

HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Report by Dr Lim Kheng Choon

Dr Lim is the Honorary Secretary of the 59th SMA Council. He is currently an associate consultant at Singapore General Hospital.



Meeting with DMS

Over the past months, the SMA Doctors-in-Training (DIT) Committee has received requests from medical students and residents for more information on the direction of the residency programme. The DIT Committee met up with the Director of Medical Services A/Prof Benjamin Ong on 25 May 2018 to address some of these concerns. A/Prof Ong provided insights into the Ministry of Health's (MOH) concerns regarding our ageing population and with it, the changing disease patterns and the need for our healthcare system to transform and adapt to the generalists' broad competencies rather than the narrow specialists' silos.

A/Prof Ong shared on the plans to increase the emphasis on generalist competencies among younger doctors, which include a compulsory postgraduate Year 1 before application for residency and building "broad-based" rotations, such as geriatrics, into specialist training. Issues discussed also include how to engage private practitioners in this new landscape, the increasing numbers of doctors trained and hired to meet the needs of the system, and how to balance the swing towards generalist training without compromising our edge in specialist training.

Most importantly, A/Prof Ong emphasised the importance for the profession to stay together, adapt and meet the nation's healthcare needs. Younger doctors would need to be competent in their clinical skills and widen their network to engage colleagues in primary care and family practice, so that community-based care can be efficiently managed.

SMA Executive Director

The SMA Council recently conducted a review regarding the role and functions of the Executive Director within the SMA Secretariat. Taking into account the

historical reasons for its creation, the current manpower and talent within the secretariat, and future plans and financial sustainability of the Association, the council voted for the removal of the post of Executive Director effective from May 2018. The Council greatly appreciates the effort and contributions by our current and past Executive Directors in making SMA what it is today.

The Courage Fund

The SMA Council re-nominated Prof Low Cheng Hock to represent SMA as a Director of The Courage Fund Limited, for a three-year term from 1 April 2018 until 31 March 2021.

The Courage Fund was initially set up in 2003 through a fund-raising effort to provide relief to SARS victims and healthcare workers. The balance of the Fund was then put into an endowment fund, which can be drawn upon in the event of SARS resurgence or other public health emergencies. Annual interest income of the endowment fund is used to support the Healthcare Humanity Awards.

12th Annual Health Insurance Asia

On 9 May 2018, SMA 1st Vice President Dr Wong Tien Hua gave a presentation at the 12th Annual Health Insurance Asia. Dr Wong spoke on the topic of medical fee benchmarks, providing a background of SMA's previous Guideline on Fees, information asymmetry, patient and doctor perspectives, recommendations of the Health Insurance Task Force and the upcoming MOH Fee Benchmarks.

World Family Doctors' Day

SMA participated in the celebration of the World Family Doctors' Day on 19 May 2018, organised by the College of Family Physicians Singapore. We wish to take this opportunity to salute the work of all family physicians in Singapore. ♦