On the front lines of a pandemic

Polyclinic doctor optimistic as he has seen dedication of those working to stem outbreak

Today, however, he is a family physician at Tan Tock Seng Hospital in the fever zone and on the front lines of the continuing ordeal, which has sparked the nation’s anxiety.

Patients with fever and respiratory symptoms are now segregated in the fever zone, while the remainder are treated in the normal wards. Arrangements have been made to the best of the hospital’s capabilities.

When working in the fever zone, he has to don personal protective equipment and is mostly confined to the psychotic, instead of the normal office attire and surgical mask that he wore when working in the outpatients department.

In February, one of his patients was confirmed to have Covid-19. Immediately, he was told to keep himself and his family away.

“The two children of the infected patient were also in isolation. I asked whether she wanted to stay at her parents’ place for the time being, but he said, ‘No, we are all in the house.’”

He added, saying, “I was worried, but I trust that he took proper care to protect himself and his family, including his wife and children. We are all in this together.”

As a precaution, Dr Lam stayed home for a week. His worried father contacted the hospital administrators.

Since then, the couple, who do not have children, have continued to spend most of their free time at home, cooking, watching television or reading. Dr Lam has also gone back to work.

“He is a doctor in a psychogeriatric ward; we see the older and younger generations from all income groups and all walks of life and often have to deal with multiple medical conditions,” he said.

Dr Lam has been handling over a thousand patients in the psychogeriatric ward and has found that many are not taking their medications regularly.

Dr Lam has been handling over a thousand patients in the psychogeriatric ward and has found that many are not taking their medications regularly.

He also worked with a team of doctors on a paper published in a medical journal that assessed the outcomes of elderly patients who were treated at a Singapore hospital. He said, “We have not seen any significant differences in outcomes when compared to those in the hospital setting.”

However, in the hospital setting, he said, “We have been able to provide better care and support to patients and their families.”

He added, “We have also been able to identify patients who are at risk of developing complications.”

“Dr Lam has been handling over a thousand patients in the psychogeriatric ward and has found that many are not taking their medications regularly.”

As a precaution, Dr Lam stayed home for a week. His worried father contacted the hospital administrators.

Since then, the couple, who do not have children, have continued to spend most of their free time at home, cooking, watching television or reading. Dr Lam has also gone back to work.

“He is a doctor in a psychogeriatric ward; we see the older and younger generations from all income groups and all walks of life and often have to deal with multiple medical conditions,” he said.

Dr Lam has been handling over a thousand patients in the psychogeriatric ward and has found that many are not taking their medications regularly.

He also worked with a team of doctors on a paper published in a medical journal that assessed the outcomes of elderly patients who were treated at a Singapore hospital. He said, “We have not seen any significant differences in outcomes when compared to those in the hospital setting.”

However, in the hospital setting, he said, “We have been able to provide better care and support to patients and their families.”

He added, “We have also been able to identify patients who are at risk of developing complications.”

“In the hospital setting, we have been able to provide better care and support to patients and their families,” said Dr Lam.

He added, “We have also been able to identify patients who are at risk of developing complications.”

“In the hospital setting, we have been able to provide better care and support to patients and their families.”

He added, “We have also been able to identify patients who are at risk of developing complications.”
There's a sense of camaraderie not just within the healthcare sector. I've seen a lot of patients, like police officers and contact tracers, working very hard. It's very heartening to know that a lot of our Singaporeans are encouraged by us. (Our situation) is relatively contained but we cannot afford to be complacent.

Left: Marks on Dr Lam's face from wearing a N95 mask. In February, one of the patients was confirmed to have Covid-19. I was quite happy that we managed to find a patient who matched his symptoms. So we took him to the hospital. If we had let the patient go untreated, the chance of spread would have been a lot higher," said the 56-year-old.

Left: Surveying patients, Dr Lam regularly takes time to touch and share new findings with younger doctors like Dr Tay, 30, and Dr Wong Heng Hao (wearing mask), 30.

Right: Dinner time is especially important for Dr Lam and his wife Ang Fei Fai – who do not have children – as they discuss their day. Most of their time is now spent at home cooking, watching television or reading.