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UiTM'S ORL: A YEAR WITH COVID-19



A YEAR WITH COVID-19

BY:

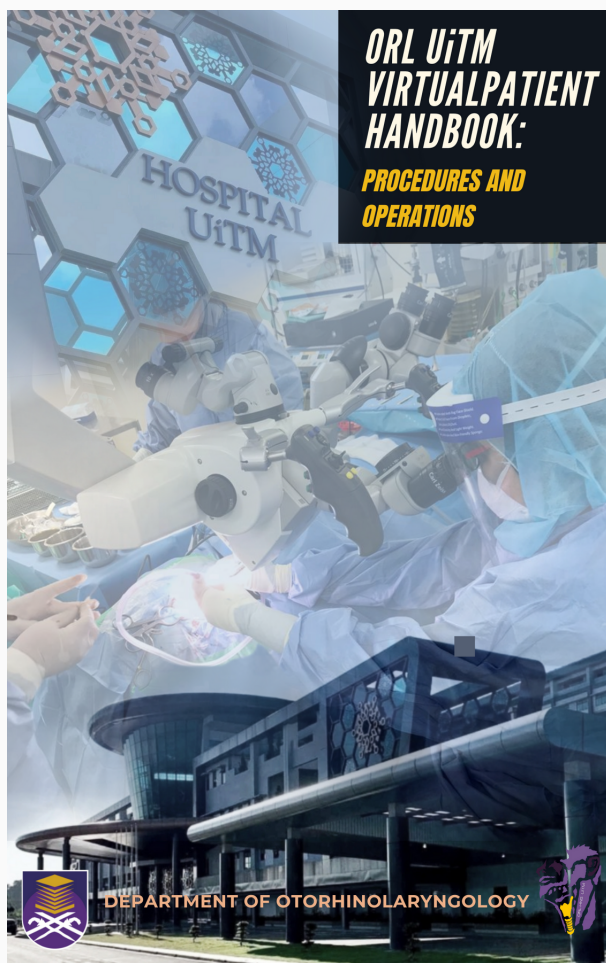
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The COVID-19 pandemic took the world by surprise. The past eighteen months have been incredibly challenging. The pandemic threw systemic shortfalls – or gaps- into sharp relief across medical education and healthcare systems the world over. While many will remember COVID-19 as a source of disruption, it will also be viewed as a catalyst for transformation brewing for the past decade. With the sudden shifting away from physical classes and towards remote learning, many innovations and digital platforms have been created and improvised to disseminate knowledge virtually. ORL surgeons have had to utilize highly invasive surgical procedures to anatomical regions usually tricky to access.

Unfortunately, these surgical procedures can result in significant tissue damage and morbidity. With the aid of robotic-assisted surgeries, a minimally invasive procedure with enhanced 3D panoramic operative field; dramatically enhances the surgeon's ability to identify and dissect anatomic structures and construct micro anastomosis leading to a reduction in cosmetic and functional side effects.

Reported studies support the feasibility and safety of robotic surgery in head and neck procedures and encourage its continuing use and exploration.



UiTM's 1st International Online Vestibular Conference - 'The Pursuit of Equilibrium' was a two-day event held from 23rd - 24th August 2021, collaborating with the Department of Otorhinolaryngology, Hospital Sungai Buloh. It had brought together 348 participants virtually, with established "rockstars" from many specialties, including ORL, neurology, audiology, and rehabilitation medicine practicing at the pinnacles of their things locally and from Brazil and the USA.



This conference revisited the fundamentals of the vestibular system and made the daunting prospect of comprehensive vestibular clinical assessment manageable and practical. It covered the common aetiologies, diagnoses, and latest treatments of vestibular disorders, including Ménière's disease, vestibular migraine, and persistent postural-perceptual dizziness (PPPD). It also explored specialty areas such as paediatric vestibular conditions and vestibular rehabilitation, including its latest innovations.



Despite the limitations from the overwhelming COVID-19, the team of UiTM's Otorhinolaryngology managed to participate in the MedInnovation Virtual International Medical Innovation Competition 2021 (IMIC 2021) and won the Bronze Medal. The team's 'ORL UiTM Virtual Patient Handbook: Procedures and Operations' is a digital patient information handbook with additional audio-enhancement features.



It aims to convey practical and straightforward patient information regarding the common otorhinolaryngology's procedures and operations, enabling patients to provide informed consent. This method, in return, will benefit in terms of patient knowledge acquisition, enhanced self-conceptualization and self-esteem, increased satisfaction with care, and improved pain control post-procedure or surgery.

In addition to the achievements as mentioned above, the team also won the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) for this year, with the project titled 'Elucidating Neuronal and Muscular Mechanistic Abnormalities in the Upper and Lower Airway of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) and Laryngotracheal Stenosis (LTS) Patients.



In conclusion, innovations adopted during the coronavirus crisis have brought to light previously hidden skills and generated new possible idealistic approaches and exciting new opportunities to explore in the healthcare and medical education systems.

"The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings" - Kanu of Okakura.