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Unexpected Outcomes of Healthcare in Singapore

Dr Jeremy Lim

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In his presentation, Dr Jeremy Lim shared his views on the need for Singapore to have a balanced and flexible healthcare model. The following is a summary of the major points:

- Health is a complex adaptive system and the complexity, inter-relations and externalities which drive unintended consequences are beyond complete human appreciation and understanding.
- Given a volatile, uncertain, complete and ambiguous world, and especially with regard to the longevity dividend and chronic disease epidemic, we do not have good health models to learn from. This necessitates lots of humility and a healthy dose of what Deng Xiaoping describes as 'crossing the river by feeling the stones'.
- Ideal policy makers are those who have been hit and have the strength to pick themselves up, the tenacity to keep moving ahead and the humility to learn. The ideal policy making stance is less about getting it right but more about not getting it irreversibly wrong, and having the "system flex" to course correct.
- These issues of balance and flexibility are evident in the examples of health insurance and managed care with regard to specific issues such as fee splitting and medical manpower planning.