



## Why You Should Not Quit And Go Private:

20 reasons to remind you of the right thing to do (we hope ...)

**W**ell, whatever past impressions may be, this article is serious – very serious, reverent, real and straight talking.

Let's face it, every doctor has to face and confront the big question sooner or later in their professional lives. Unless of course you are a forensic pathologist or public health doctor, in which case, well...

So when your brain pops the big question, what do you do? (The closest thing we have is the pleasant experience when your girlfriend asks you for 'commitment'.)

Here are some reasons that The Hobbit thinks will help you arrive at the correct decision.

If you stay:

1. You will get a balanced career of service, teaching and research, and be paid well for all three responsibilities.
2. You do not have to worry about finding parking on Saturday mornings in your public hospital and even get to play golf on Saturday mornings once in a while.
3. You do not have to worry if seeing less private patients will affect your take-home pay, or whether your hospital makes money at all, just like what the administrators say.
4. You do not have to worry about looking for clinic space to buy or rent. The administrators will also assign you a fully furnished office with no fuss in a public hospital commensurate with your seniority.
5. You will always have your head of department and hospital top management generously recognise your contributions and take care of your professional development. For example, they may give you a 'service champion' award if your patient tells the CEO you are good.
6. You will always be given adequate management training so that you are adequately equipped for the administrative duties that you have or will be given. At the very least, you will be given generous and experienced administrative support staff to assist you.
7. You get to participate in committees and meetings with top management where important discussions take place and critical decisions are made that impact on clinical outcomes. For example, you will get to contribute to what you think the vision, mission and core values of the hospital should be.
8. Your family and you get to participate in enjoyable corporate activities like Family Day Celebrations, annual dinners, strategic retreats and corporate runs and marathons.
9. You receive frequent displays of gratitude from subsidised patients. There are no grateful subsidised patients in private practice.
10. You get to train future generations of doctors – bright, young, eager, hardworking and long suffering doctors who will be grateful to you for years to come.
11. Once in a while, you get to interact with intelligent, well-informed and well-meaning management consultants hired by top management to help you solve some very real and almost intractable problems.
12. You get feedback on whether you are truly practising state-of-the-art evidence-based medicine when you are audited on your

- compliance with clinical pathways and practice guidelines.
13. You will also get valuable feedback on your efficiency and effectiveness when savvy administrators tell you how you are doing in terms of waiting times and appointment times. They will even tell you critical details like if you turned up in your clinic on time or 15 minutes late last Tuesday.
  14. You get to experience the adrenaline rush, the excitement and adventure when you realise the hospital is running out of beds and patients are still pouring in from the A&E, and gosh, you have just been told – another hospital's A&E has closed!
  15. After a while, you may get to be called “Prof”. And more importantly, you will get used to being called “Prof”.
  16. You may get on the National Day Awards list after many years of exemplary public service, or

sooner if there is another major communicable disease outbreak affecting public hospitals.

17. You have childcare facilities in your hospital, and even a lactation room for EBM (Expression of Breast Milk, NOT evidence-based medicine).
18. You have paid conference leave and you can take them anytime you want.
19. As Singapore develops into a major medical hub, you get to work with top brains from world class centres based in Singapore, such as Duke Medical School and of course, Johns Hopkins.
20. Most importantly, you can tell everyone that money is not very important to you even when like you, others in the public sector are also given competitive salaries pegged to private sector remuneration.

Seriously folks, why would anyone want to quit when there are so many perks and advantages to staying in the public sector? ■