



RUMC *Alumni*



RCSI & UCD
Malaysia Campus

alumni
e-Newsletter

Issue 9 | Nov-Dec 2021

International Medical Practice Bulletin

To teach or not to teach?

Alumni Stories

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Dr Mohd Basil bin Sulaiman

Connect with Cochrane

Alumni Contribution

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Publication Information

Publisher

prof. david whitford

Editorial & Content

raji sogamaur

kastturi sandragesan

Alumni Relations

vigneshwaran kalimuthu

shithra muniandy

Published by

RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus,
Penang Medical College Sdn Bhd,
4, Jalan Sepoy Lines,
10450 George Town,
Penang

A Message from the President



President & CEO
Professor David Whitford

As the university in Penang returns to near normal functioning, it is worth reflecting on the extra pressure that has been felt by healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies have shown high levels of depression, stress, anxiety, distress, anger, fear, insomnia, and post-traumatic stress disorder in healthcare workers. Medical students have been similarly affected with increased levels of psychological distress. But while healthcare workers have been identified as vulnerable to the negative psychological impact from the current pandemic, they do not form a homogeneous population. There are particularly vulnerable groups within the larger population of healthcare workers and psychological support needs to be targeted to them.

Females and nurses were disproportionately affected more from the mental health consequences of the pandemic. Younger people were also more vulnerable. On the other hand, resilience (high self-efficacy), good family and community support and being in a stable relationship were found to be protective. Other adaptive behaviours identified from the positive psychology movement were also seen to assist such as expressing gratitude and the ability to find purpose and growth from the situation.

So, what can we learn from this? I believe that established values of being supportive towards each other, increasing our sense of community, being grateful for the positives in our lives, expressing gratitude to others, and valuing and cherishing family are so important in helping us as doctors cope through such situations as the pandemic. Without a doubt, there is also the need for necessary structural changes in the healthcare system to create a healthy, safe and supportive work environment. But in the meantime, we can take control of areas of our lives and demonstrate love and support for our colleagues.

To teach or not to teach – that should not be a question.

As a professorial staff in a medical school, teaching, undoubtedly, is one of my obligations. It is also in line with parts of my teaching philosophy statements, viewing “teaching the next generations of practitioners as part of a doctor’s sacred duties – a remuneration to the profession and society for attaining the privilege to heal”. Unfortunately, many practicing physicians do not share the same thinking, they have no interest in spending time with medical students.

Learning through apprenticeship has always been the model of medical education (Dornan, 2005). I clearly remember many of my teachers in medical school with their enthusiastic and tireless attitudes toward training us. Some of them have become role models of how I treat my patients and teach my younger colleagues. I also remember vividly seeing hospital physicians displaying utmost disgust towards medical students, having zero mercy in helping those puzzled minds in the ward! Many of these poor future doctors see themselves as “space-occupying lesions” (SOL) in the system because they have been treated in such terrible ways!

Surely there are many reasons – or excuses – why practicing clinicians are not engaging in teaching, including the lack of remuneration and perceived insufficient teaching skills (Schormair et al., 1992). Interestingly, whether clinicians participate in formal academic teaching or not, they actually “teach” actively on a daily basis when providing care to their patients. Is teaching medical students that much different? Some doctors without a “teaching background” may fear their ways in transferring knowledge might not be “pedagogically proper”. Viewing “teaching” from another perspective, while medical knowledge transfer is undoubtedly important, fostering critical reasoning, demonstrating empathic and holistic patient care, and nurturing professionalism and ethics are equally, if not more, meaningful. Medical education is a life-long process. Information may become obsolete, but the aforementioned “intangible assets”, once learnt, can last the entire career, and even be passed on to the future generations.



cont. To teach or not to teach – that should not be a question.

Many clinicians, especially the more senior ones, enjoy teaching because of the associated intellectual and altruistic satisfactions (Dahlstrom et al., 2005; Darragh et al., 2015). Medical students, in contrary to their believes, are by no means SOL. They are often thrilled when being included in patient care and working with the clinical teams. Actively teaching medical students also allow practitioners to acquire updated knowledge, which ultimately can improve patient outcomes (Burke, 2020).

The word “doctor” originated from Latin “docere”, meaning to teach! There is a Chinese idiom, translated literally as “when you drink water, think about the source”! This should not need further elaboration. No matter the stage of medical career, there is always room to proudly share experiences with medical students. Not so long in the past, I was a student walking hospital corridors; with time slipping through my fingers, that was over two decades ago!

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By Prof Andrew Law
Vice Dean (International Student Services)
Head, Department of Psychiatry,
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*Prof. Andrew welcomes your thoughts, ideas, and contributions.
Feel free to email them to andrew.law@rcsiucd.edu.my*



About Dr Evelyn

I'm Evelyn Aun from the graduating class of 2013. I did my housemanship training at Hospital Sultanah Aminah, Johor Bahru followed by MO-ship at Hospital Sungai Buloh, Selangor. It was there that I attained my MRCP(UK) in 2017. Subsequently, I was posted to Pahang for my gazettement and currently based in Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan, Kuantan. My wedding took place recently amidst of the Covid-19 pandemic and it was still a very beautiful day to remember despite all the restrictions imposed.

Medical School Days

My medical school years at RCSI and RUMC has provided me a solid foundation that enabled me to build my future career on. I appreciate the way the syllabus was crafted, as it gave me a wholesome foretaste into this wide field of medicine, and it was through all these exposures that I found my liking for internal medicine.





Lifelong Friendship

I certainly enjoyed my graduating class the most. We came from all parts of Malaysia, with a few international students, and we went through the thick & thin of medical school together from Ireland to Penang. The friendship that was built here blossomed through the years and till today, we stay in touch as we grow in our careers. All these lovely memories were made possible by the conducive learning environment provided by RUMC.

Career Aspirations

I have a keen interest in the field of Haematology and am currently awaiting my subspecialty training in Haematology under KKM.





Get to Know Dr Mohd Basil bin Sulaiman

My name is Dr Basil. I graduated from RUMC in 2010 and worked in the Ministry of Health ever since. I shifted to non-clinical work due to health issues and transferred to the MOH headquarters in 2013 – developing & implementing Casemix at hospitals around Malaysia.

I obtained my Masters in International Health Services Management at LSBU, London. Upon returning to Malaysia, I was posted to Kuala Kubu Bharu Hospital as Deputy Director and now serving as its Director since 2020.



I have also taken part in medical teams at local, national and international sporting events such as Ironman, MotoGP, Japan SuperGT, Rotax Max Asia, Merdeka Millenium Endurance and FAM Super League, to name a few.

Outside working hours, I keep myself active by exercising 2-3 times a week and walking around town on weekends.

I hail from Kuala Lumpur but I enjoy coming back to Penang at least once a year to enjoy the food and meet up with former batchmates.



Memories in Dublin & Penang

In Ireland, I enjoyed the various attachments and home visits. Similarly in Penang, the nature of our postings around Penang and Perak gave a good insight into the life as a doctor in service.



My favourite part of studying at RUMC

The dedicated lecturers and consultants who taught us really made sure we did our best throughout the course. The friends I made during my time in RUMC are invaluable – both personally and professionally. Many of them are now specialists and consultants in various fields and it helps to have a familiar face to consult on issues I face within my own practice.



My Current Attachment

The experience of being in different healthcare settings gave me a good overview of the various MOH facilities. That has also translated into a decent understanding of how MOH works in the local level, as well as the responsibilities of clinics/hospitals/district health offices.

Outstanding achievements recognized by Cochrane

Cochrane recognizes members of its international community with a range of awards and prizes annually. This year, two of these awards went to Cochrane members of the same institution – a historical first!



Prof Dr Jacqueline (Jackie) Ho was awarded the Anne Anderson Award. This award is given to a female member of Cochrane who has made a significant contribution to the enhancement and visibility of women's participation within Cochrane. Many of the alumni would have remembered Prof Jackie fondly as she had set up and conducted most of the teaching of evidence-based medicine at RUMC as well as mentoring many students in research during their electives or as Junior Research Fellows.

Winners of the Anne Anderson Award are expected to donate the award money to a woman in a low resource setting. Prof Jackie is giving her award money to Dr Foong Wai Cheng to advance her advocacy work in Kangaroo Mother Care. Dr Wai Cheng intends to use the money to develop a website for parents and the public to inform and engage them in advocating for Kangaroo Care not only for preterm but also for term infants both in the hospital and continuing on at home.

A/Prof Dr Foong Siew Cheng was awarded the Kenneth Warren Prize 2021. This prize is awarded to the principal author of whichever Cochrane Review authored by a national living in a developing country is judged to be both of high methodological quality and relevant to health problems in developing countries.



All the members of the Paediatric department were authors on A/Prof Foong Siew Cheng's review and one alumnus.

They are Dr Tan May Loong, Dr Foong Wai Cheng, Dr Lisa A Marasco, Prof Jackie Ho and Dr Ong Joo Howe. The title of review is, 'Oral galactagogues (natural therapies or drugs) for increasing breast milk production in mothers of non-hospitalised term infants'.

Congratulations to both!

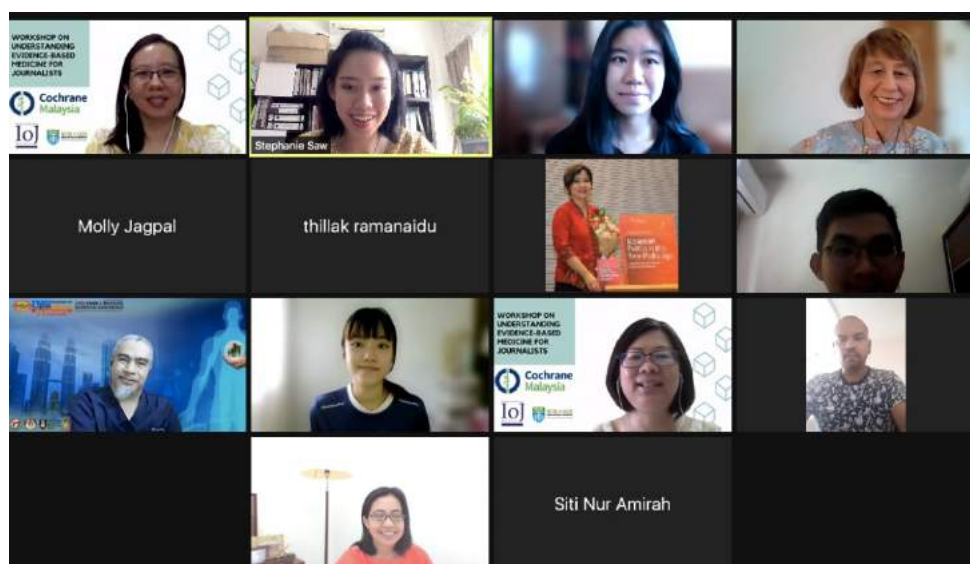
To read more about these awards and listen to their acceptance speeches, please go to <https://community.cochrane.org/news/congratulations-jackie-ho-winner-2021-anne-anderson-prize> and <https://community.cochrane.org/news/winning-2021-kenneth-warren-prize>

Cochrane Malaysia Internship Programme

Dr Stephanie Saw Le Er did a short internship with Cochrane Malaysia from July – September 2021 researching on patient support groups in Malaysia. Here's what she has to share about her experience :

“ My internship with Cochrane Malaysia has been a rewarding and motivating experience. I was given a hands-on opportunity to get involved in the field of medical scientific databases. The programme was conducted remotely where I could work from home. I was tasked with my main project of an exploratory research to identify and map out patient support groups in Malaysia, under the supervision of Dr Tan May Loong and Professor Jacqueline Ho. In addition, I was given the privilege to participate in various Cochrane Training programmes and events. Overall, it has enhanced my understanding of the roles of different types of clinical studies and equipped me with skills to evaluate scientific literature better.

Besides the project, I was also involved in translating plain language summaries (PLSs) from English to Malay language that earned me points to attain my Cochrane Membership. The membership gave me the privilege to access various Cochrane Training resources. The engaging activities and methodologies while completing the main project and the various Cochrane events, enabled me to learn significantly in terms of the importance of the various types of studies and how to evaluate them. Having empathetic, compassionate and supportive supervisors, this experience has helped me achieve my goal of developing my competency in utilising medical databases to provide optimal patient care in the future. Because of the lessons I learned not only from my supervisor, I am confident that I will continue to grow and develop professionally and in my endeavours.”



Dr Stephanie Saw (top second from left) at the online Workshop on Understanding Evidence-based Medicine for Journalists.

Alumni Contribution

So, you want to save lives?
aspiring DOCTORS '21

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



**RUMC Alumni Speak:
Pathway to Practising
Medicine in Ireland**

Dr Megat Kamaruzaman
Class of 2007
Fertility Specialist
Sims IVF, Dublin, Ireland

November 20, 2021
(Saturday)
4.00 pm – 6.00 pm

  **#RUMCturns25**

The Aspiring Doctors virtual event was carried out on November 20, 2021 to provide current and prospective students and parents with substantial information about RUMC and the programmes it offer.

In this session, RUMC's vast alumni network was represented by Dr Megat Kamaruzaman from the Class of 2007. He shared with the audience about his experience as a medical student at RUMC and the journey which led to his current practice in Ireland.

Dr Kamaruzaman always had keen interest in obstetrics and helping expectant mothers during their pregnancy. This encouraged him to pursue the pathway to becoming a Fertility Specialist. He believes that helping couples have a successful pregnancy is one of the most rewarding parts of obstetrics.

Stay in touch with your alma mater & fellow alumni.
Email alumni@rcsiucd.edu.my to update your
contact details.



A unique Pre-University programme, offering students an early introduction to medical and clinical fields in a hospital setting. Upon conclusion of the programme, with a CGPA of 3.5-4.00, students are eligible to apply for the 5-Year Medical Degree Programme at RUMC.

Next Intake: June 2022



The University's flagship programme, the MB BCh BAO, is awarded by the National University of Ireland (NUI). Receive the best of both worlds with our transnationally delivered medical degree. RUMC is well-known for offering high-value tuition and exceptional quality in clinical training, as it continues to graduate high performing, industry-ready doctors.

Next Intake: Sept 2022

Malaysian doctors can now pursue the Family Medicine specialist training using the ICGP curriculum and assessment. Managed and delivered by RUMC, the curriculum of the programme is specifically adapted for the Malaysian healthcare scenario.

Next Intake: July 2022

For more information, visit rcsiucd.edu.my/programme/mintfm or email: mintfm@rcsiucd.edu.my



Career Opportunities @ RUMC

Available Academic Positions

Head of Department in:

- o Medicine
- o Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Lecturers in:

- o Psychiatry
- o Medicine
- o Surgery
- o Obstetrics & Gynaecology
- o Family Medicine
- o Orthopaedics

Structured PhD

This is a 4-year (full-time) & 5-year (part-time) programme which includes a 1-year pre-doctoral training year. The pre-doctoral training enables you to learn some core PhD skills such as research methods, research ethics & integrity and academic writing.

For more information, please visit our website at www.rcsiucd.edu.my

To apply & for more info:
email hr@rcsiucd.edu.my OR contact 04-217 1999