

## FOREWORD

**WHAT THE WORLD** went through in 2020 and 2021 has been nothing short of unprecedented. SGH was not spared, as our colleagues shouldered the responsibility of tackling the pandemic even as we continued to care for all our patients. The idea for this book surfaced towards the end of 2020, as we had an opportunity to reflect on what had transpired in the year. We found that with the unrelenting and rapid sequence of developments and the evolution of the disease, our memories were starting to fade, and we were having difficulty recalling exactly how events unfolded. We resolved that our stories must be told – what we did, how we did them, and why.

This was important not only to recognise the contributions and achievements of our colleagues, but to offer a record of what happened in SGH, from the personal perspectives of our colleagues. We did not set out to offer guidance on how to manage a pandemic, as this has been a deeply humbling time. Indeed, the course of COVID-19 continues to demonstrate that it has much more to teach the world.

The many first-hand accounts in this book speak of our humanity – our fears and anxieties, our despair when it seemed there was no end in sight, as well as the symbiosis of our actions. In the telling, some colleagues found psychological relief to openly express the strong emotions they felt, while others used the opportunity to pen thoughtful, reflective pieces. Most of all, everyone celebrated the special camaraderie born out of a shared Purpose, to serve with Passion when our community needed us most.

Even as the virus continues to lurk around, the stories serve as a record of the triumph of the human spirit – when ordinary people did extraordinary things. Yet, every single one in SGH would say that they just did what they had to do. As we close our Bicentennial year in 2021, it is clear that this is what SGH has always done – rising to challenges and putting our patients at the heart of all we do.

I am truly humbled, and proud to be counted among the number in SGH.

**DR KENNETH KWEK**

Chief Executive Officer