

SHINING STAR: MS TAN YIN YIN

by PSS Community Chapter

Shining Star is a PSS initiative that features individuals who embody the exceptional qualities of a community pharmacist.

In this issue we shine the spotlight on Ms. Tan Yin Yin from Guardian Pharmacy.



My journey as a community pharmacist began exactly three decades ago. I started as a pre-registration pharmacist in Guardian and have developed and grown through many phases of change. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to take on different roles such as Area Manager as well some exposure as a Franchise Manager.

Currently, I am the resident pharmacist in our outlet at Gleneagles Medical Centre ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the pharmacy. Some of my duties include driving sales and profitability, managing inventory, maintaining pharmacy standards and serving all the patients, and other healthcare professionals.

I am part of the preceptorship team, and through the years, I have the privilege to mentor many PECT interns and pre-registration pharmacists from both local and foreign universities.

What is the most memorable moment in your pharmacy career?

Late last year, there was a lady who accompanied her helper to get advice on some medicines for the helper's 18-month old baby who was unwell back in Indonesia. Upon further probing and google translating the baby's condition, I strongly felt that it was a very serious condition and stressed that the baby must be rushed to the hospital for immediate treatment. She should not waste any more time trying to self-medicate.

A few weeks later, the lady and her helper returned to express their gratitude. The baby had typhoid fever and had been hospitalized for more than a week. The baby had since been discharged and was doing well. We were all relieved and even teared up. It was indeed a surreal and tender moment. Sometimes, when I think back, I am still in awe over the impact of my simple advice and that I was able to save the life of a baby.



What helps/motivates you to stay in your practice?

How do you harmonize work and family?

Invariably, I am motivated by people who thank me, people who express their appreciation and gratitude when I have helped them address their healthcare issues and needs. Their acknowledgement and recognition keep me going on for as long as I have and spur me on to do even better.

On the flipside, more often than not, we are terrified of criticisms and negative feedback. Pause. Slow down and think about it..... Genuine patients who take time to complain are trying to tell us what went wrong for them with our products, process or communication. I would reflect on these bad experiences and try to learn valuable lessons from them. From there, I derive the motivation to make changes and improvements. Many a times, such unfavourable situations have turned into positive outcomes.

Good time management skills, strong family support, great teamwork, as well as caring and understanding bosses are key factors to achieving work-life synergy. I'm glad and thankful to be blessed with all the above ideals that fundamentally lead to work-life harmony for me.



What is one misconception about community pharmacists that you hope to correct?

Most common misconception about community pharmacist is that we are just a dispenser of medicines behind the counter. Without our white coats on, we could even be mistaken as a cashier behind the counter.

Speaking about white coats, I suppose it does lend a certain gravitas to our role because at the other end of the spectrum, some people expect us to be able to dispense or top up their prescription only medicines like doctors. They get upset when we tell them that we are unable to do so without a valid doctor's prescription.



Community pharmacy is a dynamic, exciting and challenging profession. If you are passionate about meeting, relating to and helping people from all walks of life, then this career is for you.

Over the years, my customers and patients become my friends. Hence, I go to work everyday looking forward to making new friends and meeting up with old friends.

*"People will forget what you said,
People will forget what you did,
But people will never forget how you made them feel"*

At the end of the day, I will be elated and contented if I had made someone's day a little better, someone's heart a little warmer and someone's smile a little brighter.

- Yin Yin-