

# Media: Friend or Foe

by Weber Shandwick, a leading PR agency in Singapore

Ask a room full of people for their views on media and chances are you will hear a wide-ranging set of opinions – many will perhaps say interactions with media are a daunting task while others are likely to talk about the ease of media interviews.

Regardless of which of the two popular opinions you might side with, it always helps to treat media interactions like you would your school exam. And how well or poorly you do really depends on you and the preparation you put in beforehand.

So here are some golden rules for interacting with the media

## Do's:

- **Speak clearly:** Tell a story that is short, simple and easy to understand. Where possible, give the journalist some background and context of what you are sharing
- **Make a point:** Get to the point first then give the reason and example of the point you are making. Never ramble
- **Treat the journalist like a human being:** Be friendly and forthcoming. Your demeanour during an interaction can make a big difference
- **Be firm, not aggressive:** If the journalist doesn't agree with you or asks you the same question repeatedly try and change your approach
- **Always be respectful of their time and deadline:** Don't promise them something (a quote, some data or information) that you might not be able to deliver
- **Be prepared:** Some of the best speakers are those who rehearse beforehand
- **Data or visuals:** Have data or slides? Keep them handy so you can use that to illustrate your point. Journalists like nothing more than having valid data that they can use

## Don'ts:

- **Don't speak in medical jargon:** Remember the ultimate recipient of this story is the man on the street who does not have the same medical knowledge as you
- **Don't be afraid to ask for details:** Journalists always welcome questions so feel free to ask them for details about the story and angle they are working on
- **Don't do an interview in a hurry or when you are distracted:** Never do an interview over the phone in the middle of a busy clinic day or when driving. If you find yourself in such a situation, politely ask to speak to them at a later date or time or ask for their contact details. You can also opt to do an email interview by providing written responses or meet them in-person for an interview
- **Don't share information that has no local context:** The journalists in Singapore cover stories about Singapore or the region. So even if there's an interesting development in Europe or America, chances are they will not be interested in it unless it has an impact on their readers here
- **Don't chase journalists on when the story will appear:** The job of a journalist is to work on a story and file it. The ultimate decision on whether a story will be published or not rests with the editor. Sometimes your interview may be pushed or dropped altogether because something urgent came up or there's an advertisement to be placed

The job of a journalist is to inform and educate the public and as doctors you play an important role in ensuring their stories have factual and relevant information that will ultimately benefit patients and the masses.

■ CM

# Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016

By Edwin Liang, NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (Class of 2017), on behalf of the Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016 Organizing Team



(Left) Full group shot with our experienced speakers and satisfied participants in NUS MD6, LT35

*the* Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016 was held on 24th August 2016 at the National University of Singapore (MD6) for the third year running. Featuring the theme of Family Medicine in various healthcare settings, this event aims to shed light on what Family Medicine entails and its increasingly important

role in the future of Singapore's healthcare, catered for medical students and junior doctors.

Medical students from all three medical schools in Singapore

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<b>礼 (li) Propriety</b> Appropriate conduct in managing the affairs of the organization	<b>义 (yi) Righteousness</b> Abide by the ethical and moral codes of conduct
<b>廉 (lian) Incorruptible</b> Not swayed by consideration of personal gains and zero tolerance	<b>耻 (chi) Sense of shame</b> Admit to mistakes and remediate any harm done

The world would be a better place if we have virtuous leaders. As for the College, I hope we will continue to be served by council members who strive to attain these virtues. As for myself, I resolve to repent of my sins and seek to accumulate more virtues. Before I leave, one last word from another dead mentor. Beware of false prophets with phoney new visions and who talk a good game. Reject them like the plague. Good College leaders tend to be those who are long suffering and serve quietly for years and even decades. They are neither vain nor populist. They don't just show up during election time. Choose wisely. We need good leaders in the College.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-13974474>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cfps.org.sg/publications/the-college-mirror/download/57>

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(Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, NTU Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine and NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine) worked together to organize this event, with generous support from the Joint Committee of Family Medicine Singapore (JCFMS) and the College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS). Our concerted effort and hard work paid off in the end, with an impressive turn-up number of 150 medical students and junior doctor participants, who were all eager to find out more about primary healthcare from the Family Medicine veterans themselves.

This year's program comprised keynote talks from experienced Family Medicine physicians, Family Medicine Residency program talks by the three Sponsoring Institutions, as well as an update on the Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine. Participants were awed by the inspiring talks by well-respected Family Medicine doctors who shared their personal experiences interacting with patients of different backgrounds, and enjoyed the rare opportunity to personally interact with them over a sumptuous dinner (topped off with yummy Yami yoghurt)!

In essence, there are three take-home reflections from the Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016.

### Meaningful Sharing and Endless Learning

For many students, the Family Medicine Extravaganza was a good chance to learn more about family practice as a whole. Esteemed speakers such as A/Prof Lee Kheng Hock, A/Prof Chong Phui-Nah, Dr Leong Choon Kit and Dr Low Sher Guan spoke about family practice in various settings – from the hospital, to the polyclinic, to the community. For many students, it was eye opening to learn about how deeply involved family practice is in every aspect of healthcare, and how family practitioners across Singapore contributed in different ways to maintaining the health of our society. The event also allowed students to learn about the more practical aspects of pursuing Family Medicine, such as the various residency programmes available, as well as the Graduate Diploma of Family Medicine. Many of us walked away from the event with a greater appreciation for the importance of Family Medicine.

Koh Jinkiat, Phase 3 Medical Student,  
NTU Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine

### Working Together Towards a Common Goal

In retrospect, organizing the Family Medicine Extravaganza together with students from all three medical schools was a joy. The biggest takeaway was the realization that there are

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Our emcees, Jinkiat and Lauren calling the randomly-picked winners for the lucky draw events!



Assoc Prof Chen Fun Gee presenting tokens of appreciation to our keynote speakers - A/Prof Lee Kheng Hock (top left), A/Prof Chong Phui-Nah (top right), Dr Leong Choon Kit (bottom left), Dr Low Sher Guan (bottom right)



Dr Loke Kam Weng presenting tokens of appreciation to our Residency programme/GDFM speakers - Dr Darren Seah (top left), A/Prof Tan Boon Yeow (top right), Dr Sally Ho (bottom left), Mr Alvin Chee (bottom right)

All images courtesy of Nicholas Leong, Phase 4 Medical Student, NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine



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fellow students who are equally passionate about promoting Family Medicine as a potential career option. It would be great if future committees could keep up this spirit!

Wu Hongking, Phase 3 Medical Student,  
Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School

### Importance of Promoting Primary Healthcare

Every speaker highlighted the increasing role of Family Medicine doctors and primary healthcare teams in the evolving healthcare landscape both locally and internationally, in light of pertinent issues such as the ageing population. Many acknowledged the need to further develop Singapore's primary healthcare services, to ensure sustainability and efficiency for our healthcare system in the long run.

Personally, I feel that it is important for physicians of the future to promote primary healthcare to their patients, regardless of their eventual specialty.

Edwin Liang, Phase 5 Medical Student,  
NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

Overall, the Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016 was well-received by participants and the Family Medicine doctors who graced the student-led event. Moving forward, we strive to continue being strong advocates for primary healthcare, through initiatives such as the Family Medicine Mentorship Program (pioneered by the Family Medicine Clinical Specialty Interest Group from NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine in partnership with CFPS), as well as the upcoming Family Medicine Extravaganza 2017!

■ CM

## CFPS Family Medicine SIG Mentorship High Tea

by Dr Lim Hui Ling, Council Member, College of Family Physicians Singapore



On 12 November, CFPS hosted a high tea session at the Hotel Grand Pacific to facilitate a meet-up between mentors and their medical students. After an introduction by A/Prof Lee Kheng Hock, Dr Lim Hui Ling shared a few ideas and quotes on what mentorship is and how it benefits both the students and their mentors. Dr Julian Lim then shared more about his personal experience with mentoring students and younger doctors and shared some pointers on mentoring gleaned from attending a conference in Japan.

Most of the time was devoted to facilitating interaction between medical students and their assigned mentors so that they could ask questions freely and learn directly from their own as well as other mentors around their table.

For us as mentors, it was refreshing to talk to these younger future colleagues and to share our experiences with them. We left with a fulfilling sense of an afternoon well spent.

Do read on for some reflections from the students who attended the session.

### LIM MEI XING • DUKE-NUS MS3

*I had the privilege of attending the mentors-medical students high tea meet-up session at Hotel Grand Pacific. As I have yet to experience family medicine as a clerkship, it was a very good opportunity for me to find out more about family medicine as a career choice. During the session, we were put informally into small groups with one family physician in each group. For me, I had a good chat with our mentor of the day, Dr Lim Huiling. Not only did she share candidly about her choice of family medicine and the wide range of conditions that a family physician needs to know, she also shared about the difficulties faced juggling a job as a junior doctor as well as the responsibilities setting up a family at the same time. It was certainly helpful being able to talk to female physicians who have walked through the path of juggling the different duties of being a doctor as well as a mother, giving us advice and encouraging us that these difficulties can be overcome.*

*The afternoon was also filled with simple and entertaining games such as guessing how our mentors' day is like. As a medical student with endless assignments and exams to study for, I remember feeling surprised to hear about*

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