

2019 has been a roller coaster of a year for us

by Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee, President, 27th Council, College of Family Physicians Singapore

2019 has gone by in a flash. Much has happened in these short nine months, both in Singapore and abroad. As we mull the challenges before us, we have also had our fair share of trials and tribulations in our medical world.

The College has been listening carefully to the feedback from all sectors of our fraternity, and working hard to address the concerns and needs of our FP community. Top most was regarding the disciplinary process of the Singapore Medical Council (SMC). This was brought to a head when news of the Lim Lian Arn case as well the case of Dr Soo Shuen Chiang surfaced. The two rulings caused much disquiet, for both the profession and the public.

As there was much concern on the ground about hydrocortisone and lignocaine (H&L) injections, we addressed that by conducting a survey of doctors regarding H&L injections. From a practice point of view, we wanted to study how the ruling might have affected the provision of H & L injections. It had indeed; the survey results revealed that fewer of our doctors were now offering H&L injections after the ruling. Furthermore, the median charge had risen from below \$100.00 to the \$100-\$200 range for the procedure. It demonstrated how a disciplinary decision can affect how doctors practice, and this has far reaching implications. You can read about this in more detail in the article by Dr Wong Tien Hua, which can be found on page 10.

As one of the members of the Review Workgroup for SMC disciplinary process and informed consent taking standards, College had organised town halls, and also reached out to our members by email for feedback regarding the issue of informed consent and the SMC disciplinary process. Thanks to all of you who came forward with your concerns and suggestions, which were most helpful and enlightening. These were fed back to the twelve member workgroup who welcomed our contribution. They have collated this and other feedback from over 20 townhall sessions, and are working tirelessly to get the report out. We can look forward to the workgroup's report and recommendations

to the Ministry of Health, which should be released in the later part of this year.

At our Commencement Ceremony this year, we were privileged to have Master of the Academy of Medicine Singapore, Dr Selan Sayampanathan, as our guest of honour. In his speech, he reminded us of the important roles we play as family physicians in the community and in the health of our nation. We are encouraged by his support, and are also heartened by the strong interest and enrolment in our courses this academic year. We have 222 enrolling for the GDFM, 36 for the MMed(FM), and 18 for Fellowship for this academic year. As more of our brethren

embark on the road to becoming family physicians, family medicine can only become stronger, increasingly recognised as the foundation of our nation's health. Our strength lies in our unity, as we bring the development of healthcare in Singapore into the next phase.

On 27th July, we held the College's 48th Annual General Meeting at Singhealth Academia. Over 120 members attended and the atmosphere was festive. We would like to thank our retiring council members, A/Prof Lim Fong Seng, Dr Luke Low, Dr Ng Lee Beng, Dr Vincent Chan and Dr Goh Lay Hoon for their many years of service to the college. We have 5 new members to the council, namely Dr Julian Lim, Dr Nelson Wee, Dr Rose Fok, Dr Elaine Chua and Dr Tan Wei Beng. The renewal process brings a fresh perspective and energy to the council as we embark on our many projects in coming 2 years. One of these projects will be the College's 50th anniversary in 2021. We plan to organise a series of events to showcase family medicine and family doctors. Family medicine and family doctors have sustained the health of our nation for generations, and we want the world to know about it. This is an opportunity for the whole family medicine fraternity to showcase our specialty! Let's all take part in this celebration, to show who we are, what we stand for, and what we can achieve for our community.

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