

“Eye-Opening” attachments of Students from International Medical University, Bukit Jalil, KL



**Simon Yeong
Tze How**

‘Have you heard of PPCS?’ This is the first question asked by both nurses, Sumathy and Nancy when I followed them for home visits. I have never heard of this Society before and found it really interesting to know the nature of their

work. I was out with the nurses for 3 days but did not learn much because I was not hands on yet. Following the nurses and observing them handle patients helped me realize that the technique and power of healing is not just the treatment of the disease but the control of the symptoms is equally important. How can one control the symptoms and lessen the pain that is suffered by the patients? The answer may be a gentle touch given to the patient. During my 3 days with the Society, I also realized that explaining medical facts in layman terms so that patients can fully understand, is no easy task. Due to this and other reasons, some patients fail to strictly follow the regime and consequently complain of having pains. Hence it is vital to emphasize and reemphasize to the patient the dosage and how to take certain medication. I also learned that having good family support is very important in the care of the patient. I was lucky to accompany a patient and her family to see Dr Koh Wai Keat in Fatimah Hospital. I had the opportunity to observe how a doctor interacts with the family member other than the patient. I can conclude that good nursing care is a combination of control and relief of symptoms, a gentle touch by others and last but not least, family support.



Samuel Choo

My time spent with Perak Palliative Care Society was full of new experiences. It changed my views towards the treatment and care given to cancer and terminally ill patients. I have never dealt with people who are terminally ill and thus it was an eye opening experience for me.

Through my various visits to the homes of patients, I realised the importance of nurturing good relationships between medical personnel and patients. Patients will then have better confidence in the doctors and nurses, and will adhere to the medication provided. The patients also seemed more appreciative of the efforts by the nurses and doctors. It is touching to see patients put on smiles on their faces despite their pain. One particular event that most impressed me, was the outing to Clearwater Sanctuary. Patients were enjoying themselves during the outing which shows the closeness that has been established with the volunteers, doctors and nurses. I also observed a very different attitude adopted by the patients towards life. Instead of mourning and being depressed about their sickness, they chose to enjoy themselves to the fullest.

I realised the importance of free palliative care service provided by the Society. It helps many poor patients who are unable to foot treatment bills which can be very costly. The service provides not only physical needs of the patients but also emotional needs of the patients’ family members. Palliative care also enhances the quality of life of patients which may positively influence the course of illness. I also learned the ways to communicate and take care of patients.

One of the advantages of palliative care is that patients are looked after in their homes, instead of in hospitals. This enables patients to be more comfortable. Nurses travel to the clients’ homes once or twice each week to check on the patients’ condition. The nurses also help replace certain equipment like catheters.

The difference in palliative care is that its ultimate goal is not to actively treat the patients. It is to provide patients with a life that is as comfortable as possible in the midst of their life-threatening diseases. It neither hastens nor postpones death.

(see page 2)

ROYAL PATRON:

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"EYE-OPENING" attachments... (continued from page 1)



Lee Wei Rong

We deeply appreciated the time and effort PPCS spent with us. The nurses gave us a lecture on life. We, medical students, realized our lack of knowledge and

exposure to palliative care. The attachment was a huge wake-up call for us. Ultimately, we learned something we would never find in any books. The time spent with PPCS was one of my most meaningful experiences in my life.

We realised how easily life can be taken away from anyone. One can be totally healthy in one instance and in another, become ill. The fact that cancer is incurable is an emotional distress for anyone. But miracles do happen! e.g. Lance Armstrong, the American cyclist. He was diagnosed with testicular cancer in 1996. He was optimistic about life and did not give in to the disease. He survived! It is not up to us to determine the quality of life these patients are living, but we can lend our hands to instill positivity. Without support and encouragement, they may not feel positive. This is our role as health care providers.

It is disappointing that very few people are aware of this organization. It will be more functionally effective if there are more volunteers to help patients.



Clarissa Lo

Over a few days with PPCS, though short, I visited over a dozen cancer patients, young and old of different race and background. I noticed that many patients come from low income families. Because of that, they are unable to meet costs of medical expenses. Although the services provided by PPCS are free, a daily expense required for food such as milk powder is not sufficient.

I have gained and learned a lot. Basic palliative care was well demonstrated by the nurses. On the first day, Ms Wong demonstrated how to change the nasogastric tube (NGT) and showed me the bedsores the patient had on the bony areas, lower spine and hips. She also demonstrated the ways to feed a patient with NGT. The patient struggled in pain and tried to stop the nurse from inserting the tube from the nostril. Seeing these patients suffering really tugged at my heart but sadly I couldn't do anything though I wanted to help. Invariably, the one in pain is not always only the patient. Our hearts break seeing the patient suffering. What about their family members? Caregivers often suffer in silence watching the deterioration of their loved ones' condition and this is where bereavement support from PPCS comes into the picture.

We managed to learn new things that cannot be taught through books but only through people's lives. It gives us an opportunity to learn to communicate effectively with patients, or just lend a listening ear to a lonely patient. Often, what patients simply need is company - someone to talk to them, or simply be with them. These experiences increased the passion in volunteerism in me to help patients.

PPCS and the patients helped me to be even more resolute about my ambition to be a doctor, and return to help in the future. All these experiences are priceless and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the committee members and staff of PPCS for allowing us to learn a great deal from these experiences.

FUN DAY AT CLEARWATER SANCTUARY

50 people from Perak Palliative Care Society (PPCS) & Wesley Seniors Day Care Centre (WSDCC) comprising clients, volunteers and staff had an enjoyable outing to Clearwater Sanctuary organized by PPCS on 23 July 2009.

It was a pleasant breezy drive to this beautiful golf resort on that sunny morning. Arrival at the resort was greeted by smiling and helpful security guards who guided everyone to the ballroom where the event was held.

The day started with light exercises for the clients who were mostly elderly people, followed by games which included musical ball passing and Bingo! Losers were asked to do a dance and winners were given prizes. Buffet lunch was served at noon and everyone had a feast! Lunch was delicious. After lunch, the partying continued with singing, karaoke and some butt shaking dancing while a 3 gifted volunteers band entertained us.

The outing ended with a gift of appreciation from WSDCC clients to PPCS Medical Director, Dr Boon Chai Peng and her husband, Mr Leong Keng Yuen who were the sponsors for the venue and lunch. Bookmarks made by WSDCC clients were presented to everyone in appreciation for a great fun day !



Karaoke time



Sponsor, Dr Boon Chai Peng in action



PPCS Clients & Volunteers



Volunteers - IMU Students



WSDCC Clients & Volunteers



Lunchtime

Stephanie Hew
Chairman, Social Concerns
Wesley Methodist Church

FOOD FAIR AT PPCS

26 July 2009

PREPARATION BY

Volunteers



Staff & Committee



SALES BEGIN



SATISFIED CUSTOMERS



"HAPPY RETURNS" OF THE DAY

CLEANING UP



DONATIONS received during July - September 2009

DONATION - JULY 2009	RM
Tracy Foong	100.00
Tung Kam Foo	100.00
Sam Chew Wah	100.00
Foo Lee Kim imo Foo Lee Mee	3,000.00
Chao Kar Wai	50.00
Wong Siow Cheng	100.00
Kong Yoke Loong imo Kok Su Yeng	500.00
Chong Yew Li	1,000.00
Lee Maa Chun	300.00
Ng Swee Mun imo Lim Yee Yoke	5,000.00
Ho Yok Tong	100.00
Rosli B. Mohamed Ali	100.00
Philip Fung Yik Pun	500.00
Chan Chuen Wah	100.00
Wong Sau Mun	500.00
Chong Chee Wan	100.00
Chin Chee Kong	100.00
Chin Chon Peng imo Lee Hean Yin	200.00
Yip Siew Ching	100.00
Leong Yuen Yee imo Mah Sok Hun	200.00
Lai Kean Leong imo Choo Ah Mooi	500.00
Ong Boo Kuan	300.00
Choo Ee Leng imo Chong Ngook Chin	200.00
Goh Boon Hoo	100.00
Lim Siew Choo	50.00
Renuga Muniandy	100.00
Loo Yee Mei	2,473.67

DONATION - AUGUST 2009	RM
Amran Bin Busu Ahmat	100.00
Teh Lai Heong	100.00
Liew Ee Ling	100.00
Liew Yee Yee	100.00
Imo Marina	20.00
Ong Soo Sin	50.00
Sam Chak Chuan	100.00
Chin Chon Peng imo Lee Hean Yin	200.00
The Late Lau Bin Keng	1,000.00
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Ng Ngah Lea	100.00
Loke Yau Kean	200.00
Indonesian Friend	50.00
Dhanwant Kaur Gill	500.00
Mr Ng Sean Ping	100.00

DONATION - SEPTEMBER 2009	RM
Lee Yen Lyn	100.00
Chin Chon Peng imo Lee Hean Yin	200.00
Jasbir Kaur	100.00
Loo Yin Foong imo Loo Yoon Kew	2,000.00
Mdm Khoo Chun Hiea	100.00
Chan Sau Leng	100.00
Napier Lodge	250.00
Yayasan Sultan Azlan Shah	20,000.00
Erecca Liew	50.00
Elyn Liew	50.00
Abbe Liew	50.00
Christina Lee	200.00
Khor Peng Soon	100.00
Chai Pat Yon	100.00
Chan Meei Yoong	110.00
Chin Yoon Loy	100.00
Yip Yow Chooi	400.00
Hamimah Bt Sabar	100.00
Goh Hon Pung	100.00
Abd Ghani Bin Bah	100.00
Chan Boi Hoi imo Loh Chee Man	500.00
Wong Kok Meng imo Wong Kam Moi	300.00
Ooi Soon Imm	310.00
Wan Yu Jin	2,000.00

*imo = in memory of



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