

In Conversation with a Cardiology Pharmacist



Background Information

Name	Wong Yee May
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Institution	Tan Tock Seng Hospital
Area of Specialty (if any)	Cardiology
Years of Experience in Pharmacy/ Specialty area	15

Introduction

What are some of your day to day duties e.g. special services, rounds that are offered in your pharmacy?
(Word limit: 100 words)

My daily activities include cardiology or heart failure rounds, patient education, inpatient anticoagulation management, and specialty clinics for heart failure, post-PCI and anticoagulation patients. The inpatient to outpatient practice integrates acute and chronic management to enable continuity of care for patients.

I am available to the cardiology department for enquiries on pharmacotherapy and medication use processes, and to pharmacy colleagues on management of cardiac patients. My work scope includes providing training for pre-registration pharmacists and pharmacy residents, and continuing education for medical residents. For collaborative prescribing, I am the MOH pharmacist lead and curriculum committee member.

Latest Practice Updates

As an expert in your specialty, what are some of the latest practice updates/ resources e.g. guidelines, therapies, disease states management which you would like to highlight to fellow pharmacists who want to learn more about your field of practice? Please elaborate. (Word limit: 100 words)

The three main topics in cardiology are ischemic heart disease, heart failure and arrhythmias with atrial fibrillation being the most common.

In ischemic heart disease, there is never ending discussion on the duration of dual antiplatelet therapy and triple antithrombotics in patients who require, and increasingly potent lipid lowering agents. For atrial fibrillation, direct-acting oral anticoagulants and choice of anticoagulant are common questions for pharmacists. The excitement for heart failure in recent years is the angiotensin receptor-neprilysin inhibitor. Anti-diabetic agents like SGLT2 inhibitors have also shown positive cardiac outcomes in trials.

Challenges Faced

What are some of the challenges that pharmacists working in your specialty might face and what are the approaches to overcome these challenges? (Word limit: 100 words)

There is a load of evidence in this field and pharmacists need to be clear on the patient group different trials and guidelines that may apply or may not apply in. Polypharmacy is common due to the benefits shown in multiple add-on therapies, co-morbidities and risk factors of the patients. Pharmacists need to prioritize and simplify regimens according to patient needs.

There are also multiple diagnostic modalities in cardiology, displaying different information. Specialty pharmacists will need to have sufficient understanding of them, and of cardiac anatomy and function to apply to specific patients.

Any Other Sharing

Is there anything else that you would like to share e.g. words of advice regarding your specialty? (Word limit: 100 words)

Cardiology is a topic that cannot be avoided in general patient care. Cardiac disease is the highest global cause of mortality. There is ever evolving research and evidence in this field. Having a good understanding will benefit many patients in practice.

Cardiologists may have high expectations, strong opinions and work fast paced. It may be intimidating initially to match them, but once they know you mean business, they are a fun bunch to be with and work with.

Thank you for your contribution to the development of fellow pharmacists!