

GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN MEDICINE



Dr Tina 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, exams and family life, she squeezes time out for her favourite pastimes – reading a good (fiction) book and writing.

Tina Tan
Deputy Editor

The other day, my husband shared that if he needed to see a proctologist, he really would rather see a man.

Does that make him prejudiced against women? (Gasp!) Or does this simply highlight the realities of practising medicine – that patients have a right to choose their doctors?

The answer isn't a simple yes or no. Advances in opportunities for women have allowed for a shift in the gender profiles and traditional responsibilities of medical students and doctors. This has been more obvious in some specialties than others. These days, our patients are also more educated and aware of their right to choose.

In this issue, we interviewed Dr Jeanette Chen, who shares insights on her career and personal life. Dr Kao Pao-Tang and Dr Tan Tze Lee – who are both doctors and husbands – write heartfelt articles showcasing their journeys of raising their families, and how it was done in full partnership with their wives, who have careers of their own too.

I'm also delighted to present an article by Prof Sandy Cook, on her experience with changing gender profiles in the American medical school system, as well as with Duke-NUS Medical School. In subsequent issues, we hope to feature articles from the respective deans of NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine for their perspectives.

Dr Tan Yia Swam has collected a handful of anecdotes from a small (but brave) group of doctors about perceived acts of discrimination against them. While I doubt this is pervasive, it certainly highlights that such things still exist, and should not be swept under the proverbial carpet.

We also include an interview with Dr Loo Choon Yong, who will be speaking at this year's SMA Lecture on a highly relevant topic – Internationalising Singapore's Healthcare. In addition, do peruse Part 1 of a discussion by Colin Liew and Tham Lijing on the modified

Montgomery test, and this landmark ruling's implications for the way we practise and document our patient encounters. Another must-read is SMA President Dr Wong Tien Hua's column, where he discusses recent high profile cases that have thrown a spotlight on our profession's disciplinary process.

Last but not least, Dr Leong Choon Kit will be stepping down as a member of our Editorial Board. We wish to thank Dr Leong for his many contributions to *SMA News*. Additionally, we would like to welcome Dr Alex Wong as a new member of our team, and wish them both all the best! ♦