

## **DPH Chairman's Report at the 30<sup>th</sup> DPH Annual General Meeting on 20 August 2022**

Welcome to the Dover Park Hospice's 30th AGM. It has been a difficult 2 and a half years for our country and DPH has had its share of challenges dealing with Covid-19. Nonetheless, the team has risen to the occasion-navigating the many disruptions and caring for patients with even higher standards! As the first matter to raise to members, I would like to place on record our deepest appreciation for Timothy, Mervyn and the entire DPH team of staff and volunteers to continue care relentlessly through these challenging times.

As Dover Park Hospice celebrates her 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, we have much to be thankful for and also much to look forward to in the midst of these challenging times.

As we look back, we are very grateful to Dr Seet Ai Mee and Dr Jerry Lim who have been trailblazers together with many of our pioneer volunteers who gave their valuable time and resources to the establishment of DPH. She could not achieve what she is today without the contribution and sacrifices in the early days, with the prime motive to provide comfort care and relief to those who are suffering. We also note the challenges that has to be overcome in the early days dealing with "not in my backyard" syndromes and many who misunderstand what modern hospices are and what we do.

30 years forward and there is still much more to be done. Minister Ong Ye Kung in his most recent MOH Workplan Seminar have alluded that awareness of end-of-life care remains low and many Singaporeans still are not fully aware of the

benefits of appropriate end-of-life care for themselves and their loved ones, and too many Singaporeans despite expressing a heartfelt desire to pass on in the comfort and familiarity of home in the tender embrace of loved ones, die in hospitals.

Our theme for 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is "Making More Moments Matter: Insighting Care, Integrating Research and Imparting Knowledge"

### **Insighting Care**

With the ageing facilities at the current premises, the expansion to 100 beds is back on track after delays due to COVID and is due to complete some time in May 2023 and operational around November 2023 barring any further delays. New facilities will provide greater synergy with our partners such as Tan Tock Seng Hospital, RenCi Hospital who are co-located in the same campus, including ongoing engagements with specialists for non-cancer diseases such as care for end-stage organ failures, dementia and severe frailty. These collaboration with partners will also make transitions from hospital to hospice smoother as MOH will be working to reduce number of deaths in hospital by 10% come 2027. We look forward to a more conducive environment and space for both patients and caregivers to spend precious moments together.

DPH is also exploring tele-health and tele-monitoring technologies that can help to improve care and build efficiencies through use of bio-sensors. New Inpatient Hospice Medical System and Automated Pharmacy system is also being procured and built to enhance patient care information as well as drug safety. These use of tools will help provide greater insights into patient needs and care in addition to the excellent work already being done by our team of doctors, nurses and allied health workers on the ground.

## **Integrating Research**

On the research front, DPH continues to build a culture of research amongst our staff with multiple projects ongoing. At the last Singapore Palliative Care Conference (SPCC), DPH is proud to have submitted 11 posters with topics ranging from caregivers, non-cancer care for liver and renal diseases, teleconsultations, telehealth music therapy and virtual volunteering. Ms Tay Ri Yin also won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize oral presentation and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize for best poster.

In this coming year, DPH will embark on a major caregiver research as well as continue to learn as we practice through integrating Namaste Care in Inpatient Care, R.I.S.E programme for breathless patients in Day Care. This is a long journey in making our staff team as reflective practitioners.

In these endeavours, we are incredibly privileged to partner with the National Healthcare Group and LKCMedicine. We could not wish for better allies in the academic mission and working in unison, we in DPH can share the lessons of our 3 decades of experience much more effectively.

## **Imparting Knowledge**

As one of the first Learning Institutes appointed by Agency for Integrated Care, DPH has not ceased to impart knowledge through training not only of our own team but also to augment and upskill the national capabilities through our training. As COVID restrictions eases, students from medical, nursing and allied health schools have started their attachment programmes again and DPH is amongst the first to receive them to continue to expose and train up and coming healthcare professionals and leaders about hospice care as an essential part of the entire healthcare provision system.

It is our deepest hope that through insighting care, integrating research and imparting knowledge, we can truly make more moments matter for our patients and their families.

## **Governance and Management**

Good governance is at the heart of successful organisations; it increases trust with our stakeholders and the public, encourages positive behaviour among our staff and volunteers and provide a strong foundation for sustainability.

The Executive Committee and Council take an austere stand in their leadership and oversight roles in ensuring good governance. We identified key areas of our strategy and operations to address current and emerging opportunities, and risks given the changing healthcare landscape. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee has put in place the Enterprise Risk Management Framework and we have relooked at our compliance in annual submissions and applications, to ensure that we are aligned, above and beyond the requirements of the Commissioner of Charities.

Today, we have a total of 11 doctors, 78 nurses, 17 social workers and palliative rehabilitation professionals, 2 Pharmacist and Pharmacy Technician and 36 admin and support staff. They are being led by the CEO, Mr Timothy Liu and Medical Director, Dr Mervyn Koh.

## **Clinical**

In FY2021/2022, we admitted 374 patients, with the length of stay averaged 33 days. Home Care (including Programme Dignity and Programme Impact) managed 639 patients, with the average length of home care service of 84 days. Day Care managed 28 patients, with the length of stay averaged 128 days.

In August 2020, Dover Park Hospice Home Care team collaborated with Tan Tock Seng Hospital on Programme IMPACT (Integrated Management and Palliative Care for Terminally-Ill Non-Cancer Patients) to provide home palliative care to patients with end stage organ failure. The team has cared for 45 patients diagnosed with end stage kidney failure and patients with frailty by March 2022.

In providing continuum of care for its patients in time of the pandemic, Dover Park Hospice Home Care of doctors, nurses, medical social workers and therapists continue to care for patients who are COVID positive with mild symptoms at DPH and have been able to manage well with use of drug treatments. Teleconsultation is now the norm with patients who are in stable condition. As of March 2022, the team had conducted 685 teleconsultations. With very positive feedback from almost all of the patients/caregivers, DPH will continue to enhance the experience of teleconsultations.

Home Care team has extend its services to patients with end stage heart failure and lung diseases in the second half of 2021 to continue supporting these patients in the comfort of their homes. They have also expanded coverage to additional 5 postal districts in the north of Singapore growing from an average of about 160 patients to 240 patients at any one time.

Our clinical operations have been outstanding; we continue to receive good feedback and appreciation. Thank you Dr Mervyn Koh, our Medical Director and Ms Chin Soh Mun, our Director for Nursing and the marvellous clinical team. Ms Chin who has been with DPH for the past 10 years will be retiring. She has been exemplary in her leadership of the nursing team and was awarded President's Nurse 2020. I would like to thank Ms Chin for her contribution to DPH and wish her happy retirement.

## **Finance and Operations**

Despite difficult economic conditions in the past year, we have managed to end the financial year with a surplus of \$846K, as compared to a surplus of \$6.38 million in the previous financial year. This was largely due to fair value and realised losses on investment as valuation was hit as the Ukraine-Russia war broke at the first quarter of 2022. Additional government funding such as the Job Support Scheme (JSS) and Community Trust Fund is also lower in this financial year. Finally, despite the economic climate, we were privileged to continue to benefit from generous and supportive donors including estate donations of close to \$1.6 million from our fundraising activities.

On the operating front, expenditure increased from \$15.43 million in FY 2021 to \$17.60 million this FY due to 2 rounds of Community Care Salary Enhancement Scheme (CCSE) funded by MOH for 2 years for the sector to receive equitable pay compared to the healthcare sector in Singapore. Management continues to be prudent in financial management and have completed a refresh of the costing model previously done by Ernest and Young and also projections of finances when DPH occupies the new premises over the next 5 years.

Our Investment Committee worked hard to reduce impact from a challenging FY 2021/22 and as the stock market plummeted. Our overall investment portfolio continues to grow and have added about \$6 million in the last FY to \$52.3 million.

Our financial position is currently healthy but with doubling of our bed numbers and expansion of programmes, operating expenditure will markedly increase and continued discipline and prudence coupled with increased fundraising efforts will be necessary in the years ahead.

### **Fund-raising**

I would like to commend and congratulate the Fund-raising Committee and the management team for their efforts. We had outstanding fund-raising efforts year on year, the results of which are the envy of others.

Despite the Covid-19 situation, we managed to hold another Virtual Sunflower Charity Dinner on 15 October 2021. The dinner was attended by Guest-of-Honour, Minister Ong Ye Kung that raised over \$1 million with the generosity of our donors, sponsors and guests.

The Annual Year End Mailer campaign came with a creatively designed website, where donors could send their well-wishes along with their donations and this raised more than \$250,000 by the end of the campaign.

## **IT**

As we expand, we have also leveraged information technology to streamline and secure our operations. In 2022, we will upgrade our Inpatient Hospice Medical System by end of the year. We continue to use the PulseSync application to support our evolving requirements and in preparation for the move to ICH.

## **Awards**

I am very proud to share that we have earned numerous awards and recognition in the past FY. These highlight the spirit of service and the pursuit of excellence in our team.

We received many awards and accolades namely the President's Award for Most Promising Social Worker 2021, Nurses' Merit Award 2022, Community Care Development Awards (CCMDA) for Master of Social Work and Community Care Nursing Leadership Programme (CCNLP).

Our Medical Social Worker, Ms Michelle Lau was awarded the President's Most Promising Social Worker Award 2021, one of the highest accolade in Singapore's social work for young professional that recognises social workers who are newer in the field but have nonetheless made a difference in the lives of their clients as well as the community.

To have received these awards, we not only put the spotlight on us and the hard work we have done, but also on hospice and palliative care in Singapore. We can show our stakeholders that what we do and what we achieve are all possible.

## **Conclusion**

We are grateful for your immense support and may we continue to journey together to enable our patients to lead a meaningful life to the end. Let us continue to work towards providing quality palliative care and enhancing the quality of lives for our patients and caregivers.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Lim', is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

A/Prof Jeremy Lim  
Chairman  
30<sup>th</sup> Governing Council