



SMA WELCOMES OUR *New House Officers*

The 14th SMA House Officers Seminar was held on 26 April 2008 at the National University of Singapore. The main sponsor was Medical Protection Society (MPS).

Lunch was provided prior to the seminar. All House Officers (HOs) received a gift pack containing medical publications and items useful during their internship.

Dr Chong Yeh Woei, SMA 1st Vice-President, welcomed the new doctors into the medical fraternity and gave the Opening Speech. He mentioned that the practice of medicine is both an art and science. He urged HOs to place patients' interests before their own.

Dr Desmond Mao, Chairman of the Organising Committee, introduced HOs to the programme and speakers. Dr Lai Jiunn Herng defined the scope of being a HO. He emphasised: "With great power comes great responsibility". He then gave advice on how to be a good HO, by performing the role well, being proactive and always asking when in doubt.

Be professional,
competent and
ethical. Make the
care of your patient
your first concern.

A/Prof Chin Jing Jih, Executive Director of SMA's Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism, spoke on "Being a Doctor: What It Means to be Professional". He said that a professional doctor is one "whose technical standards, service quality and conduct are able to promote trust in the profession". Be professional, competent and ethical. Make the care of your patient your first concern.

Dr Lawrence Ng, Medical Protection Society (MPS) Medico-Legal Adviser, gave insights on the common pitfalls of medical practice. He spoke on patient informed consent, patient confidentiality, keeping accurate and legible clinical records, careful prescribing, doctor competency and good patient communication. He also mentioned the common causes of patient complaints and advised on how to handle complaints. The benefits of MPS coverage (including occurrence versus claims basis) too were highlighted to the HOs.

Dr Winston Lin addressed HOs on conducting proper morning ward rounds. HOs should review

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patients' progress, seniors' input and management decisions. He advised on what to do before the ward rounds (making a list and other preparation work) and items to accomplish during the ward rounds. HOs should ask if they were unsure of anything.

Dr Tan Zhi Peng cited examples of "Changes". His advice to HOs was to "prioritise" in the order of urgency and importance. He listed examples of priority and gave good advice on how to handle referral letters, urgent scans and procedures, discharges, pre-discharges, trace results/referrals and orders.

Following a tea break, Dr Ooi Pei Ling spoke on "Clerking New Cases". The aims of clerking are to assess the patients and start the first line of treatment. She spoke on the steps in clerking a new case: review notes, trace results, check patient history, conduct a physical examination, list problems, investigations

and treatment. She also gave pointers on what and what not to do during clerking.

Dr Ong Yee Yian spoke on "Night Calls". The aims of a call are to keep the patients in a stable medical state and provide continuity of care. Before a call, do things that make one happy. Adopt the right attitude during a call. Be well equipped, prioritise and persevere until the call ends. After a call, hand over important issues. There may be fatigue, tears and despair during a call (as during one's medical career), but never give up.

After the talks, HOs were regrouped into smaller groups so that they could consult and learn from hands-on experiences of some of their seniors.

Singapore Medical Association thanks Dr Desmond Mao, his organising committee and the speakers for their contribution towards the 14th SMA House Officers Seminar. SMA wishes all House Officers the very best in their medical careers. ■



Dr Chong Yeh Woei



A/Prof Chin Jing Jih



Dr Lawrence Ng



The Organising Chairman, Dr Desmond Mao.



(L-R) Dr Ong Yee Yian, Dr Ooi Pei Ling, Dr Tan Zhi Peng, Dr Winston Lee, Dr Desmond Mao.



Dr Lai Jiunn Heng



The new House Officers find out more about their postings at the respective hospitals from their seniors.