

SMC News

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**Prof Lee Eng Hin - Educator,
Surgeon, Researcher and Volunteer**

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**Season's
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from SMC



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Welcome to this edition of the SMC newsletter, *SMC News*.

In this edition, we profile our Council member Prof Lee Eng Hin, an educator and practitioner, to find out more about him and his views on the medical profession.

We also feature the multi-rater assessment system under the supervisory framework for conditionally-registered doctors.

SMC News will share with you how you can display your titles and qualifications appropriately as a doctor.

It is important as a registered doctor to keep your details up to date and in this edition we will share with you how you can keep your particulars updated with SMC.

I hope you will enjoy reading this edition of SMC News.

Season's Greetings from all of us at SMC!

Professor Tan Ser Kiat

President, Singapore Medical Council

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Speeches – SMC Physician's Pledge Affirmation Ceremony, 20 September 2014

Welcome Address by SMC President, Professor Tan Ser Kiat, at the SMC Physician's Pledge Affirmation Ceremony



A very warm welcome to all of you to this afternoon's Physician's Pledge Affirmation Ceremony. May I, on behalf of Council, congratulate you on soon reaching the important milestone of obtaining your full registration status as doctors. You have worked diligently to arrive at this point of your career and hope you will continue to work hard as a member of this noble profession that makes a difference in the lives of your patients. Your family and friends who are here to witness this ceremony should be proud of your achievements.

The Medical Profession, as elsewhere in the world, is facing a rapidly changing operating environment. The breakneck pace of advances in new technology, knowledge, escalating costs and a rapidly ageing population will bring about new challenges for all of you.

You are now dealing with a well informed and Net savvy public with increasing expectations in treatment outcomes and services. This will place great demands on your expertise and communication skills.

The explosion of new biomedical technology and breakthroughs in scientific research are indeed tremendous. The quantum leaps in new knowledge generated through biomedical research have made keeping up with the latest discovery a monumental task. PubMed, which is managed by the US National Library of Medicine and the National Institute of Health (NIH), is the database for the most prestigious and creditable

biomedical journals accessed by doctors and scientists all over the world. As of 28 July 2014, it holds 24 million papers, records, reports and publications by distinguished authors and luminaries.

However, it is still incumbent on you to keep up with the latest treatment protocols and developments in your fields and specialties. When advocating the use of technology in patient care, you will have to differentiate the good from the gimmicky. You need to do this through regular and constant upgrading of your skills and knowledge through Continuing Medical Education.

A rapidly ageing population and porous national borders through constant travels bring about a new set of health challenges never before seen. New disease trends and spreading infectious diseases require that you be constantly alert to what is happening in the rest of the world. For instance Ebola, MERS and other new emerging diseases will threaten to establish themselves on our healthcare scene.

However, this rapidly changing landscape should not change or compromise the principles and values of the Pledge that you take today. It will always be absolutely relevant and important that you should always stay true to the ethos and ethics of our profession to serve patients and society with integrity, compassion and empathy. This is the reason why you choose to enter the Profession.

SMC is cognizant of these rapid changes and is reviewing our current Ethical Code & Ethical Guidelines (ECEG) and other regulatory processes to ensure that we remain relevant and in touch with the rapidly changing practice environment. We are currently seeking feedback and inputs from the profession on our draft report before finalising it.

The medical profession has been described as a calling of the highest order, one that commands a special societal position of great privilege while carrying a great responsibility. We must always practise competent, compassionate and ethical medicine in order to maintain the trust and respect placed on us by patients and society.

My heartiest congratulations once again on your achievements thus far. You must remember always the Pledge you take today. This will act as a moral compass for the rest of your professional life which I hope will be a most satisfying and fruitful one, as embodied in the last sentence of the translated original Hippocratic Oath, which I quote:

"If I keep this Oath faithfully, may I enjoy my life and practice my art, respected by all humanity and in all time; but if I swerve from it or violate it, may the reverse be my life"

Thank you very much.

Speech by Guest of Honour A/Prof Yeoh Khay Guan, Dean, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NUS at the SMC Physician's Pledge Affirmation Ceremony



Introduction

I am very pleased to be here today with you to mark this important milestone in your career as doctors. Today we have 296 local graduates with us as well as 45 international graduates. Let me congratulate all of you on soon entering our ranks as full-fledged members of the medical profession.

You are now at the threshold of obtaining full registration. With this comes many responsibilities of professional and ethical conduct.

And today you will be reciting the Physician's Pledge. The tenets and values of this oath define us as medical professionals and serve as a compass to guide us in our service to our patients and to society.

Professionalism, Trust and Responsibility to Our Patients

We are privileged to belong to a highly respected profession, held in high esteem and entrusted by patients to care for them and to relieve suffering. At the heart of the doctor-patient relationship is this trust. This relationship of trust is built up and enhanced by good communications, empathy, patience and humility on the part of the doctor.

Professionalism is putting patients first. We are in this profession to serve our patients and not ourselves. What

we do and advocate must always be for the benefit of patients. We must not be neglectful of our duties and we must be mindful of conflict of interest situations.

In this work, you are never alone. No matter how busy you are or how difficult a situation is, remember that you are part of a team. And anytime you feel that you need help or advise, you should not hesitate to call upon your colleagues and members of the healthcare team. We are all there to help each other.

The profession of Medicine also involves mastering a body of knowledge, and of course medical knowledge continues to grow and evolve. Each of you will continue to build your skills and knowledge, be it in residency training, training as a specialist or as a family physician, we need to continue to grow our skills and to keep up to date.

All of us as doctors also share a collective responsibility to shape and contribute back to our Profession. There are many avenues for us to do so, by mentoring and teaching medical students, junior doctors and in doing our part in various professional organisations.

Singapore Medical Council

As you embark on this next phase of your career, you now come under the fold of the Singapore Medical Council (SMC).

The SMC's Ethical Code as well as the Ethical Guidelines advises us on acceptable professional practice and behaviour for doctors. This forms the basis that a doctor's professional conduct is judged against.

Changing Times

As we are all very much aware as alluded to by President, society is constantly changing and new technology and media have transformed our lives as well as the way people interact with each other as well as with their doctors. The expectations of patients and the public have also increased. Patients are better educated and informed, and many seek an informed discussion on their medical condition and options of care. As doctors we need to be mindful of these increased expectations and to work together with our patients in a relationship of mutual trust to achieve good outcomes for them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise again the significance of the Pledge that you will shortly be reciting, and to urge you to reflect on the words and the values behind them and to think of them as a compass to guide you in service to your patients and to society.

I end with a short quote from Albert Einstein. Himself not a medical doctor but a doctor of a different type but one of the most highly respected people of the twentieth century: "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile."

If you practise Medicine with empathy and compassion, you will be loved by your patients, and your work will bring respect to our profession and fulfilment to yourself. Congratulations once again and I wish you a fulfilling career and a happy life. Thank you.

SMC Physician's Pledge Affirmation Ceremony 2014

SMC held the second Physician's Pledge Affirmation Ceremony for the year at the National University of Singapore Yong Siew Toh Conservatory on 20 September 2014. The pledge ceremony marks an important milestone in the careers of doctors at the threshold of obtaining full registration status. The pledge is a solemn oath which reminds doctors of their duties and responsibilities to patients and society. The Dean of the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at NUS, A/Prof Yeoh Khay Guan, was our Guest-of-Honour and delivered the keynote address at the event. More than 300 doctors took the Physician's Pledge witnessed by family and friends.



Pledge leader, Dr Tan Hwee Leong, leading the pledge with SMC Council members.

In Conversation With Professor Lee Eng Hin



SMC News interviewed our Council member, Prof Lee Eng Hin, Professor, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore and Emeritus Consultant, Division of Paediatric Orthopaedics, National University Hospital to find out more about him and his various roles as educator, surgeon, researcher and volunteer.

Q: How would you sum up your journey in medicine so far?

I consider myself very lucky to have been given so many opportunities in my lifetime to improve myself, broaden my horizons and contribute to the medical and research community in so many ways. In my many roles, as a teacher, paediatric orthopaedic surgeon, researcher and administrator, I find that one of the most personally fulfilling aspects of my journey has been making a difference to the lives of children with orthopaedic deformities and disabilities and seeing the smiles on their faces and that of their parents. Having been in practice for over 30 years, I relish the occasions when my previous patients who are now working adults drop in to say hello to me and ask to take a photo for their Facebook. Another very important part of the journey is the very enjoyable challenge of nurturing the next generation of doctors and the opportunities to celebrate their successes with them.

Q: How has the medical profession changed compared to 10-20 years ago and what are the key challenges doctors face today?
Life was much less complicated in the “old days”. Now

doctors face many challenges much of which is related to the explosion of medical information, a more well-informed public with increasing expectations, advances in medical treatment and technology, the growing influence of the pharmaceutical industry and the need for doctors to adhere to the principles of professionalism and ethics. At the heart of it all is how to manage patients competently and safely to maximise their benefits and outcomes. For those of us in academic medicine, there is a real need to nurture and serve as role models for the next generation of doctors so that we continue to uphold the leadership position of our medical schools and teaching hospitals and develop and maintain our reputation as a medical hub.

Q: If you were to give one single piece of advice to young doctors, what would that be?

Doctors today have many paths that they can take. My advice is not to specialise too early. Have a solid grounding in the principles of medicine or surgery before venturing into the realms of specialties and sub-specialties. It is important to treat patients holistically and see them as a whole person with thoughts and emotions and not as a sum of various organs and organ systems. Don't be in a hurry. “Take time to smell the roses”.

Q: We understand that you have a history in volunteering, could you tell us about it and the importance to you?

This has been a very fulfilling part of my life. As part of my specialty training in Toronto I learnt a great deal about the care and management of children with disabilities at the “Ontario Crippled Children's Centre” (now renamed the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital). When I joined the orthopaedic department at NUS in 1983, I was able to apply my knowledge in this area in a number of ways. One of the first things I did was to establish the “Seating Program” for severely disabled children with the then Spastic Children's Association of Singapore with financial support from the World Orthopaedic Concern. I was invited by the National Council of Social Service to look into starting a school for children with multiple disabilities and this led to the establishment of Margaret Drive Special School in 1987 which not only catered for children with multiple disabilities, but also provided an early intervention programme and was the first to start a programme for autistic children. This led to the formation of Rainbow Centre which now has two such schools in Margaret Drive and Yishun. I was also asked by NCSS to chair a task force that led to the formation of the TEACH ME programme in the Asian Women's Welfare Association which enabled children with physical disabilities to be integrated into mainstream schools. I am still volunteering today as I find it very satisfying as it gives me an opportunity to “pay back” and “pay it forward” to society.



Examining a child in the free clinic in Rainbow Centre Margaret Drive School.

Q: What are your favourite books – fiction and non-fiction?

For fiction, I like authors that can tell stories with suspense and intrigue. Over the years I have read authors such as Ludlum, Follet, Grisham, Van Lustbader and more recently Dan Brown. For non-fiction, one of the books that has stood out is Malcolm Gladwell's "Outliers". I often quote the chapter on the 10,000 hours of practice that is required

to become an expert and I extrapolate this to surgical training. I like to read books that provide an analysis of the various political systems and how each system works. Currently, I am reading a book "How China's Leaders Think" by Robert Lawrence Kuhn, a long-time advisor to the Chinese government. This book gives historical and current insights into the thought processes of China's leaders and how that will shape the future of China.

Q: Could you tell us something that most people may not know about you?

This is a hard one to answer. I suppose many people may not know that when I was in secondary school, I used to have a guitar band like the "Shadows" and I played bass guitar. We had a great time playing at functions but things had to come to an end when all of us had to study for our "O" and "A" level exams and subsequently we parted ways when we went for further studies.

Q: What is a quality that you admire most in others?

Honesty and integrity. These are important and at times very difficult qualities to achieve and maintain in the face of external pressures in today's very competitive world.

Professional Matters

SMC's Supervisory Framework - Multi-Rater Assessment Reports

SMC has a duty to ensure that patient safety is always safeguarded, and this is achieved through its implementation of a Supervisory Framework, which monitors foreign-trained doctors who are on Conditional and Temporary registration. The objective of SMC's Supervisory Framework is to ensure there is direct and timely supervision for foreign trained doctors while they are at work, so that patient safety is not compromised.

A medical practitioner who is conditionally or temporarily registered will be monitored under SMC's Supervisory Framework throughout the period of his or her medical registration. In order to ensure that there is optimum supervision, the supervisor must first meet the criteria and adhere to the supervisory ratio stipulated by SMC. The supervisor's assessment reports are required at periodic intervals, and multi-rater assessment reports from the supervisee's colleagues e.g. doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, may also be requested to get a more holistic and fair assessment of the doctor's performance.

Multi-rater Assessment Reports - 5 Things To Know

1. The purpose of the multi-rater assessment reports is

to provide a holistic view of the conditional registrant's performance whilst practising under supervision.

2. New conditionally registered doctors under Level 1 supervision will require multi-rater assessments from fellow medical practitioners and other healthcare professionals (e.g. nurses) after six months in their first year of registration.
3. Depending on circumstances, SMC may require conditionally registered doctors to have repeat multi-rater assessments as well as initiate multi-rater assessments for temporarily registered doctors.
4. The multi-rater assessment is a confidential, 10-question assessment form which can be completed online by accessing the link provided in an email sent by SMC.
5. As the multi-rater assessment exercise is done on a voluntary basis, we strongly encourage the colleagues of the assessed doctor (fellow doctors, nurses or healthcare professionals) to complete the multi-rater assessment when requested in order to give a more holistic and fair appraisal of the assessed doctor's performance.

Display of Titles and Qualifications by Doctors

Doctors should display their titles and qualifications appropriately, otherwise it could have the potential to mislead patients and members of the public. SMC would like to request doctors to comply with the standards set in the Medical Registration Act (MRA) (sections 64 and 65) when they display their qualifications, titles and designations for publicity purposes. You can also find more guidance on this subject in the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines (sections 4.4.2 and 4.4.5.1) and Aesthetic Guidelines (paragraph 4), which are available for download on our website.

3 Things You Should Know About Display of Titles and Qualifications

Doctors should ensure that any qualification, title, or designation displayed on any card, letter, stationery, nameplate, signboard or any notice displayed at the premises that you use conforms to the following:

1. Qualifications - Medical Practitioners will only be allowed to display qualifications that are listed on SMC's List of Registrable Postgraduate Qualifications or List of Displayable Qualifications.

2. Titles - Medical Practitioners' titles should generally reflect the register in which they are listed (e.g. as a Specialist in an approved specialty, Family Physician or General Practitioner).

3. Titles - The addition of a title: Practitioner, Consultant, Expert, Physician, Therapist, or other descriptives (either as a prefix or a suffix) cannot be used in conjunction with a scope of practice or area of clinical interest. For example, the description "Expert in LASIK Surgery" or "Senior Consultant Anaesthesiologist" will not be allowed.

You can find more information on the guidelines for the display of titles and designations in SMC's circulars dated 27 April 2010 and 21 April 2008, available on SMC's website.

Dear Doctor, have you updated SMC on your change in personal particulars and contact address?

It is equally important and in your interest to keep your personal particulars and contact details up to date with SMC. SMC can reach you sooner on important updates, such as the renewal of your practising certificate, SMC elections or even changes to existing policies and guidelines if your contact details are current.

Simply login to our SMC website (www.smc.gov.sg) using your MCR (Medical Registration) number and password to view your particulars; and if any update is required, please do so by filling an application through the system to have your changes (such as contact details or practice address) updated by SMC.

Thank you for partnering SMC in ensuring your records are current and up-to-date!

Feedback

If you have any feedback or comments on any articles in this newsletter, please contact us at smc_newsletter@smc.gov.sg

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