

PALLIATIVE CARE... *My Choice*

I am thankful and honored to be given an opportunity to pen a few words for the newsletter of Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS). My name is Albert Yong and I am a 3rd year Family Medicine trainee from the National University of Malaysia (UKM). For this academic year, I was given the task of choosing an elective posting from any field of medicine to fulfill the curriculum and I decided to go for palliative care.

The reason I chose palliative care is because I wanted to find out what happens to patients who have been diagnosed with life limiting diseases when curative treatment is no longer possible. I wanted to explore what "palliative management" means. I feel the need to gain more experience and knowledge in palliative medicine so that I can provide better care for palliative patients. I am glad I did and the experience I gained is priceless.

On my first day of posting, I was greeted warmly by the office staff, nurses and Dato' Ziaudin. I was briefed about the history, management and core duty of the society. The routine of the society starts with the morning pass over meeting, in which nurses will discuss about difficult issues with regard to the management of patients. I find the session useful and informative about the common medical conditions encountered in palliative care and its treatment.

Throughout my posting, I have seen patients with terminal cancers from all walks of lives. The big C is indifferent to age, from as young as 16 years old to folks reaching 80 years old. In the beginning, I was taken aback not knowing how to approach young patients with terminal cancers. I could only remain silent and observe how the nurse talked to the patient and family members. It was difficult for me to cope emotionally when I see young patient suffers. However, after a few visits I managed to overcome it and learnt how to approach young patients and communicate with them.

Despite being a medical personnel, little did I know that palliative care can be so interesting, challenging, rewarding and heartbreaking at the same time. We could be rewarded with the joy and satisfaction of knowing that our patients had made some improvements, yet receiving the sad news of the passing or deterioration of another patient, all on the same day. Nevertheless, I feel palliative care is an important part of medicine and a lot more can be done despite the desolate prognosis.

Symptoms control has been the cornerstone in palliative care. The symptoms brought about by the cancer can affect a patient's quality of life, leading to distress not only for the patients but also to the family members. Hence, it is important to detect the possible complications early to exclude other treatable medical conditions and to relieve the symptoms by pharmacological and non-pharmacological methods.

The subject of death is a taboo in our culture and most people are not comfortable in discussing this topic. I was surprised at first to find that some patients were mentally prepared for their imminent death. They talked about how



they want their funeral to be, the songs for the ceremony, and the clothes they wish to wear, etc. I am astounded by their courage and readiness for the final moment.

Another area where I got to learn in this posting is bereavement visits. Palliative care does not end with the death of patients but is continued by

bereavement visits. The main purpose of this visit is to ensure that family members are coping well with their loss and to find out their needs. In my opinion, palliative care is one of the most holistic fields in medicine. The care we provide is not confined to patients but extended to family members and carers as well.

Of all the things I have seen and learnt throughout this posting, I think the most inspiring is the level of commitment from the nurses. The care they provide for their patients is by far the best I have seen in my career as a medical doctor. They go the extra mile for their patients, giving their very best for every patient under their care.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Dato' Dr Ziaudin for the teaching and guidance he gave me. Last but not least, to all the nurses who generously shared their experiences and knowledge with me, I want to say a big thank you. I wish all the staff in PPCS good health, joy in service, patience and perseverance in difficult days.

Dr Albert Yong

MPCS TRAINING

~ for ~
volunteers

ON 4th March 2017, Manjung Palliative Care Society (MPCS) conducted its first training session, 'Training The Volunteers'. It was held from 9 am to 1 pm and the venue was at its centre in Rumah Khidmat Kesihatan Komuniti Manjung, Jalan Lumut, 32000 Sitiawan. MPCS adviser, Ms Chan Lai Yoong, facilitated the session by providing a trainer in the name of Ms Cheong Sau Yen from PPCS Ipoh.

Training The Volunteers is an essential programme to equip volunteers and those involved in palliative homecare in Manjung. The topics covered by Ms Cheong were Introduction to Palliative Care and The Roles of Volunteers. There are 2 groups of volunteers in the society, Group A and Group B. Group A are Client Support Volunteers (CSVs) involved in home/patient care and its related support. Group B volunteers would be involved in office and administrative work, community awareness, relation and education (CARE), and fundraising.

In line with the society's noble mission and objectives in providing palliative care to the people of Manjung suffering from terminally ill diseases, Ms Cheong gave an inexhaustible list of do's and don'ts as CSVs in the society. Among the examples she gave were:

- Do not give advice on medical or nursing matters (any such requests should be forwarded to the Palliative Care Nurse, Nurse Kiong, Dr Lee or Matron Eow).
- Do not show disrespect to the patient-client's wishes, cultural and religious beliefs and, more importantly, not to use the visits as means of proselytizing.



A total of thirty-six (36) persons attended the training. Out of the total of 36 trained, 22 persons had registered themselves as volunteers – 11 persons for homecare support and 11 persons for CARE. An assessment of one's listening skills was carried out at the end of the workshop.

We would like to thank PPCS for the great support provided to us for the success of this volunteer workshop. On 21st April 2017 (Friday), an 'End of Life Communication Skills' workshop would be conducted by Hospital Seri Manjung. Ten persons would be sent for the training.

*Eow Yew Nguk
Hon. Secretary*

VACANCY**APPLY NOW for
an informal
interview****HOME CARE NURSING
with a difference****Would I be suitable for the team?**

If you are seeking a nursing role which will allow you to serve patients in their homes at a time when professional and sensitive care is of the utmost priority, then this service could be for you! Although terminal care has its own particular stresses, it too has immense rewards in terms of providing the opportunity to help patients and their families when they most need it. It also allows the nurse to grow as a person and to be a community pioneer, working with a society which is breaking new grounds in home care.

Our nursing team is a key support to cancer patients in an advanced stage; visiting them in their homes, administering pain and symptom-relieving drugs, assisting with basic forms of nursing care and giving support to their loved ones at critical times. As such, it is very special nursing which, whilst heavy at times, provides immense reward and professional satisfaction for the nurse who seeks a special calling to assist such patients and their families.

Remuneration and benefits summary

- ☛ Competitive salary scales
- ☛ Commencing salaries takes into account experience and qualifications
- ☛ PPCS provides vehicles for home visits
- ☛ Flexible working hours and buy back time arrangements to assist your family commitments
- ☛ Minimal on-call with allowances
- ☛ Annual development training
- ☛ Working in a small team with individual allocation of patients
- ☛ Personal hand-phone
- ☛ Annual bonus
- ☛ EPF and Socso coverage
- ☛ Personal Accident and Hospitalisation benefits
- ☛ Incremental leave allowances

23rd AGM

THE 23rd AGM of PPCS was held on 25 March 2017. Being a non-election year, the meeting was brief. Reports were accepted unanimously with no questions raised from the floor. We welcomed our new volunteer coordinator, Ms Cheong Sau Yen who was confirmed in employment since January 2017.

We are grateful to the community for their unceasing support of our work towards caring for the terminally ill. We are thankful for our dedicated staff, committed volunteers and faithful committee members for their tireless efforts to ensure palliative care is available to those in need of it in Perak.

*Datin Judy Chin***New Volunteer
Coordinator**

We welcome Ms. Cheong Sau Yen to the family of PPCS as a full time volunteer coordinator. PPCS has been on the search for a full time volunteer coordinator for some time and Ms Cheong came to us from a legal background with wide and varied experiences in legal firms and NGOs.



Ms. Cheong commenced employment with PPCS in September 2016 and was confirmed in January 2017. Since coming on board, Ms Cheong has been diligently recruiting and training new volunteers, increasing the total number of volunteers from 25 to 40. She has also been reconnecting and reactivating “older” volunteers.

We look forward to further developments in the volunteer programme with increasing numbers and volunteer supported events with Ms Cheong at the helm. We are always grateful to our selfless, committed and active volunteers who are essential parts of the backbone of PPCS in the areas of administration, patient care, fund raising and community awareness.

THANKS*Promoting
the Spirit
of Care*

We thank all our donors for their generosity. As PPCS is a non-governmental agency, it relies substantially on the financial support of the general public. If as a reader of this newsletter, you wish to donate something to the Society, or you know of anyone who might be interested in doing so, please direct your personal donation or inform them to contact the Honorary Treasurer at:

PPCS, 54 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah, 31400 Ipoh, Perak.**Tel/Fax: (605) 546 4732 • Email: admin@ppcs.org.my**

DONATIONS received during January – March 2017

JANUARY	RM		
Chuah Oh Kheng	500	Wong Lai Pheng	100
Anonymous	20,000	Lim Soon Kong imo Lim See Lin	100
Koo Szu Mee imo Koo Ah Kow	500	FEBRUARY	RM
Anonymous	300	Phun Chee Hon	100
Chong Chee Keong	3,000	Patricia Koo Pey Tse	100
Imo Lee Kee Fook	240	Gan Ling Mei	1,060
Imo Andrew Wong Ah Mow	100	Kong Ming Temple	1,500
Patricia Koo Pey Tse	200	Tan Ah Looi imo Fan Yan Chun	1,000
Ng Wee Liang imo Ng Boon Haw	400	Tham Jun Jie imo Chong Yoon Ching	1,000
Wong Chiew Kin	150	Ooi Pei Ling	120
Chuah Tiong Kau	5,000	Loon Teik Wai	100
Lim Wei Chiat	150	Tang Luang Heng	100
Lim Wei Suang	150	Anonymous	710
Song Chee Mun	100	Cheong Swee Kam	100
Imo Aw Siew Ching	100	Ming Da Motor	50
Imo Aw Ping Chuen	100	Anonymous	300
Lim Lay Koon	100	Lim Siew Yin	100
Imo Tan Tiam Hock	500	Lee Chok Lam	100
Nithia Nathan a/L Vasudevan	600	Lee Kok Chee	100
Leong Sau Guen	100	Tan Chin Guan	50
Ng Kit Chin	250	Tan Been Guat	100
Joseph Chong	100	Lee Li Tng	100
Choong Chee Wah imo Choong Kai Man	100	Xin Xie Charitable Group	3,500
Lee Siew Fong	50	Chew Chee Huat	100
Lee Yoke Lin; Chee Wei Siong & Chan Ting Ting	150	Chan Yen Fun imo Chan Ah Chai	2,000
San Sew	50	Chin Soong Sang	100
Yip Yue Kuen imo Yip Siew Heng	300	Syuen Hotel Berhad	5,000
Yong Ching Koak	100	Chin Kean Chong	500
Cheah Mee Lin	400	Chin Chon Peng imo Lee Hean Yin	200
Chan Mun Katt imo Chow Yok Kuan	500	Lai Mei Yoong	500
Kwong Hup Cheong (Kampar) Foundry Sdn Bhd	5,000	Chooi Chai Kuan	200
Imo Kwok Voon Ming	100	Yemaya Life Sdn Bhd	590
Lee Wai Pun	300	Lim Soon Keat imo Lim See Lin	100
David Ma Sau Teem	150	Lim Seng Lee	200
Brian Fong	150	Yan Sook Ling	100
Lee Lai Meng	100	Kong Lee Yeun	50
Tung Wai Kuen imo Tung Yoke Kai	1,000	Khaw Yee Kuan imo Wong Swee Mooi	150
Lee Fong @ Lee Fong Yin	150	Khaw Family	500
Imo Chin Yoke Kin	100	Khaw Chin Hong imo Wong Swee Mooi	150
Cheah Chow Fook	100	Hong Siew Liang	500
Liew Pit Wen	100	Chee Weng On imo Chee Kam Wah	200
Liew Pit Har	100	Anonymous	505
Lau Pit Ng	100	Lee Li Leng imo Lee Ah Khin	300
Liew Peng Ling	100	Imo Cheong Wai Kew	3,000
Western Pureland Enterprise	610	Ong Koon Heng	100
Wong Siow Fun	20	Khor Yuat Lee	50
Chin Ah Moi	200	Imo Chow Chong	1,000
Family of Chong Bok Lan	200	Chong Ping Ling	200
Teow Sow Fun	50	MARCH	RM
Lim Seng Kooi	500	Shajetha Nazrin Bt Mohamed Ayob	120
Yip Fook Meng	300	Khan Asuraja imo Mohamed Salleh	600
Anonymous	505	Lee Meow Seng	600
Lee Wan Cheng	150	Chin Chon Peng imo Lee Hean Yin	200
Wong Cheh	100	Goh Jee King	100
		Goh Guan Huat	400
		Imo Low Fook Loy; Low Mun Kead & Thong Thiam Fee	150
		Lau Sook Heng	50
		Lau Sook Hun	100
		Phun Chee Hon	100
		Bee Sion Nam	300
		Ling Jyh Ming imo Lim Siew Leng	610
		Lee Lai Fun	100
		Tang Meng Keen	300
		Lau Sook Mun	200
		Imo Au Ah Kaw	110
		Catilia (M) Sdn Bhd	4,000
		Anonymous	200
		SPS Logistics Sdn Bhd	10,000
		Koh Tse Ming @ Quek Tse Ming	1,000
		Chew Vee Yee	100
		Pang Yee Leng imo Pang Kong Chin	480
		Imo Thong Sau Chee	3,000
		Fong Then Hua	300
		Patricia Koo Pey Tse	100
		Dato Mohamed Hamzah	100
		Lau Kok Lee imo Kong Sing Yuan	2,000
		Imo Aw Ping Chuen	100
		Imo Aw Siew Ching	100
		Wong Chun Min imo Wong Tuck Yee	1,210
		Lee Chee Loon	50
		Lee Chee Wai	50
		Lee Wai Pun	200
		Lee Lai Meng	200
		David Ma Sau Teem	100
		Brian Fong	200
		Lee Lai Mei	100
		Tang Zhen Kai	550
		The family of the Late Leong Ah Chun	2,000
		Imo Yeoh Gaik Looi	300
		Lee Chong Shir imo Ang Ling	300
		Sam Kam Leim	100
		Lim Soon Kong imo Lim See Lin	100
		Soo Yau Wah imo Lau Kam Ng	200
		Victor Lee Kok Hee	1,000
		Yeoh Geok Eng	250
		Lim Pooi Ling	400
		Datin Siriander Ratti	200
		Wong Tuck Yu	1,000
		Lim Liew Yee	250
		Yap Mee Yung	500
		Lee Yee Teng	500
		Lee Li Leng imo Lee Ah Khin	300
		Cheong Li Yan	100
		Connie Cheong	200
		Hew Sau Yong	50
		Ong Kwai Lan	300
		Wong Pooi Shan imo Foo Siew Mee	100
		Foong Mun Kong @ Phoong Mun Kong	500
		Datin Mee Leng	100
		KT Chan imo Chan Kam Chuen	300
		Leong Wai Siew	100
		Anonymous	505

(*imo = in memory of)