

Clinical news

Pandemic is the word of the year 2020. COVID-19 strikes our healthcare system particularly the well-being of the vulnerable older persons. Older persons are more prone to illness and a worse outcome including COVID-19. Geriatric trainee Dr. Thiam Chiann Ni shares her clinical experience in UMMC here.

In 26 older COVID-19 patients who were admitted to University Malaya Medical Centre (UMMC) from March 2020 to May 2020, 6(23.1%) died, 11(42.35) had inpatient complications, and 6(23.1%) developed new functional disabilities.

COVID-19 could present atypically as only 42.3% and 57.7% had cough and fever respectively. Patients take longer time to recover just like any other illnesses but they are more prone to social isolation which begins from the time of hospitalisation. Furthermore, 88.5% of the patients had prolonged hospitalisation.

Some of these patients were diagnosed with COVID-19 infection in the geriatric ward. We made difficult decisions due to lack of standardized operating procedures or guidelines at that time to safeguard the health and safety of our patients and our staff. We embraced change in practice and revised its effectiveness continuously. The challenge in manpower allocation at that time was not to be forgotten.

What had we done for older patients who recovered from COVID-19 infection? For the 20 patients who survived COVID-19 infection in UMMC, we initiated a phone call follow-up on their mood and function. In Hospital Sungai Buloh which is the main COVID-19 designated hospital in Malaysia, Dr. Wan Mazlina Wan Mustapa liaises with the Infectious Disease, Respiratory Medicine and Rehab Medicine team in providing post-COVID care for the elderly.

After the initial wave, we are dealing with the new norm. This has brought a great impact to the Geriatricians who are the leader in the medical care of older persons, not only in the clinical practice but also in personal development.

In the ward, we learned how to communicate with the next of kin over the phone on history taking, update clinical condition, advance care planning, and discharge planning which we were not comfortable doing before this. We learned how to engage all members of the multidisciplinary team to participate in the virtual meeting. As a creative solution for social isolation, we set up video calls for patients to interact with their family members while hospitalised.

Older persons are advised to avoid the crowd and stay home. We cannot answer when it will be 100% safe to come to the clinic but we need to ensure our patient's concern still can reach our attention. This has hastened the development of Virtual consultations clinic in the following geriatric centres: UMMC (Dr. Khor Hui Min), Hospital Selayang (Dato Dr. Tunku Muzafar Shah Tunku Jaafar), Hospital Sungai Buloh (Dr. Wan Mazlina Wan Mustapa), Hospital Umum Sarawak (Dr. Ling Jia Nee) and Hospital Kuala Lumpur.

For our personal development, we are grateful that there are ample opportunities to attend local and international conferences virtually. More importantly, the new norm has stimulated us to brush up our information technology skills to chair a meeting or present via virtual platforms. The geriatric fellows are also involved in COVID-19 related research, for example, Dr. Kejal Hasmukharay, Dr. Lim Wan Chieh, Dr. Gordon Pang, Dr. Ng Chai Chen, Dr. Aimy Abdullah, and Dr. Thiam Chiann Ni from UMMC and Dr. Lee Yoong Wah from HKL.

Our jobs are not confined to the ward and clinic. The UMMC team led by Assoc Prof Dr. Tan Kit Mun organised the first Virtual International Day of Older Persons celebration and it attracted 2.6k views on YouTube. Some of us are actively involved in virtual public awareness talk to promote healthy ageing in the era of this pandemic namely Dr. Lim Hong Tak and Dr. Ho Yun Ying. We also get our social media to spread the message on how to care for their loved ones during this period.

A quarter of the patients who had COVID-19 infections were from care homes. Dr. Kejal Hasmukharay and Dr. Hakimah Sallehuddin had published a comprehensive report entitled "The Long Term Care COVID-19 Situation in Malaysia" to the International Long-term Care Policy Network. It was also a great achievement that the report has made the COVID-19 test mandatory for older persons to be discharged to a care facility. Further details on Malaysia Interim Recommendations for Care Homes are available on the MSGM website. <https://msgm.com.my/covid-19/>

Opportunity lies in every crisis. We, geriatricians as the leader of the healthcare of older persons will continue to fight for a better tomorrow for the older person with our determination and innovation.

MSGM News



Covid-19" Hospital Sungai Buloh Experience" and Prof Edmund Ong on Thromboprophylaxis and Covid-19.

A total of 150 participants tuned in to listen to the webinar organised for the first time. It was also a learning process for us to handle the webinars right from the start, unsure of the outcome.

Starting from 11 July, an average of two to three webinars were held each month, without realising that a total of 16 webinars had been held when we concluded the last one on 9 December.

The 3 October webinar themed Knee Osteoarthritis: Importance of Early Management was most well received with 328 participants attended the webinar.



Organising chairman Dr Tiong Ing Khieng was the key person to hold the fort for MSGM in making sure that the eMCGM webinars were held after a physical meeting in Kuching was not possible.

"The experience is of course exciting, from initial stage of doubt and denial, to acceptance and now full embracement of the advantages of webinar to bring together speakers and delegates from every corner of the world," said Dr Tiong.

He thanked the speakers - Dr Nordiana Nordin, Prof Edmund Ong, Dr Tan Kok Yang, Prof Tan Maw Pin, Dr Chung Wai Mun, Dr Lee See Pheng, Dr Foo Chik Loon, Prof Chin Ai-Vyrrn, Dr Rizah Maziani, Prof Shahul Bahyah, Dr Samuel Teong Huang Chew, Dr Cheah Wee Kooi, Dr Sally Suriani Ahip, Dr Tan Kit Mun, Dr Terence Ong, Dr Premala A/P Subramaniam, Dr Eileen Yap and Pn Puspa A/P Maniam for their dedication and willingness to share their knowledge and experience in the webinars.

Also the chairpersons in the webinars and the MCGM committee members for their time and effort to put everything together.

The list of eMCGM webinars is here:

- **July 11** Geriatric Teleconference Visit (GTV) Clinic: "The Journey Beyond Covid-19" Hospital Sungai Buloh Experience" Thromboprophylaxis and Covid-19
- **Aug 6** Perioperative Management of Older Persons - Overcoming the Challenges in a Time of Pandemic
- **Aug 8** Conducting Research in Older Persons during the Covid-19 Pandemic
- **Sept 2** Journey of Hospitalised Frail Older Persons
 - Caring for Older Persons in Emergency Department
 - Caring for Critically Ill Older Persons
 - Geriatric Emergency Service: The Past, the Present, the Future or Alternative Topic "Caring for People with Dementia in Emergency Department"
- **Sept 22** Horizons in Dementia: Optimisation of Care
- **Sept 30** Influenza: A Real Threat to Older Adults
- **Oct 3** Knee Osteoarthritis: Importance of Early Management
- **Oct 10** Turn Back to Frailty
Malnutrition, Sarcopenia and Frailty: Relevant Findings from the SHIELD Study
- **Oct 21** How Does Influenza Affects Older Adults with Co-Morbidities
- **Oct 24** Assessment and Management of Frailty in Primary Care
- **Nov 7** NOAC in Older Persons
- **Nov 21** Rethinking the Hip Fracture Care During the Covid-19 Pandemic
- **Dec 2** Anorexia In Aging
- **Dec 5** Eat Well - Ageing and Oral Health
Dysphagia and Sarcopenia
- **Dec 9** Is Oral Anticoagulation Safe and Effective For use in the Elderly?

The sponsors played a big role in making sure the webinars are taking place with special thanks to **Bayer, Sanofi, Abbott, Amgen, DKSH** and **Mylan** for supporting the webinars organised by **MSGM**.

To the participants, we wish to extend apologies for the shortcomings attending to the webinars.

For a physical meeting of **MCGM**, which can be far more interactive and allowing seamless two-way conversations and collaboration, it is still on.

The **MCGM** will still be held in Kuching from 19-21 August next year and we look forward to see you in East Malaysia.

MSGM Facebook followers cross 1,000!

We are growing with increasing number of followers. Just passed the 1,000 mark and we are getting more likes! Please help to promote us!



About See All

- 1 A Society for Geriatricians in Malaysia
- 1 Our Society was formed to address the urgent issue of the healthcare needs of older population in Malaysia, which is rapidly increasing.
- 992 people like this
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- <https://msgm.com.my/>
- Send Message
- secretariat@msgm.com.my
- Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)



Malaysian Society of Geriatric Medicine

No High-Risk Older Adults... (text partially obscured)

Charity

MSGM joins the Dermatology Chapter, College of Physician of Malaysia to purchase pulse oximeter, ECG machine and glucometer worth of RM5,000 for Duchess of Kent Hospital, Sandakan, Sabah in November as Sabah was down with high number of Covid-19 cases right after the state election.



Event news

Do not miss the **MCGM** Kuching scheduled to be held from 19-21 August, 2021. Remember to look out for the registration on www.msgm.com.my!

Reminder to renew membership subscription

As 2020 is coming to an end, this is a gentle reminder to renew your annual MSGM subscription.

Kindly make arrangement to remit RM100.00, by cheque/bank transfer/cash via ATM machine to:

Bank: **Maybank**
 Account Name: **Persatuan Perubatan Geriatrik Malaysia**
 Account Number: **5141 6113 3358**

Kindly send us your remittance advice with your written name by WhatsApp at +6012 388 1193 or email it to secretariat@msgm.com.my once payment is made.

Should you have any questions pertaining to your membership, please feel free to contact us.

