

GUARDIANS and EDUCATORS

Layman's perception of the emergency department (ED) probably falls into one of two categories: stat action all the time as per television series *ER* or *Code Black*, or a 20-hour waiting time in priority level 3 areas as per local complaints...

How about doctors' perception? Do GPs send patients to the A&E expecting everything to be sorted out? Do specialists denigrate A&E doctors as mere postmen?

In this issue, *SMA News* is proud to feature the frontline warriors of EM, an irreplaceable component of our healthcare landscape. One must marvel at how thousands of new patients of all age groups and varying presentations are managed effectively at the pre-hospital front and emergency departments all over the country every day. In contrast, we hear of overseas hospital counterparts having to shut down their emergency care facilities due to lack of funding, or manpower or political issues. Fortunately, through visionary leadership and strong support, our EM capabilities have been growing from strength to strength over the decades. In our Feature, we have esteemed clinicians, Prof V Anantharaman, Clinical Prof Goh Siang Hiong and Clinical A/Prof Eillyne Seow, reminiscing about their earlier years in EM.

Not only do our ED colleagues play critical roles in initial patient management, but they are also essential pillars of medical education. Many of the outstanding clinician-educators are ED specialists who have taught numerous generations of physicians and surgeons alike. I fondly remember the legendary clinical and ECG tutorials conducted by Prof Anantharaman and A/Prof Suresh Pillai, respectively, during my medical school days. A/Prof Shirley

The truth is that emergency medicine (EM) has evolved very much in the past few decades. It is a recognised specialty in its own right and has various subspecialties. My guest editor, Jipson, has gathered some of his close friends in EM to piece together a great issue on this specialty, bringing us an insider's review on what it actually means to be an EM specialist today. Enjoy, be impressed and appreciate them!

Ooi, whose passion for teaching and mentoring has influenced many, and whose book co-authored with A/Prof Peter Manning sits on innumerable shelves, shares her remarkable journey in medical education.

We often take our peace and security for granted, but what happens during a mass casualty situation? We hark back to the night of the 2013 Little India riot, which was previously an unimaginable scenario. While many of us merely read about the incident in sheer disbelief, Dr Chan Wui Ling recounts her first-hand experience of that dramatic night. Moving along the theme of emergency response, we have Col (Dr) Ng Yih Yng from the Singapore Civil Defence Force, with the latest developments at the pre-hospital front. Imagine a "Pokemon GO" app designed to address cardiac arrest cases – that's the myResponder app!

All our EDs are extremely busy and crowded, but have you ever wondered which among them might have the highest caseload? A/Prof Ng Kee Chong and Dr Lee Khai Pin tell us more about the Children's Emergency at KK Women's and Children's Hospital, an ever-present oasis of relief and comfort for children, parents, grandparents and often other extended family members.



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 mother, a wife and the increased duties of *SMA News* Editor. She also tries to keep time aside for herself and friends, both old and new.

Yia Swam
Editor



Dr Jipson Quah is a medical officer who has recently completed his National Service and is currently attached to the Department of Pathology at Singapore General Hospital. He enjoys music-making, fitness-related activities and editorial work in his free time.

Jipson Quah
Guest Editor

We have also invited a pair of EM residents, Drs Joanna and Jonathan Chan (who happen to be siblings), to share snippets of their lives and careers as junior ED specialists. One can only imagine their conversations at family gatherings!

Lastly, I would also like to thank all esteemed colleagues for their insightful articles, as well as Drs Desmond Mao and Lim Jia Hao, for their invaluable contributions in making this special issue of *SMA News* a truly memorable one. ♦