Lesson 1: Keep an Open Mind
Mavis’s primary duty during the two missions may have been the same—to provide anaesthesia for surgeries—but each trip offered her a different experience. Part of it was due to geographic and cultural differences, with one mission being to Ngabang in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, and the other to Chengmai County in Hainan, China. However, more significantly, there were also differences in the way the local medical teams operated.

“Every mission trip is an eye-opening and enriching experience,” Mavis says, pointing to the learning and growth to be gained from simply being aware of what is new or different. For example, the local medical teams sometimes had protocols that were different from what the doctors on the mission were familiar with. “Each medical team has its own workflow and standards, and we do not impose our preferences on each other. We have to be sensitive to local needs and work with the local teams to provide the best possible care for patients without compromising on safety standards.”

Lesson 2: Work Together as a Team
Mavis believes that teamwork was an important factor in the success of both mission trips. “A common challenge we encountered was the language barrier, but we managed to handle this with help from volunteers.”

She adds: “Working with team members whom we hardly know in an unfamiliar environment is definitely a challenge. One common goal brought us together—to provide the best care for each and every patient we encountered. That allowed team members to gel and work alongside each other quickly and efficiently.”

Lesson 3: Think on your Feet
During mission trips, it is often inevitable that one has to work in difficult situations. Mavis is glad that her Residency training has prepared her to deal with the unexpected. “A solid foundation in Anaesthesia is needed to deal with the circumstances posed by the new environments and medical constraints. My Residency training at SingHealth has given me exposure to a
varied case mix with a wide range of patient demographics. This gave me the knowledge and confidence to be able to improvise and work around difficulties.”

Lesson 4: Treat Patients as the Priority
Of the many insights gained from the trip, the most significant for Mavis was from her interaction with patients. “The patients and their families may not have much but their eyes show their sincere gratitude. They reminded me of why I had chosen to become a doctor: to help people.”

“I learnt the importance of always looking back and reflecting on the meaning of what I do. Even if the work sometimes gets overwhelming, we should always treat patient care and safety as our first priority.”

Dear medical student,

A warm welcome from the SingHealth Anaesthesiology Residency Program (SHARP)!

SingHealth is a dynamic and rewarding place to pursue your Anaesthesiology training. As the nation’s leading and largest public healthcare cluster, SingHealth offers Residents a depth and diversity of experience found in no other institution.

Find out more about the interesting experiences you will get from our Residents Dr Ho Ying Ci and Dr Leonard Loh.

A Well-structured Training Program
“Cardiothoracic (CT) Surgery is one of the major subspecialties that SHARP Residents rotate through in the second year of our training. Induction of anaesthesia in CT surgery is more challenging as the patients have multiple comorbidities and are already at a higher risk of perioperative cardiac events than other patients.

To aid our learning and deepen our understanding of CT anaesthesia, our rotation is structured to ensure adequate time allocated for operating theatre exposure, echocardiography exposure and learning about cardiopulmonary bypass from highly skilled and experienced perfusionists.

Everyone plays a part in ensuring the success of each surgery and no one is dispensable. That was one of the key things that made me enjoy the posting even more— I was part of a team that made a difference to someone’s life.”
- Dr Ho Ying Ci

Dedicated Mentors
“At SHARP, I was privileged to be exposed to Transplant Surgery, where we work as part of the transplant team when a donor is found. The anaesthesia team plays an important role during the operation to optimize the patient’s physiological condition and ensure that the new organ has the best chance to function healthily once transplanted.

In the first year of my Residency training, I was given the opportunity to administer anaesthesia under the mentorship of experienced clinicians for four transplants. After successful surgery, patients continue to be cared for under the watchful eyes of the anaesthesia team subspecializing in Intensive Care Medicine. There, I was given expert guidance and ample opportunities to develop my confidence in managing patients in an intensive care setting.”
- Dr Leonard Loh

We invite all those who look to thrive in an intellectually stimulating and friendly environment to consider SingHealth for their Anaesthesiology Residency training. Contact us at AnaesthesiaResidency@singhealth.com.sg or sharp@singhealth.com.sg now! Our website is www.sghan.com/residency.

Dr Ruban Poopalalingam
Program Director, SingHealth Anaesthesiology Residency Program (SHARP)
This month, we showcase some developmental opportunities available to our Residents. With two hospitals, five national specialty centres, nine polyclinics and a community hospital, along with training from major participating site, Changi General Hospital, SingHealth has high clinical volume and rich variety of specialties and subspecialties, thereby providing Residents with comprehensive clinical training and opportunities for growth. Together with a strategic Academic Medicine partnership with Duke-NUS, interdepartmental rotations, and exposure to developing research and teaching programs, it is apparent that SingHealth Residency offers Residents the best capacity to grow.

As co-chairs of the Residents’ Committee (2012-2013), Dr Jill Lee and Dr Benny Loo represent the Residents in sharing their feedback at group and ministry levels to fine-tune programs. In FY 2012, the committee initiated offsite access to electronic medical journals, as well as childcare facilities and scholarships to better Resident’s welfare and educational needs. There are plenty of opportunities for them to hone their leadership skills and also be involved in various research and education events.

Being firm believers of the Academic Medicine ethos, both of Dr Lee and Dr Loo also instill and encourage fellow Residents to incorporate Academic Medicine in their daily clinical practice. “Modelling themselves on Academic Medicine practising faculty members allows trainees to learn the ropes and know who to turn to when they encounter difficulties. SingHealth’s growth as an Academic Healthcare Cluster will also attract more talented doctors to participate and contribute in this field. When Residents have a greater sense of satisfaction practicing Academic Medicine, it will serve as a positive reinforcement, spurring them on in the long run,” said Dr Loo.

(Credit: SingHealth Annual Report FY 2012 | Read the full article here)

**Hot Read**

**SingHealth Annual Report 2012: Strength through Collaboration**

Featuring over 20 inspiring stories on themes ranging from nursing education, life-changing research breakthroughs, to initiatives that improve healthcare delivery, the Annual Report showcases how various partnerships and collaborations have led to great strides in patient care, education and research across the SingHealth Academic Healthcare Cluster.

**What’s New?**

**Myopia Clinic for Children Opens at SNEC**

Children suffering from rapidly deteriorating myopia can now turn to a new treatment offered by the Singapore National Eye Centre – eye-drops that can slow down short-sightedness by 50 to 60 per cent over a two-year period with very little side effects.

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- Issue 05, Mar 2013
- Issue 06, Apr 2013
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