

activities like professional development programmes for everyone. The centre has thus identified two activities in the coming year.

The first is the CME sessions in the areas of medical ethics and professionalism, practice, and medical laws that will be run monthly, about 9 to 10 times a year for each area. These will be case based. Potentially, there are therefore 30 topics for the Singapore doctors to choose from. Each topic will have CME points but that is not the main reason for running the sessions.

The second is the burst of activities scheduled from 1-5 November. There will be four items: a short course on medical negligence; a Saturday afternoon session on practice management; a Sunday morning mini-course on the ethics on the relationship of the doctor with his professional world; and the SMA lecture in the afternoon as the grand finale.

Think about your professional development programme just as you would think of developing your clinical skills through a structured programme. ■

Quotable Quotes

from SMA-IPPG Seminar keynote address, "Medical Professionalism: Our Badge and Our Pledge"

- *"The policeman wears a badge that warns the criminal he's there to protect society; the doctor wears one that pledges to society the protection of its health."*
- *"...the Center is making a simple and uncompromising statement that the patient will always come first."*
- *"Elements of professionalism may be simplified into the big 3: altruism, excellence, and ethics...I suspect that much of altruism is learnt early in life through the positive influence of parents, teachers, religious leaders and good friends. By the time the student enters medical school, it is probably too late."*
- *"If we wish to have doctors who treat their work as a calling rather than a trade, then medical school admission committees ought to look more closely for evidence of altruistic behaviour in the applicant...We seek a servant's heart and the motivation to serve."*
- *"Motivation is not exactly the same as incentive. Motivation comes from within, an innate drive. It is a humane value, whereas incentives are social constructs or individually valued rewards for desired behaviour."*

- *"Life-long learning in order to keep at Medicine's cutting edge is expected of all of us – generalists and specialists alike. But how many doctors do keep up? "*

- *"The medical profession is under siege. The public increasingly distrusts us because we are too condescending to listen, too mediocre to keep up, and too greedy to truly care about their welfare."*

- *"Once upon a time, there was an empathic, scholarly, humanist named Doc, but as he grew popular and successful, he began to trade in his badge of service. His descent was gradual, barely perceptible, but nonetheless real. Finally, he found himself transformed into an arrogant, incompetent and materialistic three-headed god. This describes some of us, but many more of our colleagues are falling."*

- *"Now is the time to again wear that badge with humility, and renew our pledge to society."*