

The Editors' 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.

In my recent months of scrolling through social media, I came across reels of doctors and medical students teaching their audience about certain topics in preparation for examinations. Watching these content creators led me to wonder, "How has medical learning changed in these times?" and "How does it look like for educators and for the students being educated?"

You will see that we have obtained answers to both questions in our Feature and Doctors-in-Training articles, respectively – one response each from our three medical schools. The takeaway message is that learning is a lifelong process. Even the way learning is conducted has to adapt to changing times, and our schools have made remarkable efforts to keep up.

As such, Prof Thomas Coffman's article fits in nicely with our issue, where he reflects on his tenure as dean of Duke-NUS Medical School and the lessons he has learnt along the way.

Lastly, I read with amusement the snippet from Gunjan Agarwal (who would be considered a junior of mine from Duke-NUS) where she states, "One week. Fifteen pre-recorded lectures. Two readiness assessment tests. Countless tutorials. Repeat for 52 weeks – that was the life of a first-year Duke-NUS student."

Well, the times may have changed and medical education may have evolved (and is still evolving) in accordance with those changes, but some things... don't change.

A/PROF DANIEL FUNG

Guest Editor

A/Prof Fung is a father of five and grandfather of five, which are experiences that have taught him to live with stress, uncertainty and joy in equal measure. A lifelong supporter of Tottenham Hotspur, he has learnt resilience and the discipline of hope. His tenure as CEO of the Institute of Mental Health prepared him well for his current role as chief wellness officer at NHG Health.

Medical education does not begin on the first day of medical school, nor does it end with graduation, examinations or specialist accreditation. If the practice of medicine is "doing good", then its education is "learning good" across one's professional life span. The science evolves, systems change and our understanding of patients deepens with every encounter. More importantly, medicine is a profession where what we do, or fail to do, can have profound consequences for others.

Professional education therefore holds a special place in medicine. It is not merely about acquiring knowledge or skills, but

about shaping judgement, ethics, humility and a commitment to service. As this issue of *SMA News* explores medical school curricula, reflections from academic leaders and the voices of students themselves, we are reminded that education must keep pace with changing societal needs, digital realities and emerging models of care, while remaining grounded in compassion and professionalism.

Medical education is about developing doctors who are not only competent but curious, genuine, sincere and committed to learning for the sake of their patients, their profession and society. ♦

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