

# A Simple Wish

By Dr Ivan Lin

I am a simple doctor with a simple wish.

Some months ago, I was diagnosed with leukaemia. Overnight, my world was changed and I became a patient. My M3 tutor, who took me for my first clinical posting in medicine, did my first bone marrow biopsy. The haematologist, who gave me a lecture on haematological malignancies during my revision posting for final year, became the senior consultant in-charge of my care. Even my diagnosis was made at the very same polyclinic where I previously did my posting in. My friend, who was working at that polyclinic, had ordered the peripheral blood film which saved my life.

I was deeply touched by the care and consideration that the doctors and nurses have shown me during my treatment. All along, I have thought of myself as a little doctor with a simple wish: to contribute to the care of patients in my own little way. Hence, I was greatly moved when I saw how concerned the MO was when she clerked me the night I was first admitted to hospital. I didn't know her, but I could see that she was very worried for me. I haven't had a chance to see her again since, but I will always remember that worried look on her face.

I am but human. We all are. My hair fell with the chemotherapy. My haemoglobin was halved to 6.1 and my platelets plunged to 10. I was neutropenic with a total white of 0.07. Never along the way did I give up. As I grew weaker with the chemo, I grew stronger in my determination. During the six months of hospitalisation, I met a few friends who helped in my management. An old classmate helped me with the fluoroscopic-guided lumbar puncture while another administered intrathecal methotrexate for me.

I have spent my eight cycles of inpatient chemo in isolation, but I was never alone. My friends messaged me when they were on-call, just to let me know that they were around if I needed them. I still remember one of them called my room to check if I was doing well. Another donated platelets several times. I am very grateful for all the support they have given me. They might not have been my treating doctors, but they have certainly helped save my life.

I have since completed my inpatient chemo and will continue to take care for my outpatient treatment. When I get better and am able to see patients, I will do my best to help them, just like the doctors and nurses who have done their best to help me.

I will never give up. I will never give up, for I am a simple doctor with a simple wish. SMA



*Ivan will be undergoing outpatient chemotherapy for the next two years. He plans to write papers and take exams during his treatment. He will not give up. Please support him at [ivan.lin@mohh.com.sg](mailto:ivan.lin@mohh.com.sg)!*