

HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Report by Dr Lim Kheng Choon

Dr Lim Kheng Choon is the Honorary Secretary of the 58th SMA Council. He is currently an associate consultant at Singapore General Hospital.



Feedback on managed care practices

The Ministry of Health (MOH) and Singapore Medical Council (SMC) invited the three professional bodies – Academy of Medicine, Singapore; College of Family Physicians Singapore; and SMA – to provide feedback following the implementation of the new SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines, Guidelines H3(7), relating to payment of fees to managed care companies that came into force on 1 July 2017.

After collating feedback, the three professional bodies provided a comprehensive response which included the following observations:

- A sizeable number of doctors have since terminated at least one, if not all, of their existing contracts with managed care companies/third party administrators (TPAs).
- Some members still feel that the current guidelines and advisories do not provide sufficient clarity on what are acceptable arrangements, which could potentially expose them to formal complaints.
- TPAs should collect fees from organisations that engage them, not from doctors whose primary responsibility should be towards the care of patients.

- MOH should directly regulate TPAs as these are essentially healthcare entities involved in the provision of healthcare for their clients.

Keeping in touch with medical students

SMA recently partnered with National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and Singapore Health Services during their residency open houses to engage local and returning overseas medical students. The SMA Membership Committee also organised information and sharing sessions with the three local medical schools to share SMA's advocacy work and membership activities. More than 250 students signed up for the complimentary SMA student membership.

SMA representative as CMAAO chairperson

Dr Chong Yeh Woei, one of SMA's former Presidents and a current Council Member, was recently elected as the chairperson of the Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania (CMAAO) for a two-year term at its 32nd General Assembly held in Tokyo. Dr Chong had been serving as CMAAO vice-chairperson since 2011 and has played a key role in improving SMA's relationship with our neighbouring medical associations. We wish him all the best in his new role. ♦