



20th MASEAN

Mid-Term Meeting

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The 20th Medical Association of South East Asian Nations (MASEAN) Mid-Term Meeting, graciously hosted by the Medical Association of Thailand (MAT), was held from 17 to 19 July 2025 at the Amari Bangsaen Hotel in Chonburi, Thailand. The event was held in conjunction with the International Seminar for Authors of Medical Journals from MASEAN Countries, organised by MAT and the MASEAN Group of Journals (GOJ).

The SMA delegation comprised the following members:

- Adj A/Prof Ng Chew Lip, SMA Treasurer; Secretary General of MASEAN
- Prof Mahesh Choolani, Chairperson, MASEAN GOJ
- Dr Calvin Tjio, Vice Chairperson, SMA Doctors-in-Training Committee

- Dr Maxz Ho, Secretary, MASEAN Junior Doctors Network (JDN)
- Ms Krysanja Tan, Ms Denise Tan, Ms Lee Xin Yi and Mr Spencer Soh, SMA Secretariat

Harmful inhalational volatile substances

Delegates from the national medical associations of Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam convened over three days, joined by special guests from the medical associations of Australia and Nepal, to share insights on the positive developments and challenges related to this year's theme: "Harmful Inhalational Volatile Substances, with Special Reference to E-cigarettes and Cannabis".

Delegates shared insights on the current situation and legislative frameworks concerning the use of harmful substances in their respective countries, with a particular focus on the growing global public health impact of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and cannabis. Recognising the increasing prevalence of e-cigarette and cannabis use, especially among youth, and their strong association with tobacco use and other substance use disorders, and expressing concern over the detrimental health effects linked to these substances, the delegates reaffirmed their collective commitment to uphold the highest standards of healthcare and to advance a coordinated regional approach in addressing these escalating public health challenges.

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As a regional network, the MASEAN Group of Journals plays a vital role in strengthening academic publishing within Southeast Asia. We bring together a diverse and dedicated group of editors, each working to raise the standards and impact of their respective journals. This meeting offers us a valuable opportunity to reflect on our progress, address common challenges and more importantly, to launch new initiatives that will help us move forward together.

– Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz, Chairperson, MASEAN

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MASEAN GOJ

The Seminar for Authors of Medical Journals from MASEAN Countries drew 208 participants. During the business meeting, Prof Mahesh Choolani, Senior Deputy Editor of the *Singapore Medical Journal*, concluded his two-year term as chairperson of the MASEAN GOJ and formally handed over the role to A/Prof Maria Christina H Ventura, Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of the Philippine Medical Association*.

The MASEAN GOJ Board also held a strategic meeting on 17 July to discuss key developments and chart new initiatives.

MASEAN JDN

The MASEAN JDN, chaired by Dr Loke Xi Mun from the Malaysian Medical Association, also convened a business

meeting on 17 July. The meeting brought together junior doctor representatives from Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand, reflecting the network's commitment to regional solidarity.

The MASEAN JDN remains dedicated to strengthening regional collaboration through ongoing dialogue, active engagement and meaningful exchange of ideas among junior doctors across the ASEAN region. Its key advocacy areas include safe and supportive working environments, clear and equitable career progression, and fair and improved remuneration.

We extend our deepest appreciation to MAT for their warm hospitality, and we look forward to the 21st MASEAN Conference, which will be hosted by the Philippine Medical Association in Bohol, the Philippines in 2026. ♦



Legend

1. Delegates of 20th MASEAN Mid-Term Meeting
2. SMA President Dr Ng Chee Kwan presenting a token of appreciation to Medical Association of Thailand President Prof Prakitpunthu Tomtitchong
3. Strategic meeting of the MASEAN Group of Journals Board
4. Members of the MASEAN Junior Doctor Network

