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PSS E-BULLETIN

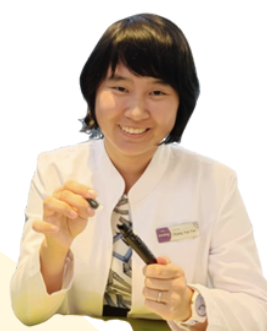
To maximise the contribution of Pharmacists to the healthcare of Singaporeans



Pre-Registration Pharmacists' Training Closing Ceremony



*In The
Spotlight*



*Shining
Star*

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PSS Annual Awards



*Wishing everyone a
Happy New Year!*

PSS HIGHLIGHTS

PSS PRE-REGISTRATION PHARMACISTS' TRAINING CLOSING CEREMONY 2023

By Mr Chaing Kwok Fai, Chairperson, PSS Pre-Registration Pharmacists' Training Committee 2023

The PSS Pre-Registration Pharmacists' Training Closing Ceremony 2023 was successfully held on 9th December. The event was to mark the end of the series of lectures that the Pre-Registration Pharmacists' Training Committee had put together to prepare and equip the pre-registration pharmacists for the period leading up to their competency exam. The event was graced by A/Prof Lita Chew, respective institutions' representatives, PSS Chapter representatives and guest speakers.

Dr Vivianne Shih, President of PSS, gave the opening speech, in which she reiterated the importance of continual learning.



Dr Vivianne Shih, President, 117th Council, PSS, giving the opening speech

This was followed by the Pre-reg Montage 2023 showcasing the lighter moments of the pre-registration of pharmacists in the various training institutes.

A/Prof Lita Chew, President of the Singapore Pharmacy Council, gave the opening address of the Closing Ceremony on 'Leadership in Pharmacy'. A/Prof Chew shared her philosophy of the path of growth and the direction newly registered pharmacists are going to embark on and gave her advice on the ways to overcome initial challenges they would face as they grow in their profession.



Group photo of the attendees at the PSS Pre-Registration Pharmacists' Training Closing Ceremony 2023

This year's closing ceremony also included a segment of sharing of PSS activities and another segment of sharing by Young Pharmacist Seniors, whereby second-year pharmacist Mr Myat Thu Kyaw shared his learning and growing journey as a young hospital pharmacist and industry sector pharmacist Ms Erinn Lee Si Min similarly shared her experiences. A common thread that runs through these sharing by young pharmacists in different sectors is passion and interest in one's work will always help one to find ways to overcome initial difficulties encountered.

The ceremony was then concluded with the presentation of tokens of appreciation to chief preceptors and a photo taking session.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DINNER

By Ms Evelyn Pang, PSS Ex-Officio of Media and Communications Committee,
Professional Education and Industry Chapters



It was such a joy to connect with the healthcare professionals community, many whom we went to school and work collaboratively to advance patient care together. Health Minister Ong, in his address, reminded us of the importance of preventive care and how each of us play a role as the nation steps up for our super-ageing population.

Alumni Association is uniquely the oldest Alumni Association with medical, dental, pharmacy and nursing graduates from our seminal medical school and has now evolved into the faculties of medicine in both Singapore and Malaysia. Its mission is to foster a lifelong relationship between all healthcare professionals, promoting our members' interest and contributing back to our healthcare scene in Singapore. Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore Council and our members appreciate the strong partnership with Alumni Association fostered over the years, and is privileged to share this centennial milestone of celebration and collaboration.



We-fie with Guest-of-Honour Health Minister Ong Ye Kung

As we say, "Community is the foundation of success", let's cheers to the 100 years where the community joined hands to transform healthcare. We are excited and looking forward to the coming years of deeper collaborations and partnerships!

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION GOLD MEDAL AWARD



PSS proudly congratulates Mr Ng Cheng Tiang on receiving the esteemed Alumni Association Gold Medal Award for his exceptional service to the Alumni Association.

A distinguished leader and visionary, Mr Ng's significant contributions to the Alumni Association, highlighted by his roles as Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, Chairman-Elect, and ultimately Chairman in 2020, reflect his unwavering commitment. He played a pivotal role in steering the Association through financial challenges, demonstrating resilience and strategic acumen. His leadership during the collaboration with CATALYS/Aardvark Lab, resulting in the CATALYST Alumni Association Innovation Programme (CAAIP), also showcased his dedication to advancing medtech incubation initiatives.

Beyond financial stewardship, Mr Ng has made commendable efforts to expand the Alumni Association family, recruit new members, and foster networking within the healthcare community. As a former president of PSS (2006-2008), Mr Ng's leadership was marked by establishing international networks and organising prestigious pharmaceutical conferences. His achievements, including the Professor Lucy Wan's Outstanding Pharmacist Award and Fellowship of PSS, underscore his profound impact on both the pharmaceutical and alumni spheres. PSS would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Mr Ng Cheng Tiang, celebrating his remarkable achievements and exemplary service to the Alumni Association.

PSS ANNUAL AWARDS 2023

Heartiest congratulations to all winners!

Ms Law Hwa Lin

Professor Lucy Wan Outstanding Pharmacist of the Year

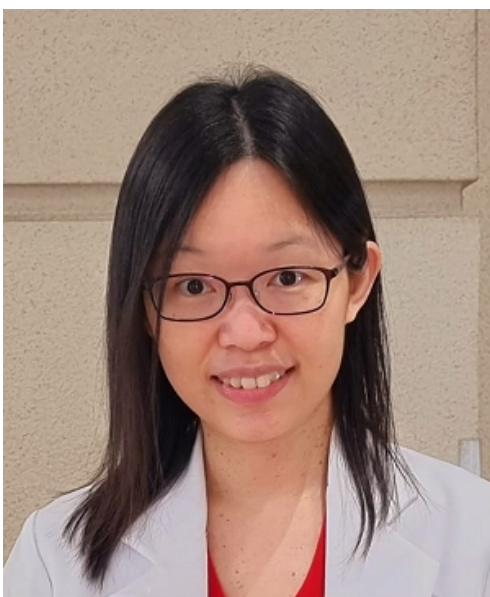


I am honoured to be awarded the Professor Lucy Wan Outstanding Pharmacist of the Year. My sincere appreciation goes to PSS for this recognition. I am grateful to my colleagues and mentors whose unwavering support has been instrumental in my journey. This award is not just a personal achievement but a collective acknowledgment of the dedication to advancing pharmaceutical care.

As we confront evolving healthcare challenges, particularly in enhancing pandemic-readiness, I am committed to upholding the highest standards of excellence and contributing to the progress of patient care. This recognition fuels my determination to foster innovation and continued improvement within the pharmaceutical community. Thank you for this honour, and I am privileged to stand among the outstanding professionals making a positive impact on healthcare.

Ms Lim Wan Peng

PSS-Johnson & Johnson Hospital Pharmacist of the Year



I am deeply humbled to be given the J&J Hospital Pharmacist Award 2023 and would like to convey my gratitude to PSS for the recognition as well as to the Division of Pharmacy of TTSH for the generous support. While hospital pharmacy has been presented with resource constraints and the need for models of care to constantly evolve with changing demands over the past few years, many in the fraternity remain passionate about the core mission of quality pharmaceutical care and about developing their knowledge and skills in different dimensions. I will remain committed to supporting pharmacists' advancing roles in acute, ambulatory and community care and to facilitating their educational and developmental journeys in order to perform these roles well.

Mr Tan Wei Xun

PSS-DCH Auriga Community Pharmacist of the Year



It is an honour to receive the PSS-DCH Auriga Community Pharmacist of the Year award. I am grateful to Guardian for the nomination and PSS for the award. It has been a pleasure to serve in the community pharmacy over the past few years in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic while also witnessing improvements in the pharmacy services that community pharmacists can provide to our patients. Being a member of PSS, I'm also thankful for the opportunities and experience in organizing community and pharmacy events over the years.

As the healthcare needs of Singaporeans continue to evolve, I believe community pharmacists and myself will continue to embrace innovation and improvement of work processes to serve the community better. This will allow us to provide strong support to the Healthier SG initiative and ensure that healthcare remains accessible in the community, so that patients can continue to trust the services that we provide.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MS CHONG YI SAN

by PSS Hospital Chapter

In the December issue of In the Spotlight, Hospital Chapter is honoured to feature Ms Chong Yi San, Principal Pharmacist at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH).

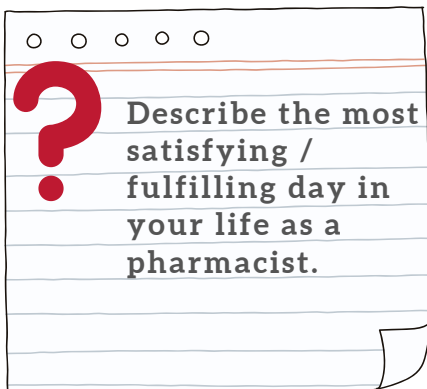
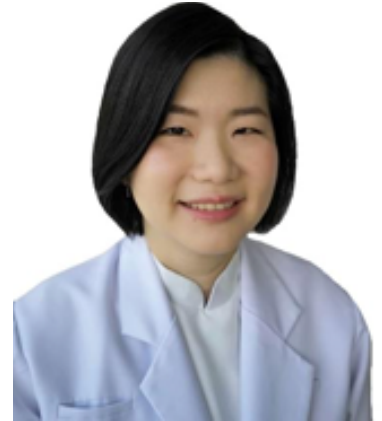
Yi San graduated with a Bachelor of Science, Pharmacy (Hons.) from the National University of Singapore and is a registered pharmacist with the Singapore Pharmacy Council. She is currently Head of Pharmacy Practice at the Division of Pharmacy of TTSH, a 2000-bed multi-disciplinary tertiary hospital in Singapore and part of National Healthcare Group (NHG) cluster. As the Head of Pharmacy Practice, she oversees the smooth running and provision of pharmaceutical care services and healthcare products for patients in the inpatient, outpatient and retail settings.

Yi San has been involved in several improvement projects at department and organisation level to achieve operational excellence and patient-centric care. One of the key projects that she has led is the Outpatient Pharmacy Transformation Project. This project revamped the patient's experience at the outpatient pharmacy by bringing part of the pharmacy process upstream to the clinic, and utilising automated pharmacy systems and robotics to achieve breakthrough speeds in filling prescriptions. The project has been accorded several awards since its inception, including the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HiMSS) Elsevier Award in 2015 and the Asian Management Hospital Award in 2016.

Besides her current role, Yi San has previously served two years as Assistant Manager at the Chief Pharmacist's Office, Manpower Standards & Development Division, Ministry of Health, Singapore. She assisted the Chief Pharmacist in healthcare policy matters, as well as projects such as review of the pre-registration pharmacist training framework and pharmacist career path during her tenure with the ministry.

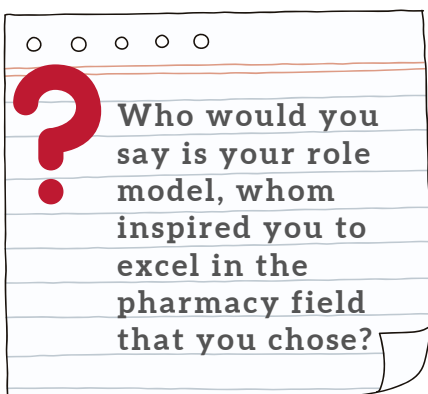
Aside from pharmacy work, Yi San has special interest in the area of organisation development and is a trained facilitator for collective leadership.

We are glad to have Yi San to share what drives her passion in pharmacy in our interview with her!



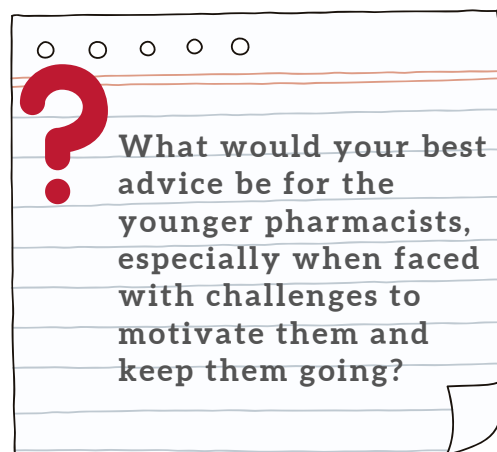
There was a case from the early stages of my career that remained etched in my memory to this day. I was part of the team running the anticoagulation services at the neurology clinic. As a young pharmacist, I encountered a gentleman in his late 50s who had recently suffered from stroke. He had been referred to the anticoagulation clinic after being initiated on warfarin. On his first visit with us, he walked into the clinic with much effort as he developed paralysis on one side of his body post-stroke. In addition, he had speech impairment making communication a significant challenge during the clinic session. I could remember the tears in his eyes as he struggled to respond to my questions. I spent some time talking to him to help him understand his treatment plan. In addition, he also shared his perspectives with me, conveying how deeply the recent stroke had impacted his life.

We built a rapport after that session and as he was very determined to recover, he worked closely with us on the treatment plans, and we were able to titrate him to the optimal dosing quickly. Several months later, during his last session with us before being discharged from the anticoagulation clinic, I could see remarkable improvement in his condition. As compared to the first day that he came into the clinic, he did not require any walking aids anymore, although he still walked with a gait. He was also able to communicate coherently and clearly. I congratulated him on his recovery, and he also expressed his appreciation for the role we played as a pharmacist in his recovery journey. I could see the joy on his face as he left the clinic for the last time. While there are many factors contributing to the recovery of a patient, what gives me joy is to know that I have played a part in making a difference for this one patient. While much of our pharmacy work currently is focused on transactional episodes with patients, which may come across as being very cold and emotionless, I feel that it is also important to be able to establish that long-term relationship with our patients/clients. This will help gain the trust and understanding required when we work together on the treatment plans. In addition, when we can move from a transactional to a relational model, we are also able to gain the job satisfaction that keeps us going as a profession. This is why I am excited about the upcoming plans to build long-term relationships with our residents under the Healthier SG initiative and what it can potentially change for our profession.



There is a saying "I can see further by standing on the shoulders of giants" and I think I have come a long way with the help and support of many teachers and mentors that I had the honour and fortune to meet in my life. There have been many role models who have inspired me along the way and molded me into the person I am, and I have learnt many different things from them. My first role model was my preceptor, Ms Christine Teng, she showed me the importance of standing shoulder to shoulder with other professionals. In a healthcare team, nobody should be subservient to another, and it is important that everyone's opinions and views are heard. From her, I've learnt the importance of speaking up.

My next role model came in the form of my former head of department, Ms Annie Chia. When I was given the opportunity to take over a managerial position on short notice, it was a period of a very steep learning curve and high stress for me. Annie gave me the strongest support then and was very generous in coaching and mentoring me for areas that I floundered in due to inexperience. From her, I've learnt the importance of supporting my team members, especially in times of need. Last but not least, my third role model is my current divisional head, Ms Lim Hong Yee. Whenever we meet with challenging situations at work, Hong Yee would always provide sound advice and spur us on with her never-say-die attitude. From her, I've learnt that there's no problem too big to be solved. I've also learnt the importance of perseverance and resilience and finding new angles to a problem.



"Find your why" would be my advice to the younger pharmacists who have just entered the profession. While it sounds clichéd, I strongly believe that it is important to know what gives you meaning in life and fuels your passion as that is the fire that will keep you going, even when things get tough. For some, it is very clear to them what they are passionate about right from the start and that's good. For others, this may not be clear from the start, and I would advise them to be open to try different roles that may come their way in order to find out what is meaningful to them. Do not be afraid if it takes time to find your why, be more afraid if you cannot find it.

SHINING STAR: MS CHUANG XUE FEN

by PSS Community Chapter

Shining Star is a PSS initiative that features individuals who embody the exceptional qualities of a community pharmacist. In this issue, we shine the spotlight on Ms Chuang Xue Fen from Unity Pharmacy.

"Hello! I am Xue Fen. I have been a pharmacist with Unity for 7 years. I enjoy being a community pharmacist as I can play an active role in keeping my community healthy and well. Seeing them take charge of their own health and reap the benefits from it brings much satisfaction and pride."



Throughout my journey as a pharmacist, I am heavily involved in public education and professional education as I believe in knowledge empowerment. I was a member of the PSS Public Education Chapter for 4 years where I conceptualised and designed public education collaterals for various social media platforms and vetted medication information leaflets to be uploaded onto HealthHub.

I was also the Public Education Team Lead for PSS Pharmacy Week 2021 where I set the direction on content creation and delivery for the health talks and infographics. I am currently the Deputy Chief Preceptor for Unity where I ensure the smooth running of the pre-registration training and mentor and nurture pre-registration pharmacists for future practice.

What is the most memorable moment in your pharmacy career?

A domestic helper in her 30s thought she was having a heart attack when she started experiencing increasing pain in her chest. She was panicky and in tears but thankfully, was still able to converse. After some probing, I suspected she was having heartburn instead. I told her she was unlikely to be having a heart attack and quickly gave her an antacid to take. To calm her down, I demonstrated a breathing exercise and performed it with her. A doctor who is my regular customer also came and checked in on her and reassured her that she was not having a heart attack and that she was in good hands with me. When she felt much better, she thanked me and gave me a hug which caught me off-guard. She was grateful that she was still alive as she thought she was going to die young and was worried about her family back in her home country. I told her I was happy to help and gave her some advice to manage her heartburn. She left the store relieved and I felt a sense of satisfaction that I was able to discern various health conditions with my pharmacy knowledge and provide the care needed for it.

What important skills should a community pharmacist be equipped with?

I think a community pharmacist needs to be equipped with at least the following skills:

In the care of customers:

- Empathetic and non-judging to build trust and respect
- Active listening to sieve out pertinent information to make good clinical judgements
- Good communication to provide advice that is easily understood
- Interpersonal skills

In running the business:

- IT skills to be able to use the systems at work
- Team player
- Analytical and problem-solving skills
- Results-driven

**What motivated you to stay in your practice?
How do you harmonise work and family?**

The interaction and engagement with my customers of various backgrounds makes work interesting and broadens my perspective as we exchange knowledge, not just on health but also on life. Having my customers trust me to always come back to me for various personal or family's health and wellness needs is definitely heartwarming and satisfying. I feel proud that I am able to contribute positively to the health of my community and reduce the burden on our public healthcare system. Of course, having the acknowledgement from customers who take the time to write in compliments and express their appreciation keeps me extra motivated to improve and continue serving wholeheartedly.

Having my family's support and understanding is invaluable as oftentimes I have to work shifts, weekends and public holidays. I am grateful that my family would always try to accommodate my work schedule so that I am able to join family gatherings. I am also thankful that this job does not require me to bring a lot of work home so I can spend quality time with my family after work hours.

What is one misconception about community pharmacists that you hope to correct?

One misconception is that community pharmacists only handle the medication aspect of customers' health. Actually, we play a much bigger role. We value-add beyond just the scope of medications and play a significant role in health promotion. We empower our customers with knowledge on healthy living, well-being and self-care so they can make informed choices. We are frequently engaged by external partners on various health promotion initiatives e.g. Temasek Foundation for the distribution of vitamin D and oximeters and the Singapore Cancer Society for the distribution of Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) kits for the screening of colorectal cancer. We also run patient counseling services like smoking cessation and diabetes care to better manage our customers' health and medications. We are thus providers of holistic care, keeping our communities healthy and well so they are able to live their best lives possible.



"Genuinely care for your customers the way you would for your family and friends so that you will always give your heart and your best to your customers. Witnessing your customer's betterment in health from your personal care may just be the drive you need to serve passionately and what keeps you contented, fulfilled and constantly motivated to improve."

PROFESSIONAL UPDATES

NAVIGATING THE FRONTLINES OF ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE: REFLECTIONS FROM GRIP FORUM 2023

By Ms Kee Ya Ling, Pharmacist from NCID

The "GRIP Forum 2023: Interventions for Lasting Change in Antimicrobial Resistance" proved to be a transformative experience, offering a deep dive into the challenges faced by healthcare professionals combating inappropriate antibiotic use on a global scale, with a particular focus on Southeast Asia. Taking place from 5th to 7th of October 2023, the forum brought together a diverse array of experts and practitioners, fostering insightful discussions and inspiring interventions for a sustainable approach to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The discussions delved into the complex interplay of factors contributing to the misuse of antibiotics, ranging from patient expectations to systemic flaws in healthcare delivery. Regional healthcare professionals shared their experiences, shedding light on the unique challenges faced in their communities. The importance of tailored interventions that consider cultural nuances, socioeconomic factors, and healthcare infrastructure disparities became evident. Collaborative efforts were emphasized, underlining the necessity of sharing successful strategies and lessons learned across borders.

Education and awareness campaigns, targeted at both healthcare professionals and the general public, were identified as crucial tools in combating inappropriate antibiotic use. The significance of political will and policy advocacy was highlighted, underscoring the need for governmental support to enact lasting change.

As I reflect on my experience at the GRIP Forum 2023, I am left with a renewed sense of purpose. The collective dedication of healthcare professionals, researchers, and policymakers towards addressing AMR instills hope that lasting change is not only possible but within our grasp. The forum served as a reminder that our actions today will determine the trajectory of healthcare for generations to come, and it is our responsibility to rise to the challenge of safeguarding the efficacy of antibiotics.



OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES



The Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore mourns the passing of Mrs Tan Shook Fong.

Having served as the former Chief Pharmacist and Director of Pharmaceutical Department, Mrs Tan's visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to our pharmacy profession and patient care has left an indelible mark on the healthcare landscape of Singapore.

PSS is deeply thankful for Mrs Tan's invaluable contributions, and her legacy of excellence in pharmacy will continue to inspire and guide future generations of the profession. Her profound impact on the field will be remembered with enduring respect and gratitude. She will be dearly missed.

PSS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2024

As we approach the end of 2023, we extend our sincere gratitude for your unwavering support in keeping the Pharmacy flag flying high through a myriad of fringe and national activities.

In order for PSS to know you better and to ensure that you are kept up to date with our activities, we would appreciate if you could update your particulars by clicking on this link: <https://forms.gle/gzvceUE1is62LiMw7> to fill up the "Update of Member's Particulars" form.

To ensure a seamless continuation of your membership benefits into the forthcoming year, we kindly request the submission of your renewal payment. Your timely response will enable us to plan and execute more enriching activities for the upcoming year.

For Renewal via Paynow:

Scan the QR code below with your Digi bank via PayNow, PayLah!, other bank application (that supports QR codes payment) or NETS merchants to pay your membership fees.

- Under UEN/reference, please include your 5-digit PSS membership number
- Please email the screenshot of the transaction receipt to admin1@pss.org.sg for our verification purpose

We sincerely thank you for your constant support rendered towards our society. Your membership makes it possible for the society to remain a strong voice for the profession. We look forward to another exciting year ahead and anticipate your continued participation in our activities!



Scan for Membership Renewal

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore



Secretariat Manager/ Assistant Manager

PSS is searching for a Secretariat Manager/ Assistant Manager to lead the Secretariat team that supports the PSS Council in delivering their goals and objectives to upgrade and upskill pharmacists so that they will continue to provide high quality pharmaceutical services in the country.

Click [here](#) for more information.

An initiative under the PSS Media & Communications Committee
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