

The Editor's Musings

DR TINA TAN

Editor

Dr Tan is a psychiatrist in private practice and an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. She treats mental health conditions in all age groups but has a special interest in caring for the elderly. With a love for the written word, she makes time for reading, writing and self-publishing on top of caring for her patients and loved ones.



SMA News is kicking off 2023 with a bang. I am excited to present this month's issue to you as we delve into the various intangible ways that COVID-19 has impacted (and continues to impact) our profession and our society. Chief among these is Dr Alex Cheng's Feature article, which discusses the legal and ethical implications of Vaccination-Differentiated Safe Management Measures, which the Government implemented once vaccines were available to combat the virus (lifted in October 2022). This is a fascinating topic because we can consider the impact of such measures within Singapore, and also compare them with other global examples where harsher, less draconian, or similar measures were put in place.

Ultimately, the past two to three years have been a time of learning, and the collective lessons learnt translate into how Singapore, and the world at large, will handle future pandemics. And we know those **are** coming. To top it off, certain aspects of healthcare in Singapore continue to remain a complex bugbear, such as manpower, bed capacity and our ageing population. As former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi once said, "History is the best teacher, who has the worst students". Even as we go back to the way of life as we knew it before 2020, let us learn from the teacher, and not be like those students.

Three other articles in this issue also reflect COVID-19's continued impact on us. We have included a poem about viruses (not a viral poem, though perhaps this could someday go viral) by Dr Oon Chong Lin, and two review articles on books containing insights on our journey through the

pandemic. *The COVID-19 Chronicles: Singapore's Journey from Pandemia to Peri-Pandemic Limbo* and *Unmasking the Extraordinary* are unique reflections of this day and age because they are both comic-based and easy to consume with their illustrated formats. I highly encourage our readers to check out both books for their enlightening insights. In particular, do consider supporting SMA by purchasing *Unmasking the Extraordinary* as all proceeds will go to SMA Charity Fund.

In this issue, we have included Part 2 of the celebration of the NUS Department of Anatomy's centennial with an interview conducted by our student correspondents, Joycelyn Soo and Helen Cai. They have spoken with esteemed former and present faculty of the department about their memories learning and teaching anatomy at NUS.

In recent months, I have been highly encouraged to hear that people look forward to reading *SMA News* (and no, these are not folks who happen to be my relatives, though a couple are!). It is my aim that *SMA News* remains a relevant and reliable source of information, as well as a platform for doctors to stay connected and engaged with each other within the medical profession. We are thankful to our regular contributors and are always looking for new ones. In particular, *SMA News* has compiled a list of doctors who do illustrations on the side, and we are always happy to include thought-provoking art in our issues. We welcome contributions, feedback and responses. Please submit them to news@sma.org.sg.

We look forward to hearing from you. ♦