

“May The Light shine on you because there is a light at the end of this tunnel.

I feel like a medical student and intern again. Every day there is something new and exciting to see, learn and discover. Science, Medicine and the World is throwing anything and everything at this pandemic. The pace of change and learning is truly head spinning and incredible. Knowledge, Treatments and Protocols change weekly.

Two Months ago at the beginning of March, there were some pretty dire predictions. A gigantic Tsunami of patients were coming in just 2 weeks to flood all the hospitals and healthcare system to over 2 to 3 times maximum capacity. We entered combat mode. Ramping up resources, staffing, training, and hospital beds. Everything else shut down! 1000s of hours sweat and tears were spent. Everything was focused on this pandemic. Nothing else mattered. Just brace and prepare for the storm.

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We truly were operating blind. Little to NO testing available. Despite knowing we had multiple probable positive COVID patients, we could not test except by strict CDC recommended protocols. No testing anyway. Told hundreds to stay home. Don't come unless truly sick or very short of breath. "Your cough and fever probably is the flu." So when the first hospitalized patients did show up, O2 sats in the 80s and White out on CXR with the worst looking ARDS ever seen. Intubate and Ventilate early. Steroids were not helpful. Try some Hydro chloroquine. Give fluids. Don't give fluids; give albumin... Etc. Operating in the dark. No Light. Just weeks old anecdotal information from China, Italy and Washington State.

In war, they say that first encounter always has casualties. Those first Health Care providers who were infected and those first few patient deaths were the first encounter. Retrospectively, one always wishes one knew what we know now.

What if we had broad available testing? What if we would have told everyone to come in ASAP with symptoms? What if we all stood up and screamed as loud as we could to everyone: SHELTER AT HOME AND DO NOT GO ANYWHERE! Social Distance, Wear a

mask, and wash your hands like crazy! Would anyone really listen? Would things have been different?

Fast forward just two months to early May. Except for NY, those dire predictions ended up only 1/5 to 1/10th as bad. That tsunami ended up a large swell. Patients now come in ASAP with any symptoms. We know SO much more now. We have SO much more experience now. (At least for the West Coast) we have decent testing. We have good protocols. We have treatments: High Flow O2, Proning, Steroids, Anticoagulation, Remdesivir, IL1 & IL6 Inhibitors, Convalescent Serum, ...etc.

Just last week, Sent home 10 COVID patients and put 4 more into the Remdesivir trials and no deaths. Patients are actually doing well and going home. Deaths are few and far between. No new Healthcare Provider infections. There is hope and promise and solutions and an end to this pandemic sometime in the future.

Cannot wait to see what the next 2 months, 6 months and year brings. Along with some hiccups and disappointments, there will be even more major victories: Even better

knowledge, protocols, treatments, and even a vaccine. It probably will be the new normal to have continued COVID Patients trickle in daily. But Morbidity and Mortality will drop dramatically.

There is a light at the end of this tunnel!

The light of knowledge and science will shine even more brightly on everything.”

**Edmund Cheung, MD, (MED'93)**