their medical careers. Our "Doctors in Training" column also follows this theme and our authors share about their journeys as house officers and medical officers.

We also have a report from the Vietnamese Medical Association

Annual Scientific Conference, as well as some highlights from the Annual National Medico-Legal Seminar 2019, which I am sure will be of great interest to many.

Here is wishing one and all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! ♦