



## Joint Letter to *Straits Times* Forum on Inaccurate Statements about General Practitioners

In May this year, social media posts carrying misinformation regarding GPs were brought to the attention of the professional bodies. To address the inaccurate statements, SMA, College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS), Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) jointly wrote to the *Straits Times* Forum. Reproduced below is the letter submitted to the *Straits Times* Forum.

We wish to address the misinformation in recent social media posts containing inaccurate statements about GPs. Family medicine, which is practised by GPs, is a recognised clinical discipline. Family medicine is devoted to the comprehensive and continuing care of individuals and their family. It is a discipline that encompasses all ages, every organ system and different disease entities.

Many GPs undergo years of postgraduate training before they acquire qualifications that allow them to be admitted to the Register of Family Physicians. With further years of training, they acquire other qualifications that allow them to be admitted to the Academy of Medicine,

which is the same body that represents medical and dental specialists in Singapore.

GPs and hospital-based specialists play differing roles, bringing different skills to the healthcare landscape. Both are essential.

In the present COVID-19 pandemic, most generalists are at the front lines attending to patients and performing a critical role in public health, in screening, testing and vaccination of patients. Some generalists also work in the hospital setting, whether acute or community hospitals.

When writing about issues in the public sphere, we expect that effort be made to check the facts. In a civil discourse, this is the responsible thing to do.

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