

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.

I am excited to present this month's issue to our readers. It marks my second term on the SMA Council and rounds up roughly two years since I took over as the *SMA News* editor, which was also when the COVID-19 pandemic started. It is heartening to see that life is returning to some level of normality after two tumultuous years. We have kicked off a snippet series where we invite doctors to share their reflections on the past two years, and we at *SMA News* welcome any further submissions from our readers. As a psychiatrist, I believe that it is good to share and talk about what has gone wrong, and also what has gone right in that blip which was caused by COVID-19 (and not Thanos #avengersinfinitywar).

For those more social-media savvy (and even for those who are not), this issue showcases various aspects of navigating the social media minefield, and how some of our colleagues have used various platforms to promote healthy living, their areas of specialty, or even their hobbies. As someone who has recently rediscovered the rather addictive joys of social media (after shunning it for various reasons), these articles are a reminder that social media has become part and parcel of our lives, for better or for worse, and also a reminder of the roles it plays in our personal and professional lives.

Social media has weaved itself into the fabric of our lives. For some, the online persona is an imagery of the subconscious alter ego, the mouthpiece of one's opinions, a reverie of fantasy and realism. Some of us may already be on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. While curating articles for this issue, I chanced upon TikTok and Snapchat, and I am sure that there are other apps people use too.

Social media is a medium of self-expression. Depending on which group of friends we are reaching out to, one may use different platforms. I have a set of Facebook friends and another set of Instagram friends because many of my millennial colleagues are not on Facebook.

Social media has also weaved itself into the professional realm. The growth of virtual cardiology congresses during the pandemic prompted me to start a Twitter account. Many of my international cardiology colleagues go by a Twitter handle. The hashtag, retweet and mention functions are perfect for networking with peers and professional organisations.

Twitter can elevate the scientific impact of new research papers. This is an informal and instant way of information dissemination superseding the usual method of the oral presentation at a conference. Twitter promotion of research papers has a positive impact on future citation rates. In the future, researchers may be informally ranked by a matrix of citations and digital footprints, the highest being "cited, with digital

Dr Lim Ing Huan

Guest Editor

Dr Lim is the first female interventional cardiologist in Singapore. She is an early adopter of new technology and is a key opinion leader in international cardiology conferences. She shares a clinic with her twin sister, an ENT surgeon in Mount Elizabeth Hospital. Travel, fine food, family love and friendships are the things that keep her going.

footprint", and the lowest being "not cited, with no digital footprint".

The influence of social media cannot be underestimated. The #CardioTwitter hashtag has reached a euphoric phase where it can reach out to a huge audience with a specific interest. This can cut both ways. On the one hand, researchers can tap on the knowledge of their peers or seek opportunities for research collaborations. On the other hand, real-time debates on controversial subjects may come at a furious pace and turn vitriolic. The cardiac stenting versus coronary artery bypass graft debate between cardiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons is one example of a trial by Twitter. In fact, international cardiology conferences now appoint digital ambassadors on the Twitter platform to moderate discussions.

In this issue, we have invited Dr Stephanie Yeap to write about her use of social media as a musician and a doctor, Dr Suraya Zainal Abidin to share her opinion on engaging patients through social media, and Asst Prof Low Ting Ting to introduce the cause she promotes and advocates for on social media. Enjoy reading! ♦