

THE EDITOR'S MUSINGS



There has been a lot of public discussion regarding the National Electronic Health Record (NEHR). As a doctor working in a public institution, I find it a very useful tool in the sharing of information between restructured hospitals and polyclinics. Of course there are its limitations, but those of us familiar with it have found the best ways to use it to augment our current management of each patient. There is also constant feedback and on-going improvements (see <https://goo.gl/UPvGoJ>). In expanding the NEHR to private sectors – both specialists and family physicians – there are several challenges to surmount, some of which have been mentioned in various other forums. The main concerns are that of (1) security, (2) confidentiality, and (3) accountability. Dr Alex Wong writes a candid piece on his concerns over the NEHR. We thank him for his frank words, and hope that relevant authorities will take the feedback into consideration. This forum is more appropriate than Facebook rantings.

In this issue, I hope to remind all readers that, other than the NEHR, there are many other technological innovations and programs in place: some good and some bad. As with all tools, it is always up to the user to make the best of it. The latest model of rice cookers may have multiple functions, but one can still end up making soggy undercooked rice; while an experienced cook can make perfectly moist and fluffy rice in a simple pot.

Dr Eric Wong from Tan Tock Seng Hospital gives an excellent example of how electronic innovations have improved patient care. He also shares on the work that has gone into it, as well as future developments. Other than official programs, there are many mass market apps available on smartphones out there as well: some for professionals and some for the general public. There is so much potential and power to tap on in these apps, when used appropriately. Dr Yau Teng Yan reviews some of the ones that he has used.

Dr Teoh Ming Keng from Medical Protection Society shares tips on how to avoid complaints and claims. Dr Devanand Anantham gives a simple and practical four-step framework teaching us how to apply ethical analysis to clinical problems.

On a related note, A/Prof Cheong Pak Yean relates a few patient anecdotes involving the increasing availability of health-related information on the Internet. This is an experience which many of us can relate to, I'm sure, for it involves delicately balancing a patient's right to participate in the management of their health, with our professional privilege of exercising clinical judgement.

In our GP Matters column, Dr Tan Tze Lee provides some useful information on the up-and-coming Enhanced Screen for

Dr Tan Yia Swam is a consultant at the Breast Department of KK Women's and Children's Hospital. She continues to juggle the commitments of being a doctor, a wife, the *SMA News* Editor and the increased duties of a mother of three. She also tries to keep time aside for herself and friends, both old and new.

Yia Swam
Editor

Life programme and the arguments for its benefits.

Finally, even as we embrace technological advances, we should never forget that patients should remain at the heart of all we do. Dr Tan Su-Ming's poignant and delightful anecdotes bring that home. Meanwhile, I also got to indulge in one of my fandoms through an interview with Mr Ron Chiang, the commanding officer of the Singapore Garrison of the 501st Legion, also known as Vader's Fist – the bad guys who do good. I know that there are many fellow *Star Wars* fans in our community. I hope you will support this organisation in their charity work and fundraising efforts. May the Force be with us. ♦