

Surge On



**THOUGHT
LEADERSHIP:
NOT A ONE
MAN SHOW**

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THOUGHT LEADERSHIP: NOT A ONE MAN SHOW

Assoc Prof Tan Ngian Chye excels in the practice of Academic Medicine – being a clinician, a clinician-educator and an innovator.

He shares his insights on playing different roles in medicine and how this benefits patients.

By Assoc Prof Tan Ngian Chye
Senior Consultant, SingHealth Duke-NUS Head & Neck Centre
Programme Director, SingHealth General Surgery Residency Programme
Director, Device Development, Surgery ACP

THE CLINICIAN

My speciality is in head and neck cancer surgery. Patients diagnosed with such cancers face a difficult prospect. A resecting surgery can save their life, but they may lose parts of their anatomy and body functions. This leaves them scarred, and their self-esteem dented.

There is no doubt that we must save patients' lives. But do we feel their dilemma? Do we understand the conflicting objectives that sometimes exist between patients and their families? We need to give patients hope that the battle is worth fighting.

Being a doctor goes beyond technical competency. In the tough training to become a surgeon, we sometimes get so caught up with learning all the technical aspects that we neglect the equally important soft skills.

Go beyond the symptoms and disease at hand to see the patient as a person sitting before us. A good doctor is not just a skilful surgeon, but one who can see the patient and his/her family's needs holistically.

THE EDUCATOR

When I was asked to take on the job of Programme Director (PD), I was hesitant as I thought the administrative rigour as a PD may take away time from clinical work and teaching.

Teaching is a way to extend my knowledge and skills beyond me to my students, so that together we can help more patients. I learn from teaching too and like to help my students overcome learning obstacles. Being taught is the greatest gift I received, and it is the greatest gift I can give to my juniors.

To me, a PD is part principal, teacher and disciplinarian. It is a chance to shape the next generation of surgeons.

My generation of doctors grew up in the old school of tough love where sparing the rod means spoiling the child. This method clearly does not work for the millennials joining the profession today.

I liken them to a different OS (operating system). My job is to help them become competent and ethical surgeons, using compatible software that works better for this new OS.

THE INNOVATOR

I like to solve problems and I am often intrigued by innovative gadgets. My involvement in MedTech innovation has opened up a new world to me.

Surgeons use many medical devices for different procedures. There is always room for better equipment and opportunities to create solutions for unmet needs.

In our busyness, we make do with the status quo because we have neither time nor expertise to think of alternative solutions. With the setup of the SingHealth Medical Technology Office by Assoc Prof Henry Ho, there are now processes in place to ideate and create, and teams to work with to take your ideas from the lab to the market.

Never be too quick to throw out a crazy idea. My inspiration for a new surgical lighting device came from my child's pull-toy! Find someone to talk over your idea with. Who knows? It may become a new or improved medical device that can impact many patients.

THE JUGGLER

People often asks how I juggle so many hats.

A surgeon never works alone. It would not have been possible without the teammates I work with. It is also through all the interactions I have with patients, students, researchers, engineers and administrators that I continue to learn and grow.

Regardless of the role we play in healthcare, learning to lean on others, learn from others, and feel for others, is what makes us good doctors.



SOFT OPENING OF SKH CAMPUS

Sengkang General Hospital (SKH) and Sengkang Community Hospital have opened progressively from 18 and 28 August 2018 respectively. The announcement was made by Minister for Health, Mr Gan Kim Yong, Guest-of-Honour, at a Community Health Day event on SKH Campus on 11 August 2018.

"We have been building up over the last 6 years to get our entire healthcare team, the infrastructure and facilities ready to be a hospital for the community," Prof Christopher Cheng, CEO, SKH, said. "Our priority and focus are to ensure that the hospital opens smoothly and safely for our patients and that they receive the appropriate care and treatment at the right time."

The opening of the two hospitals will add 1,400 beds to our national capacity to serve healthcare needs. "Beyond taking care of medical needs, everything we do is aimed



at motivating future generations to be healthier and better equipped to manage their health. Hopefully, we actually reduce the need for hospital visits," added Prof Cheng.

Excerpt from article "A Hospital for the Community" by SKH Communications Department.
<http://infopedia.shs.com.sg/SengkangHealth/pages/news.aspx>

WHEN WE COME TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE MORE!



Surgery ACP formally welcomed our Changi General Hospital (CGH) surgical community at the Surgery ACP Townhall on 11 September 2018 at the CGH auditorium.

Giving his opening remarks, Assoc Prof Tan Hiang Khoo, Academic Chair, said, "Surgery ACP is a programme that anchors on clinical activities and initiatives with a pursuit for academic excellence. We strongly support every surgical division and department from the various institutions, to help the surgical community reach the peak of their academic clinical performances."

More than 100 staff heard from Surgery ACP's Vice Chairs and leads of Clinical Innovation, Research, Allied Health, Postgraduate Education, Undergraduate Education, Faculty

Affairs and Professional Development. In particular, the CGH surgical community was invited to participate in the various initiatives and partner with Surgery ACP on our Academic Medicine journey.

The highlight of the session was the opportunity to have a dialogue and Q&A session with Prof Ivy Ng, GCEO, SingHealth, Prof Sandy Cook, Senior Associate Dean, Office of Education, Duke-NUS as well as the presenters. It was a lively and informative session as the leaders fielded questions ranging from junior doctors' prospects to management's action plans.

At the end of the session, Prof Ivy commended Surgery ACP on our achievements and that indeed, "when we come together, we can achieve more!"



SURGERY ACP EDUCATION RETREAT

On Saturday, 28 July 2018, Surgery ACP held its Education Retreat (Surgery Programme) at Hotel Jen @ Tanglin.

Hosted by Assoc Prof Tan Hiang Khoon, Academic Chair, Surgery ACP, the retreat was attended by close to 50 participants. Besides clinician representatives from SGH, NCCS, SKH, CGH and KKH, allied health and nursing colleagues were present as well.

Prof Ian Curran, Vice Dean, Education, Prof Sandy Cook, Senior Associate Dean and Assoc Prof Scott Allen Compton, Associate Dean from Duke-NUS also joined us at the retreat.

We shared updates on the Duke-NUS's surgery curriculum (Year 2 Clerkship and Year 4 Advanced Surgery) and the new Year 4 Student-In-Practice (SIP) Programme. Participants from different institutions exchanged views on the curriculum changes and discussed issues they faced during medical student teaching.



Surgery ACP Education Retreat on Sat, 28 Jul 2018

GLOBAL SURGERY

Surgery ACP will be launching a 3-year regional capacity building programme through the support of an anonymous donor, who pledged close to \$1 million over three years. The programme aims to advance the frontier of surgical knowledge and the practice of safe surgery in the region and improve patient outcomes by playing a leading role in conducting overseas surgery outreach mission trips, education workshops and clinical fellowship programmes.

The goal of the programme is to transfer surgical knowledge and skills to healthcare professionals in resource-poor countries to enable and consequently improve the standard of health services. Surgery ACP will further advance academic medicine by looking into disease burden, epidemiology and promoting safe surgical practice e.g. through implementation of surgical checklists in these countries.

Additionally, Surgery ACP aims to enhance capacity building for our Singapore-based medical practitioners by increasing their regional exposure for cases less encountered in Singapore, and to deliver best patient outcomes with limited resource medical practice.

By building a regional network of medical leaders and practitioners, Surgery ACP will be able to explore greater regional collaborations in research, education and patient care.



A RELOOK AT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



A healthcare organisation which implements quality improvement (QI) experiences a range of benefits, from improved clinical processes to better patients' clinical outcomes.

The Department of Paediatric Surgery shared with Surgery ACP one of their current QI projects. Intussusception is the second commonest emergency surgical reason for admission of children into KKH, with approximately 80 - 100 cases seen per year. Traditional protocols dictate that after reduction, feeds are initiated only after a 24-hour fasting period, and advanced slowly, based on the belief that early feeds may increase the risk of recurrence. However, there is little evidence to support this. The department compared historical data with prospective data and implemented an initiative for enhanced recovery protocols in the treatment of intussusception.

For junior doctors, QI is now part of their residency curriculum. At the recent Residency in SingHealth Excels (RiSE) Awards Ceremony 2018, two residents from Urology Residency were awarded the "QI Project Award" for their initiative on "timely and appropriate inpatient ward review". The team observed that a patient had post-operative complications and prolonged post-surgical stay, which might have been avoided if his initial problem had been addressed earlier. The team did a root-cause analysis and looked for a solution to prevent a similar episode from recurring. A framework based on an early warning scoring system and an escalation protocol flow chart was created to aid nurses and junior doctors to identify and attend to sick patients within 1 hour.

Surgery ACP hope to create a culture where clinicians continuously engage in quality improvement.



CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS

The members of the Surgery ACP continue to achieve academic excellence. Heartfelt congratulations to all!

"BE INSPIRED BY THE CLINICAL QUESTIONS SEEN IN YOUR PATIENTS, BE OPEN TO LEARNING NEW CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONING OLD IDEAS, BE FEARLESSLY PERSISTENT AND FIND A GOOD MENTOR! THE MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP IS A SPECIAL ONE THAT CAN CONTINUE TO BE PRODUCTIVE FOR MANY YEARS, EVEN AS THE MENTEE MATURES IN PRODUCTIVITY. I AM STILL IN CONTACT WITH MY RESEARCH MENTOR FROM YEARS AGO, AND WE ARE IN MANY ACTIVE COLLABORATIONS AND RESEARCH NETWORKS."

DR SHIREEN NAH
Published article highlighted by American Paediatric Surgical Association as a 'landmark' paper



"TEAMWORK MOTIVATES ME. I GET MY BUZZ FROM THE CAMARADERIE OF WORKING TOGETHER WITH MY GROUP – EACH OF THEM ARE PASSIONATE AND HIGHLY SKILLED INDIVIDUALS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT, BUT THEY SEE THE SYNERGY AND MULTIPLICATIVE EFFECT OF COLLABORATING AS A TEAM."

ASST PROF AMOS LOH
Winner of SingHealth Excellence Awards 2018 Distinguished Young Leader Award



"I HOPE TO REDEFINE BREAST SURGERY AND TRANSFORM PATIENTS' CARE WITH THIS TECHNIQUE"

DR LIM GEOK HOON
On the development of a new minimal scar technique for mastectomy



"WITH SURGERY, YOU CAN HELP ONLY ONE PATIENT AT A TIME; WITH RESEARCH YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO HELP MANY MORE. THAT IS WHY I TRY TO DO BOTH WELL."

ASSOC PROF LEE SER YEE
Winner of GCEO Excellence Awards 2018 Outstanding Clinician Researcher Award



Residents' Corner!



CHARITY CAR WASH FOR PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE 2018

President's Challenge 2018 is a movement supported by the kindness and generosity of people from all walks of life, regardless of culture, religion or family background, to help those less fortunate. On Saturday, 11 August 2018, Urology & General Surgery Residency organised a car wash to help raise funds for President's Challenge 2018.



BIGGEST TAKEAWAY FROM ENT RESIDENCY TRAINING

"Residency is a challenging time where one is stretched mentally, physically and emotionally. It was a time of growth and self-discovery as well. I am glad I was given the opportunity to train - that I may be equipped to provide better care for my patients."

Celeste

"Having spent 5 years in residency, I have come to appreciate what this saying really means - "If I have seen further, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants". I am thankful to the teachers who have selflessly shared their knowledge and surgical experiences with us. And to all our juniors still in Residency, it is a long and slow process but keep at it! It always seems impossible until it's done!"

Anna



(L-R) Dr Celeste Chua, Dr Neville Teo (PD), Dr Leonard Tan, Dr Anna See



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