



- Text by Mellissa Ang, Assistant Manager, Membership Services -

SMA started the year on a good note with the second edition of the Clinic Assistant Introductory Skills Course, which took place from 11 to 14 January 2017. One week prior to commencement of the course, participants attended a job preview to understand more about the Train and Place programme and the expectations of a clinic assistant. 16 of them then took on the challenge and joined the course.

In early January, while interested members of the public were being screened by SMA Secretariat staff, some SMA Members were also making their own preparations for the second batch of SMA-trained clinic assistants. These members added and edited details about clinic vacancies via their SMA membership portal. During the first edition of the course, SMA Members who were keen to hire clinic assistants could only interview participants on the last day of the course. This time round, ten interested clinics and medical groups chose from the limited interview slots available all through the four-day course to do a face-to-face assessment of the course participants and take the first pick for their clinics.

On the first day of the course, all participants were briefed and given unique login IDs to access the Train and Place Portal on their smartphones and SMA laptop, where they could view the complete list of clinic vacancies across

Singapore. Excited chatter spread across the auditorium as participants scrolled through the list of more than 60 clinics with at least 80 vacancies offered. They then had the option to either book an interview slot with the ten clinics and medical groups during the course duration, or contact other potential employers personally via email or phone for job opportunities.

One of the programme participants, Miss B Mahalekshmi, grasped the opportunity and readily signed up for seven interview sessions spread throughout the four-day course. Miss Mahalekshmi shared that her family and friends had encouraged her to explore employment in the healthcare industry due to her caring nature but she had not entertained that thought until she chanced upon the SMA Clinic Assistant Train and Place Programme. As Miss Mahalekshmi was proactive in her search for employment through the opportunities offered by SMA and its members' clinics, the 42-year-old ex-administrative assistant was unfazed by the one-month placement criteria for all participants to be eligible for the 90% e2i course subsidy. She opined, "The interview sessions that SMA arranged for all participants at the end of each day motivated me throughout the course and provided me with ample employment opportunities at the get-go! I'll definitely recommend the SMA

Clinic Assistant course to my family or friends who are keen to take on clinic assistant positions." Miss Mahalekshmi was the first SMA-trained clinic assistant, among her cohort, to secure a clinic assistant job just two days after she completed the course.

If you are looking for SMA-trained clinic assistants for your medical practice, you can create new vacancies on our online platform by logging into your membership portal at <https://www.sma.org.sg/trainandplace>. Alternatively, you can contact Mellissa Ang (mellissa@sma.org.sg) or Denise Jia (denisejia@sma.org.sg) for direct access to the course graduates. This service is provided free of charge for SMA Members and their clinics. ◆

Legend

1. The second batch of graduates from the SMA Clinic Assistant Introductory Skills Course
2. Participants learning communication skills through group work
3. SMA Members' clinics and medical groups conducting interviews with participants

