

UNION

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Message from the Chief Hospital Manager

Dear Colleagues,

Union Hospital had just completed an Organization Wide Survey (OWS) by auditors/surveyors from the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (International) which took one whole week from 10 July 2023 to 14 July 2023. The two lead surveyors were from Australia who participated in the audit in virtual fashion by "Zoom". We arranged for two "buddies" who would take them where they would like to see and verify for themselves with a mobile cart of audio-visual equipment. There were three seasoned local surveyors and they were respectively Dr Loretta Yam, a respiratory disease expert, Mr Michael Ling, a very respectable pharmacist and Ms Queenie Chan, an experienced infection control nurse cum quality assurance officer of another private hospital on the island side. Since this survey was being conducted in a format new to ACHS, i.e., a three year cycle instead of the four year one previously and according to a new edition of standards and criteria, the EQUiP 7, we had been preparing for it in the past few months. Thanks to the great effort of Dr Joseph Ho and his team in our Quality Assurance Department, this "accreditation week" just went by successfully without any hiccup!

On looking back I must hand out a big "LIKE" to ACHS for the remarkable changes in EQUiP 7, the most impressive of which is doing away with writing to document findings and recommendations. All these are being delivered verbally and may be settled with improvement made then and there when minor. With important issues of serious nature which will take time and effort to deal with, these will be left behind and improvement measures will become subjects for discussion at the next "Focal Check Point" session about one year later. There are two such sessions of accreditation activity within the same cycle. Thus you can see that the long and tedious work of writing up reports by the surveyors had been gladly disposed of! This is very much welcomed by all parties concerned, i.e., surveyors and surveyees. I am also pleased to report that all the verbal comments by the surveyors, both overseas and local alike, were positive and encouraging with lots of commendations.

I must ascribe our success in this round of accreditation to two factors which have been firmly ingrained in the minds of our staff. Firstly, the hospital culture of "open disclosure" had been established since 1999 when we first achieved hospital-wide ISO accreditation. Secondly the Quality Management System as dictated by ISO standard and procedure guide-lines together with regular cross-departmental internal auditing activities will ensure that different grades and levels of our staff are well aware of their duties and responsibilities and then execute them accordingly with due diligence. Thus we are always preparing to be examined and scrutinized by third parties and it is this "preparedness" which enables us to deal with this week of auditing by ACHS surveyors as just another working week with no undue hardship or extra effort!

Cheerio,

Dr Anthony K Y Lee

Chief Hospital Manager & Medical Director