

(continued from Page 15: Tips on Cultural Competency in a Medical Consultation)

1. What do you think caused your problem?
2. Why do you think it started when it did?
3. What do you think your sickness does to you?
4. How severe is your sickness? Do you think it will last a long time, or will it be better soon in your opinion?
5. What are the chief problems your sickness has caused for you?
6. What do you fear most about your sickness?
7. What kind of treatment do you think you should receive?
8. What are the most important results you hope to get from treatment?

Table 2. The Patient Explanatory Model (Kleinman, 1978)



Lois graduated in 2012 from NUS. In Sept 2020 she will head to Timor-Leste with her husband Dr Natarajan Rajaraman for a season of work in primary care health system strengthening

Writing on patient centeredness, cultural competence and healthcare quality, Saha et al. stated that ultimately cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility are not novel ideas, but extensions of the basic concept of patient-centred care. In these divisive times, may the consult room remain a place where racial diversity is welcomed, multiculturalism is embraced, and empathy is extended to all.

COVID-19 Related Language Resources

NUHS COVID19 FAQ [Chinese, Bengali, Burmese, Hindi, Sinhalese, Tamil, Thai] <https://www.nuhs.edu.sg/About-NUHS/Newsroom/news-stories/Pages/COVID-19-Resource-for-Migrant-Workers.aspx>

Healthserve's COVID19 information page [Bengali, Chinese, Tamil] <https://covid19.healthserve.org.sg/>

Language Aid [Bengali, Burmese, Chinese, Tagalog, Hindi, Malay, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Vietnamese] <https://translatefor.sg/>

CM

Interview with A/Prof Tan Boon Yeow – *St Luke's Hospital during COVID-19 Pandemic*

Interviewed by Dr Lim Khong Jin Michael, Family Physician, Editor (Team B)

College Mirror (CM): Can you share a little about St Luke's Hospital (SLH)?

A/P Tan Boon Yeow (BY): St Luke's Hospital (SLH) was conceived by a group of healthcare workers and Christians who were inspired to build the first hospital in Singapore dedicated to the elderly sick. Meeting the needs of our patients has been the *raison d'être* of the hospital.

CM: How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect SLH's patients and their relatives, and how did the hospital respond to their needs during this challenging period?

BY: During COVID-19, the hospital continued to meet patients' needs, ensuring safety of patients and staff, and

continuing to care for the whole person through clinical, social and pastoral care. The pace and magnitude of the work intensified as we sought to care for patients, staff and the community, to be responsible and sustainable.

During circuit breaker, hospital visits were restricted. Patients missed the presence of their loved ones. To provide emotional support for patients and lift their spirits, the hospital started "Good Morning, St Luke's" (bit.ly/gdmorningslh). This "radio programme" broadcast on the hospital's public announcement system encouraged patients and staff through inspirational messages by hospital staff and guests.



With help from hospital staff, Teo Chiew Tien stays in contact with her children through her very first video call, reassuring them that "mum is well"

Volunteers also helped cheer up patients through "virtual volunteering". Volunteers, while staying safe at home, greeted, performed and sang to patients through the internet and mobile TVs in wards.

To help patients keep in touch with their families, the hospital sought mobile devices from staff and the public. With these devices, even patients with no phones and no visitors could see their loved ones. For example, we helped an elderly patient make her very first video call, where she reassured her children that "mum is well".

To keep patients safe, St Luke's Community Clinic (located at St Luke's Hospital) arranged video consultations and medication delivery so that patients could receive care while staying home. The hospital's Day Rehabilitation Centre, which closed temporarily during circuit breaker, also continued to care for patients virtually through tele and video sessions.

St Luke's Hospital also works with partners. The hospital trains healthcare workers in other institutions through St Luke's Academy (SLA). Courses include dementia and wound care, with both theory and experiential components. We converted course content (except practicums) to be delivered online.

CM: Can you share how staff of SLH are coping with COVID-19 and SLH's measures to support and encourage them?

BY: SLH has faced challenges over the years, such as building from scratch the first hospital dedicated to the elderly sick, dealing with toxic haze and SARS, while caring for patients with increasingly complex comorbidities amidst changes in the healthcare landscape. The intrinsic passion to make a difference in the lives of our patients has helped us over the years.



Philip Lim from Volunteer Guitar Connection performs "virtually", bringing cheer to the ward. At the bedside is speech therapist Ian Shen.

We encourage staff to be more reflective during these trying times, to make sense of and adapt to the multiple changes. This is done through the initiatives mentioned above, as well as virtual townhall updates where I share my personal reflections.

The hospital started "Project Warm Hearts", a ground-up initiative by hospital staff to encourage one another with gifts of appreciation and cheer each other on to persevere with their good work. The hospital's partners and the public have also joined the project.

Just as we care for our patients holistically, we aim to care for our staff in the same way. Recognising the importance of physical health, the hospital's Health and Wellness Club organises exercise programmes online. We gave staff resistance bands, skipping ropes and in-house video on related exercises. The club also initiated "Me 2.0 Challenge" to help staff develop new or improved lifestyle habits, with health tips from hospital staff.

For emotional and mental health, we started a "Dear Diary" initiative where staff could express their concerns online. Staff may choose to remain anonymous or seek counselling from internal and external resources.

We are working with NUHS Family Medicine doctors on an enhanced health and mental well-being screening with targeted interventions for our staff.

CM: What is your advice to others coping with COVID-19 pandemic?

(continued on the next page)

(continued from Page 17: Interview with A/Prof Tan Boon Yeow - St Luke's Hospital during COVID-19 Pandemic)

Voices of Light
6 November 2020 (Friday), 8.30pm to 9.15pm

Virtual charity concert featuring

Lauren Yeo Yap Shu Mei Crystal Goh

Music Director: Eric James Watson

St Luke's HOSPITAL

St Luke's Hospital is organising its inaugural virtual charity concert to raise funds for patients.

BY: The pandemic has shown how volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) the world is. We cope by having a growth mindset that adapts to rapid changes arising from the pandemic. We seek opportunities amidst difficulties. Most of all, we work together: “we are here for each other, and God is with us”.

CM: Is SLH coping well financially during COVID-19, and how is the hospital trying to raise enough funds for the hospital's operations?

BY: As a charity, most of our patients are lower income. Grants and donations are important to us and the patients we serve. While several fundraising events were cancelled, the needs of our patients still need to be met. Just as

technology helped meet the needs of patients clinically, the hospital is using technology to organise its inaugural virtual charity concert, its biggest fundraiser of the year.

The concert, *Voices of Light* (<https://bit.ly/slhconcert2020>), is about the patient journey from darkness—caused by illness—to light, as they receive loving care and go home to their families. For the concert, we are honoured with a message by Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies, and cultural medallion winner Eric Watson as Music Director. Do join us for the concert.

Best birthday ever
Thank you for the well wishes

During a virtual townhall update, colleagues from various groups surprised A/Prof Tan Boon Yeow with birthday greetings, complete with songs and speeches. Photo taken in February 2020.