

By Dr Raymond Chua, Honorary Secretary

News from SMA Council

1. MEET YOUR COUNCIL ON 15 OCTOBER 2005

The Dialogue with SMA Members is intended to gather feedback from those of you who may wish to have a say in the important issues that face the medical profession. Some of the issues discussed will include works-in-progress. The first Dialogue was held on 19 July 2005 (Tuesday), 2pm at SMA. It was chaired by 1st Vice-President Dr Wong Chiang Yin, who was joined by Council Members Dr Toh Choon Lai, Dr Tan Sze Wee and Dr Yue Wai Mun. Of the 24 responses received, 22 members indicated that they were unable to attend. On the day itself, one SMA Member turned up.

The next Dialogue will be held on 15 October 2005 (Saturday), 6pm at SMA. More information is provided in this month's mailbag.

We look forward to engaging members in a productive discussion, and better representing the views of the general membership.

2. SMA SINGAPORE DOCTORS DIRECTORY 2006/7

We would like to thank all SMA Members who have updated their personal particulars with the Secretariat. Please note that any updates received after 6 September 2005 will not appear in the new edition of the Directory. However, your personal particulars in the SMA Membership Database will still be updated.

The updating of the Directory took more time than anticipated. It is now targeted for release **end of October 2005** and will be entitled **SMA Singapore Doctors Directory 2006/7**. Members will be notified when the Directory is ready for collection. Every member is entitled to a **complimentary copy** as a membership benefit. If you are unable to collect the Directory from the Secretariat,

delivery to your preferred address can be arranged at a nominal charge of **\$5 per copy delivered**. Additional copies are also available at **\$30 per copy (includes delivery) to Members**.

3. A FAMILY DOCTOR FOR EVERY SINGAPOREAN

The Ministry of Health has been actively engaging the professional bodies on raising the overall standard of Family Medicine practice in Singapore so that Family Physicians can play a greater role in our healthcare system. A few of the desired outcomes are improved management of chronic diseases thereby reducing the national burden of disease; more appropriate siting of care in family clinics in the community instead of clinics in hospitals; and containment of healthcare cost and rates of avoidable hospitalisation.

The SMA Council has met with Dr Balaji Sadasivan, Senior Minister of State for Health, and Professor K Satku, Director of Medical Services, on various occasions to provide feedback and share the profession's concerns.

4. STRENGTHENING THE PROFESSIONAL BODIES

The Presidents of the Academy of Medicine, College of Family Physicians and SMA met on 11 February 2005 to look into strengthening collaboration among the professional medical bodies. The meeting, hosted by the SMA, saw the start of the 3 bodies' commitment to exchange views on a more regular basis, besides the informal exchanges that take



place from time to time, so as to promote closer collaboration for the greater good of the medical profession.

The second meeting on 6 September 2005 was hosted by the College. Leaders of the 3 professional bodies exchanged views on matters of interest and concern, and updated one another on their respective activities.

5. NEW COMMITTEES

- i. The Ministry of Health recently formed the **Committee for Self-Regulation in Aesthetic Medicine**.



Committee Members include SMA President Dr Lee Pheng Soon who is also chairing the Committee, and SMA Council Members Dr John Chiam Yih Hsing and Dr Tan Sze Wee.

- ii. The Singapore Medical Council's **Committee on Maintenance of Competency (MOC)** was formed to study what other countries have implemented with regards to maintenance of competency, revalidation/recertification, and to look into how this can be best achieved in the Singapore context. The first meeting was held on 1 September 2005. SMA is represented by Dr Tan Sze Wee; his alternate is Dr Wong Chiang Yin.
- iii. Dr Wong Tien Hua was appointed as SMA Representative for the **Joint Committee of Family Medicine Training (JCFMT)**, which held its first meeting on 12 September 2005. The JCFMT will be responsible for reviewing minimum training requirements, mobilising training resources, monitoring training processes and providing oversight for Family Medicine training activities. Under JCFMT, two Sub-Committees for (a) Training Accreditation and Audit, and (b) Overseas Qualifications and Community Diploma, were formed. Dr Wong will be serving in the latter.

6. OVERSEAS MEETINGS

- i. SMA President Dr Lee Pheng Soon and Honorary Assistant Secretary Dr Chong Yeh Woei represented the Association at the recent 24th Congress and 41st Council Meeting of the Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania, held from 9 to 11 September 2005 in the JW Marriott Hotel in Seoul. SMA 1st Vice-President Dr Wong Chiang Yin attended the Congress as the CMAAO Chairman. Our delegates also participated in the Symposium on "Present Status of National Health Insurance in Asia & Oceania Region", during which Dr Chong YW presented a paper.
- ii. A MASEAN Workshop on Medical Education was organised by the Indonesian Medical Association on 20 August 2005 in Jakarta. SMA Council Member Dr Toh Han Chong and SMJ Editor Prof Wilfred Peh attended the workshop. *(See page 6 for Prof Peh's report.)*

7. NEW OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH CLINIC

A new Occupational Health Clinic has been set up in Hougang Polyclinic at 89 Hougang Avenue 4, Singapore 308433. The other clinic is in Geylang Polyclinic at 21 Geylang East Central, Singapore 389707. *(The clinic that was operating in Ang Mo Kio Polyclinic ceased operations with effect from August 2005.)*

Workers with suspected occupational or work-related diseases can be referred to these Occupational Health Clinics for investigation. Early detection of cases is important so that control measures can be adopted sooner.

For appointments, call:

Hougang Polyclinic

Tel: 6489 8071

Fax: 6386 3783

Geylang Polyclinic

Tel: 6842 2440

The Occupational Health Clinics at the Hougang and Geylang Polyclinics only operate every third Monday and Wednesday of the month respectively.

8. NEW FACE IN SMA SECRETARIAT

Ms Emmeline Yeo joined the SMA Secretariat on 5 September 2005 as Finance and Administration Executive. She replaces Ms Angie Ong who has resigned. ■