FOR DOCTORS, FOR PATIENTS

SMA 56TH ANNUAL REPORT
2015/2016
The Singapore Medical Association (SMA) was formed in 1959, and is the national medical organisation representing the majority of medical practitioners in both the public and private sectors.

Our Motto
Jasa Utama, ‘Service before Self’

Our Objectives
• To promote the medical and allied sciences in Singapore
• To maintain the honour and interests of the medical profession
• To foster and preserve the unity and aim of purpose of the medical profession as a whole
• To voice its opinion, and to acquaint the Government and other relevant bodies with the policies and attitudes of the profession
• To support a higher standard of medical ethics and conduct; to enlighten and direct public opinion on the problems of health in Singapore
• To publish papers, journals and other materials in furtherance of these objectives
The new slogan of the Singapore Medical Association (SMA). For Doctors, For Patients, was unveiled at the SMA Annual Dinner on 16 May 2015 by our guest of honour, Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore.

The new slogan has brought SMA’s key vision and purpose into sharp focus. It emphasises the importance and centrality of the doctor-patient relationship, which is the medium of information exchange between the physician and his patient. The doctor-patient relationship provides the framework and forum for problem-solving, diagnosis and management. A good relationship is in itself therapeutic, and results in better outcomes for all parties involved. In this era of increasing patient autonomy, the process of shared decision-making means that both the doctor and patient are involved when they make a choice from the bewildering array of treatment options available.

SMA supports doctors through its many programmes, activities and publications. By empowering our doctors to do their work ethically and with a high degree of professionalism, the downstream effect will be beneficial to patients as well. Since both the words ‘Doctors’ and ‘Patients’ appear in the slogan, there is no doubt that SMA’s mission is centred on service to the medical profession and the society at large.

The slogan came about after a review and re-examination of SMA’s position in the healthcare landscape. Singapore’s ageing population, changing demographics and increasing burden of chronic diseases require the healthcare sector to adjust and adapt. Likewise, the role of SMA as the national medical association has to change in order to meet the demands of both the medical profession and the public at large. The SMA Council must provide direction for future action and public engagement, and this was done during the SMA Council retreat on 30 May 2015.

Medical ethics and professionalism underlies the notion of a good doctor-patient relationship. The work of the SMA Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism (CMPE) has placed SMA in a strong leadership position in the areas of ethics, health law and professionalism. We are thankful to A/Prof T Thirumoorthy, Executive Director of SMA (CMPE), for his hard work in spearheading the development of curriculum and content in this area.

SMA believes that a good doctor-patient relationship is something worth defending. Through SMA News, updates on our website and electronic communication channels, we seek to share some of the work that the Council had done behind the scenes. Through advocacy and constant engagement with stakeholders, we help to create a conducive environment for doctors to focus on the practice of medicine for the benefit of patients.

In 2015, the medical profession faced many challenges: disruptions to the long-running medical indemnity scheme; proposed changes to the ethical code and guidelines; concerns about assimilation and training of foreign-trained doctors; and emerging business practices threatening professional autonomy, which need to be closely monitored. SMA acted swiftly to meet these challenges in the following ways: we advocated for alternative dispute resolution and tort reform to lower future medical litigation and indemnity costs; we gave feedback on the need for the ethical code and guidelines to be more practical to avoid the practice of defensive medicine; we commented on the need to assimilate foreign-trained doctors to help them understand Singapore’s culture, customs and healthcare system; and we gave advice to members on business practices that we felt restricted professional autonomy and eroded the doctor-patient relationship. Our voice was heard because of your continued support and membership.

By empowering our doctors to do their work ethically and with a high degree of professionalism, the downstream effect will be beneficial to patients… there is no doubt that SMA’s mission is centred on service to the medical profession and the society at large.

A good doctor-patient relationship mandates that the doctor must have the necessary medical knowledge to be clinically effective. The doctor has to keep up to date in his professional and clinical skills, and maintain a strong network of colleagues for advice and referral.

The Singapore Medical Journal, under the leadership of A/Prof Poh Kian Keong, continues to provide our members an avenue to publish their research and views. The waiver of the article submission fee for our members and the journal’s largely local content further add value to our members.

During the year, SMA also worked with many stakeholders to create educational content to meet the needs of our members and the medical profession. The courses and events that we organised brought colleagues within the profession together to network and to learn. In this aspect, we will continue to look for more opportunities to collaborate with healthcare institutions, professional societies and relevant external parties. SMA is always on the lookout for new content and training, including e-learning and web-based tools, to help the medical doctor grow professionally in the changing healthcare environment. We hope that these seminars, workshops and online material will equip our members with the necessary skills and knowledge in their professional development.

What I have outlined above are some highlights of the work of SMA. In 2016, we will continue to create a more comprehensive and wider suite of courses and events to meet the diverse needs of our members. Together with the Council and more than 100 volunteers in the various committees, coupled with the support of more than 7,000 members, SMA will indeed be the voice that shapes the healthcare environment for the good of doctors and patients. We seek your strong, continued mandate and membership as we work for the good of our patients in 2016.
HONORARY SECRETARY’S REPORT

In many ways, his vision and policies had shaped Singapore’s healthcare system in its early years, the result of which is a healthcare system ranked one of the best in the world today. SMA paid tribute to the late Mr Lee in the April 2015 issue of SMA News.

At the SMA Annual Dinner in May 2015, we conferred the SMA Honorary Membership on Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore. The conferment marked President Tony Tan’s place in the esteemed ranks of revered clinicians and influential persons who have distinguished themselves in public life or rendered meritorious service to SMA or the medical profession. Special for us at the Dinner was the unveiling of the new SMA slogan ‘For Doctors, For Patients’, which encapsulates our aim to focus our efforts towards protecting and enhancing the doctor-patient relationship.

Another notable occasion was SMA Lecture 2015, entitled ‘Medicine and Diplomacy’, where we were privileged to have Prof Tommy Koh share his insights on the many roles which our doctors can play to promote good relations with our neighbours and the world.

In the area of representation of the profession, the SMA Council’s engagements with various government agencies and stakeholders played an important contributory role in shaping the policies and plans that were eventually implemented. Even though not every recommendation was taken up by the relevant body, it is our belief that the healthcare landscape is much more viable for medical practitioners because of our advocacy work and collective voice. In other consultations, either by individual or groups of Council members, we consistently sought to put the needs of the medical profession and the doctor-patient relationship at the forefront.

At the SMA Committee level, more than 100 doctors volunteered countless hours of their time to head various initiatives of the Council last year. An example is the work of the Professional Indemnity Committee chaired by Dr Lee Pheng Soon. In 2015, the professional indemnity scheme underwent numerous disruptions, which affected many of our members. These disruptions included changes to existing schemes and classification of risks, as well as the entry of new players with varying product offerings. An article to help our members understand and appreciate the differences of each indemnity scheme was published in the November 2015 issue of SMA News.

The SMA Secretariat, led by Executive Director, Dr Lee Yik Voon, supports the work of the SMA Council and Committees. The Secretariat comprises a total of 24 paid staff as at 31 December 2015. Chief Administrator, Mr Martin Ho, oversees the day-to-day operations of the SMA Secretariat, which is broadly divided into four divisions — Membership, Publications, Courses and Corporate Services — as well as the SMA Charity Fund.

COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDANCE

Up to February 2016, a total of ten council meetings were convened to discuss the business and affairs of the Association. The attendance record of the meetings is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>May ’15</th>
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Overseas • Absent with apologies

The Singapore healthcare landscape is constantly evolving. Despite the ever-changing practice environment, SMA remains steadfast to our raison d’être — to serve and support our members. We believe that in a well-supported milieu for clinical practice, patients’ interests can be best served. In the coming year, the SMA Council,

Committees and Secretariat strive to continue to work together for the Association, to be the collective voice of the medical profession and to further the interests of our members and patients.
### STANDING COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES

#### 56TH SMA COUNCIL 2015/2016

**Chairperson**
- Dr Terence Tan Hsien Liang
- Dr Lee Yik Voon, Chairperson

**Medical Informatics Committee**
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Chairperson
- Dr Tan Tze Lee, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Khor May Thiam, Deputy Chairperson
- Prof Low Cheng Hock

**Basketball:**
- Dr Colin Teo Kok Ann

**Volleyball:**
- Dr Ravi Amran Cuttilan

**Tennis:**
- Dr Anantham Devanand, Chair

**Squash:**
- Dr Jonathan Pang

**Bowling:**
- Dr Alvin Koo

**Sports & Games Committee**
- Prof A/Prof Chin Jing Jih, Vice Chairperson
- Prof Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh, Chairperson

**Wine Appreciation Chapter (SIG)**
- Dr Benny Loo Kai Guo, Chairperson
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Chairperson

**Chemistry Committee**
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Chairperson
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Lim Kheng Choon, Vice Chairperson

**Forensics Committee**
- Dr Lim Kheng Choon, Chairperson
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Vice Chairperson

**ISCA Investigation Committee Panel**
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei
- Dr Benny Loo Kai Guo

**Doctors-in-Training Committee**
- Dr Benny Lee Kai Gus, Chairperson
- Dr Lim Kheng Choon, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Advisor
- Prof Paul Tseang, Advisor
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Advisor

**Medical Informatics Committee**
- Dr Leo Seo Wei, Chairperson
- Dr Chew Lian Li, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Terance Tan Hsien Liang

**Medics Awaris Committee**
- Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui, Chairperson

**ITE Certificate in Healthcare (Outpatient) Course Committee**
- Dr Lee Yiok Koon, Chairperson
- Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui, Vice Chairperson

**SMA-SNA CPR Training Programme**
- A/Prof Lim Siew Hwa, Chairperson
- Dr Chai Tak Seong
- Dr Choo Kay Wee
- Dr Nelson Chia
- Ms Celestine Fong
- Mr Goh Teck Koon
- Ms Christina Loh

**2016 Convention Organising Committee**
- A/Prof Nigel Tan Choon Kiat, Chairperson
- Dr Tan Meng Yuan, Vice Chairperson

**2016 Dinner Organising Committee**
- Dr Ananthan Devanand, Chairperson

**Property Committee**
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh, Chairperson
- Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Lim Kheng Choon, Advisor
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei, Advisor

**Legal Committee**
- Dr Leo Seo Wei, Chairperson
- Dr Chew Lian Li, Vice Chairperson
- Dr Terance Tan Hsien Liang

**SMA Charity Fund**
- Board of Directors
  - Prof Wong Tien Huat
  - Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh
  - Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui

**Medical Ethics Committee**
- A/Prof Chin Jing Jih
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei

**SMA Trust Fund Board of Trustees**
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei
- Dr Benny Loo Kai Guo

**The Courage Fund Limited**
- Board of Trustees
  - Dr Tan Chee Bock & Adrian Tan
  - Prof Chia Yam Cheng (from May '15)
  - Prof Low Cheng Hock
  - Dr Yong Neng Khong (till Apr '15)
  - Dr Teo Eng Kiong

**Centre for Medical Ethics & Professionalism (CMEP)**
- Dr Tan Chee Bock & Adrian Tan
- Prof Chia Yam Cheng (from May '15)
- Prof Low Cheng Hock
- Dr Yong Neng Khong (till Apr '15)

**ESCIMA**
- Prof Tan Sze Jwee
- Prof Lee Siow Hoon

**Non-Executive Directors**
- Dr Wang Tien Huat
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh
- Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui

**Board of Trustees**
- Dr Tan Chee Bock & Adrian Tan
- Prof Chia Yam Cheng (from May '15)
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- Dr Yong Neng Khong (till Apr '15)

**SMA Charity Board**
- Board of Directors
  - Prof Wong Tien Huat
  - Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh
  - Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui

**SMA Trust Fund Board of Trustees**
- Dr Lee Pheng Soon, Chairperson
- Dr Tan Yew Chee, Secretary
- Dr Tan Keo Seo, Treasurer (from Apr '15)
- Prof Chong Hau Pak, Chairman (from Apr '15)
- Dr Bertha Woon

**REPRESENTATIVES OF SMA 2015/2016**
- MOH Advisory Committee on Clinical Management of Dengue
  - Dr Wong Tien Huat

**Singapore Medical Association Private Limited**
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh

**Medical Advisory Committee on Dengue**
- Dr Wong Tien Huat

**Medical Ethics Committee**
- A/Prof Chin Jing Jih
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei

**SMA-SNA CPR Training Programme**
- A/Prof Lim Siew Hwa, Chairperson
- Dr Chai Tak Seong
- Dr Choo Kay Wee
- Dr Nelson Chia
- Ms Celestine Fong
- Mr Goh Teck Koon

**Organisations Under SMA's Governance 2015/2016**
- SMA Charity Fund
  - Board of Directors
    - Prof Wong Tien Huat, Chairperson
    - Mr Colin Lim Fung Wan, Secretary
    - Dr Lee Yik Voon, Treasurer

**Medical Advisory Committee on Dengue**
- Dr Wong Tien Huat
- Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh
- Dr Tammy Chan Tien Mui

**Professional Auditors**
- Professional Auditors
  - Kreston David Yeung PAC

**SMA Charity Fund**
- Board of Directors
  - Prof Wong Tien Huat, Chairperson
  - Mr Colin Lim Fung Wan, Secretary
  - Dr Lee Yik Voon, Treasurer

**Medical Ethics Committee**
- A/Prof Chin Jing Jih
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei

**AGM Advisory Committee on Clinical Management of Dengue**
- Dr Wong Tien Huat

**Medical Ethics Committee**
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- Dr Chong Yeh Woei
- Dr Chong Yeh Woei

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- Prof Low Cheng Hock
- Dr Yong Neng Khong (till Apr '15)
We are pleased to report a surplus of $293,714 for the SMA Group, which will be set aside for future capital expenditure and operational needs. Our combined accumulated fund, which amounts to $6.9 million, is expected to sustain the work of the SMA Group even in times of unexpected decrease in income.

In recognition of the contributions of our members and volunteers, the expenditure in 2015 was significantly increased to fund more membership-related events and courses, such as photography workshops and the online learning module on mental capacity assessment. We also increased the number of partners and SMA collaterals for our members. This focus on quality membership activities reflects SMA’s goal of providing ample opportunities for members to build collegiality and expand their network.

In 2015, the investment climate contributed to a challenging environment for investors to garner a positive rate of return. In view of this, our investment committee, chaired by Prof Tan Sze Wee, Executive Director of Singapore Medical Association Pte Ltd, monitored the situation astutely and carefully. The committee’s vigilant efforts paid off, as our investments, comprising mainly bonds and equities, made a positive return in 2015. Our annualised investment return of 2.53% since its inception in July 2008 is representative of our long-term aim for a reasonable return of investment in a low-risk portfolio.

Last year, discussions were held between SMA and the Alumni Association on possible extension of the current rental lease of the SMA office, which is set to expire in 2018, in line with the expiry of the master lease held by the Alumni Association. A Property Committee was set up to explore options to purchase or rent property for investment or operational purposes.

SMA Charity Fund (SMACF), a separate entity set up by SMA in 2013 to support needy medical students and promote volunteerism among the medical profession, renewed its Institution of a Public Character status for another two years from December 2014. Last year, SMACF was also accepted into the National Council of Social Services’ Care and Share scheme. With the generous support of our well-wishers and members of the profession, SMACF was able to continue to positively impact the next generation of doctors in Singapore.

Transparency in the financial management of the Association has always been a guiding principle of SMA. With this in view, charts of SMA’s income sources and key expenditure during the year have been made available on the SMA website (www.sma.org.sg/membership) from 2015. At a glance, the charts show that membership subscription contributed approximately 22% to SMA’s annual operating expenditure, although 28% of the operating expenditure was devoted to membership-related events and courses. The next significant expense, which amounted to 27% of SMA’s annual operating expenditure, comprised publications-related expenditure.

Membership representation and support is not simply a matter of financial sustainability; it is what SMA stands for and at the heart of what we do. In order to better represent the profession, SMA would need a larger pool of members who support and endorse our work. To this end, we will continue to engage and encourage more medical professionals to come alongside the Association to build a viable healthcare ecosystem for doctors and patients.

From Left-Right: Dr Tammy Chan Teng Mui (Honorary Treasurer), Dr Benny Loo Kai Guo (Honorary Assistant Treasurer)
As Singapore’s national medical association, SMA takes a leading role in influencing public policy, standards and regulations on behalf of our members and patients. Through quiet diplomacy and public position statements, SMA raises concerns and questions, presents feedback from the medical profession and suggests alternatives to the relevant policy-making bodies, in order to advocate the rights of doctors and the well-being of patients. With the support of the medical profession, SMA aims to shape a more inclusive and collaborative healthcare landscape in Singapore.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Revised Singapore Medical Council (SMC) Ethical Code:** The proposed revision of the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines was presented for feedback following the first consultation carried out in 2014, during which SMA conducted an extensive feedback exercise among members. Coupled with input from SMA’s honorary legal advisors, SMA reviewed the revision and highlighted that the existing 2002 SMC Ethical Code was fundamentally sound, requiring only an update and not a revamp. SMA opined that the revised Code would do little to champion professional ethics, and that its numerous provisions and explicit judgements may cause apprehension instead of budding aspiration for personal excellence. SMA is concerned that the revised Code may inevitably encourage the practice of defensive medicine, resulting in negative effects on patient care in Singapore.

- **Finalised Ministry of Health (MOH) National Telemedicine Guidelines:** SMA commented that future revisions should not result in prohibitive costs, which make telemedicine untenable for smaller healthcare institutions with fewer resources.

- **Medical records:** SMA highlighted that the different requirements expected from electronic records vis-à-vis paper records, as set out in the National Guidelines for Retention Periods of Medical Records, do not appear to encourage the adoption of electronic medical records. SMA also gave feedback on the draft Specific Licensing Terms and Conditions (LTCs) on Medical Records for healthcare institutions. Most of SMA’s recommendations were adopted in the final document.

- **Consent forms for aesthetic procedures:** SMA raised concerns over the sample template patient consent form for aesthetic procedures provided by MOH to clinics offering aesthetic procedures. The form appeared to require patients undergoing aesthetic procedures to give consent not only to undergo the procedure, but also to be contacted and interviewed by MOH authorised officers after the procedure. The sample template has since been amended.

- **Managed care:** SMA collaborated with the College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) on several projects, including a survey on managed care organisations conducted among SMA and CFPS members. This is an ongoing area of focus, and we hope to report on more details soon.

- **Medical appointment websites:** SMA received queries from members regarding inaccurate information on doctors and their medical clinics published on third-party medical appointment websites. SMA informed the respective companies that only information provided with consent may be published on their websites, and also provided feedback to the Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore.

- **Ministry of Health:** On various occasions, SMA met with MOH officials, including Minister Gan Kim Yong on 23 October 2015, to highlight various issues such as the future of primary care and the rising costs of medical litigation.

- **Health Promotion Board (HPB):** In a meeting with HPB CEO Mr Zee Yoong Kang to discuss possible collaboration, SMA reiterated our support for HPB’s tobacco control measures. SMA subsequently showed this support at an SMA seminar by distributing smoking cessation collaterals to GPs to be used for information sharing with patients.

- **Medical indemnity:** SMA attended several meetings with representatives of indemnity providers to discuss various issues on medical practice coverage. An article on medical indemnity selection was published in the November 2015 issue of SMA News. SMA also advocated for tort law reforms and changes to
In 2015, SMA took official positions on important issues related to both doctors and patients, sparking active discourse and creating awareness of issues pertinent to our current medical landscape. Some of these areas of concern that were highlighted by the media included post-retirement protection plan for obstetricians, rising medical litigation costs, and a focus on home care. SMA seeks to continue bringing greater awareness to issues that impact both doctors and patients for the improvement of local healthcare.

**MEDIA EXPOSURE**

**3 MARCH 2015**

**Protection for obstetricians: Urgent solution needed**

*The Straits Times*

In response to the newspaper article titled ‘Looming shortage of doctors to deliver babies’, then SMA 1st Vice President Dr Wong Tien Hua pointed out that, in the absence of a post-retirement protection plan for obstetricians, the higher cost of delivering and looming shortage of experienced obstetricians require a viable solution so that a potential national crisis can be averted. SMA posited that the gravity of the current situation facing obstetricians, if left unaddressed, could result in a large number of babies born “uncovered” — a potential problem that should be prevented as Singapore experiences a rise in the number of babies.

**24 APRIL 2015**

**Rising medical litigation costs may turn healthcare sickly**

*The Straits Times*

With reference to then SMA President A/Prof Chin Jing Jih’s President’s Forum column in the March issue of SMA News, it was reported that Singapore needs to ensure that the cost of medical litigation is reasonable and fair to both doctors and patients. The report also added that should this problem not be resolved, doctors in Singapore may avoid risky cases, refuse to practise in high-risk specialties, or even resort to defensive medicine, all of which are detrimental to patients.

**16 & 17 MAY 2015**

**SMA Annual Dinner 2015**

*AsiaOne, Channel NewsAsia, Lianhe Zaobao and The Straits Times*

Various media platforms reported on the SMA Annual Dinner 2015, held on 16 May 2015 at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel Singapore. Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore, was conferred the SMA Honorary Membership 2015 at the event. In his speech, President Tony Tan emphasised the need to focus on primary and family care, and to renew support for geriatric medicine in view of our ageing population. He also encouraged the Association to create opportunities for mentoring at different levels of professional development. Dr Wong Tien Hua, President of the 56th SMA Council, echoed the President’s sentiments, and opined that a strong doctor-patient relationship would ensure effective communication. At the event, the Association’s new slogan, ‘For Doctors, For Patients’ was also unveiled.

**13 AUGUST 2015**

**Medical watchdog incurs net legal expenses of around S$800,000**

*The Straits Times*

In its 2014 Annual Report, the Singapore Medical Council (SMC) published a net expenses of nearly S$800,000 incurred in the last financial year. In 2013, SMA had requested that SMC make public its financial accounts, SMA President Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore, was conferred the SMA Honorary Membership 2015 at the event. In his speech, President Tony Tan emphasised the need to focus on primary and family care, and to renew support for geriatric medicine in view of our ageing population. He also encouraged the Association to create opportunities for mentoring at different levels of professional development. Dr Wong Tien Hua, President of the 56th SMA Council, echoed the President’s sentiments, and opined that a strong doctor-patient relationship would ensure effective communication. At the event, the Association’s new slogan, ‘For Doctors, For Patients’ was also unveiled.

**25 FEBRUARY 2015**

**SMJ study: One in three cabbies report ‘driver fatigue’**

*Channel NewsAsia and TODAY*

In the September issue of the Singapore Medical Journal. The study suggested that pharmacists’ reviews of medication could save costs and reduce side effects from inappropriate medication or dosage. It also called for greater cooperation among physicians, nurses and pharmacists for the benefit of nursing home residents.

**5 OCTOBER 2015**

**Many in Singapore nursing homes take wrong medication, dosage**

*The Straits Times*

It was reported that three in five residents of nursing homes could be taking the wrong dosage or medication. The report quoted a research paper titled ‘Pharmacist review and its impact on Singapore nursing homes’, which was published in The Straits Times.

**28 NOVEMBER 2015**

**SMA offers programmes to help foreign doctors assimilate here**

*The Straits Times*

In response to the article ‘Number of foreign doctors rising in Singapore...

**MOVING FORWARD**

Highlights from the Honorary Secretary, a new column in the SMA News, was launched in 2016 with the aim of providing members with regular updates on SMA’s work that relates to clinical practice and health regulation. As some issues take a longer period to resolve, SMA endeavours to provide members with ‘early warning’ information to help them prepare for any changes in the local medical landscape.
SMA Membership aims to actualise the Association’s vision, which is succinctly captured in our slogan ‘For Doctors, For Patients’. We deliver value-added services to our members, such as professional resources, lifestyle events and networking opportunities, to aid our members in their professional and personal growth, in the hope that the benefits of a well-developed medical practitioner will translate to greater benefits for patients.

We have been strengthening our efforts to create greater value in our membership subscriptions by exploring ways to improve members’ professional and personal lives. Over the last year, the Association continued to reach out to different segments of the medical profession to better understand the ever-changing medical education and practice landscape, and to create awareness of SMA’s work and advocacy on behalf of the profession. In addition, SMA collaborated with various institutions to provide our members with an even wider variety of activities, such as a networking event, a job fair, and photography courses. We also worked closely with our promotional partners and collaborators to bring more exclusive privileges to our members throughout the membership year. Apart from the wealth of online resources available to our members, from 2015, members also have the convenience of paying the annual membership subscription fee online.

**2015 HIGHLIGHTS**

**Broadening our representation**

For the past four years, SMA has extended complimentary student membership to local medical students and those studying abroad as they train to enter the profession. We also continued to reach out to medical professionals to better understand the challenges that they face in the industry, regardless of whether they are local- or overseas-trained, junior or senior, specialists or generalists.

As awareness of SMA and its work is still underappreciated in some sectors, recruitment drives were conducted throughout the year through SMA events and various platforms, which received strong support from healthcare institutions. We are encouraged by a significant increase of 303 members in our membership representation in 2015, and we are confident of receiving continued support and membership from the medical profession in 2016.

**Diversifying membership events**

Last year, SMA organised more than 30 sporting and lifestyle events, which were attended by approximately 2,400 SMA members and guests.

The 30th Inter-Professional Games (IPG) was held from August to October 2015, with the Institute of Engineers (IES) as the main convenor of the Games. A series of 12 games was played among members of SMA, IES, the Law Society of Singapore, Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants, Singapore Institute of Architects, and Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers. SMA emerged as the first runner-up of IPG 2015, with strongholds championships in chess, pool and soccer.

SMC members also had the opportunity to take part in newly mooted lifestyle and practice-related events that the Association hosted in partnership with external organisations. These included photography courses with Canon Imaging Academy, a networking event with SPRING Singapore and a healthcare job fair with e2i.

Since 2012, SMA has organised an annual Members’ Appreciation Nite, as part of our ongoing efforts to express gratitude for the continued support received. Following the premiere screenings of ‘The Hobbit’ trilogy for the past three years, at last year’s Members’ Appreciation Nite, SMA members, committee members and volunteers were given the chance to purchase discounted tickets to the premiere screening of the highly anticipated Star Wars Episode VII: ‘The Force Awakens’. Over 510 SMA members and guests attended the event.

**Collaborating with promotional partners**

Our 12 official promotional partners have been providing tangible and exclusive privileges to enhance our members’ professional and personal lives throughout the membership year. They include the UOB-SMA Platinum Visa Card with perpetual fee waiver, special subscription rates for online medical resources, discounts on books, unique corporate room rates, savings on travel packages and complimentary magazine subscription, among others.

**Utilising online platforms**

As healthcare processes become increasingly digitised, SMA has been working on maintaining and expanding our online resources for members. Some of our existing range of resources include online event registrations, online-accessible course materials from SMA Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism and other professional seminars, SMA News and Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ) online publications, SMA Forum and Ethics Consultation, SMA Jobs Portal and Locum Online, and SMJ CME questionnaires.

More significantly, from 2015 onwards, SMA members are able to make payment for their annual subscription fees via our online payment portal at their convenience.
EMPOWERING THROUGH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

SMA Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism

2015 marks the 15th anniversary of SMA’s Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism (SMA CMEP). SMA CMEP was officially inaugurated on 10 June 2000 to develop and promote the art and science of medical ethics and medical practice for the betterment of patient care and public health. It aims to provide education, leadership, resource and research covering these domains: Professionalism, Medical Ethics, Health Law and Medical Practice. In line with SMA’s slogan, ‘For Doctors, For Patients’, SMA CMEP strives to build a strong doctor-patient partnership through educating, empowering and nurturing doctors to be competent, collegial and professional yet not neglecting personal efficacy and wellness; this will in turn benefit patients in the long run. In the SMA News June 2015 issue, a special section was set aside to mark SMA CMEP’s 15th anniversary, with articles on medical professionalism written by guest writers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

- Core Concepts of Medical Professionalism: This full-day training workshop held its second run on 4 July 2015 and was inaugurated to introduce important concepts of professionalism to healthcare professionals, especially the teaching faculty of medical schools and residency programmes. The workshop adopted an interactive teaching style to allow participants to gain deeper insights and acquire skills to handle matters on medical professionalism. Topics included Professionalism, Doctor-Patient Relationship, Collegiality, Confidentiality and Privacy, Professional Accountability and Governance, Conflict of Interest, and an interactive discussion on Evaluation of Professionalism in Trainees. This event saw a turnout of 30 healthcare professionals. Feedback obtained through surveys included comments such as “an extensive programme” and “active interaction and participation is priceless”.

- Training Module on Mental Capacity Assessment: Supported by the Office of the Public Guardian, SMA CMEP developed the educational module on Assessment of Mental Capacity under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA). Initiated in July 2015, it aims to provide understanding of the principles in the MCA, the application of these principles in the assessment of the individual, and the preparation and issuance of medical reports on mental capacity status as required under the MCA. Following the Online Training Module, a Medico-Legal Seminar on Mental Capacity was organised to further improve skills on mental capacity assessment and report writing. More than 100 doctors attended, and gave feedback that the seminar was useful, informative and practical.

- Medical Ethics, Professionalism and Health Law Course: This 2½ day course is mandatory for exit certification for advanced specialist trainees, family medicine trainees and residents. Currently, five courses are run per year with plans to increase to six in 2017. Since the course commencement in 2004, SMA CMEP has run 38 courses and trained 2,369 trainees (as of January 2016).

Dr Gerald Chua will take over as Executive Director of SMA CMEP from 1 April 2016. We thank Dr T Thirumothy for his leadership, dedication and contribution as Executive Director for the past four years. Dr Thirumothy will continue to sit on the board of directors to assist and guide the execution of programmes. We look forward with confidence to the continued growth of SMA CMEP under the leadership of Dr Gerald Chua.

We also wish to record our sincere gratitude to the SMA CMEP Core Faculty who have contributed their time and effort in all our events (see side bar). Special thanks also goes out to the SMA CMEP and SMA Secretariat for the help rendered in running the events.

SMA CMEP CORE FACULTY

- Dr Harri Rijal Abdullah
- Dr Daniel Keek
- Dr Prof Gilbert Lau
- Dr Angil Lee
- Dr Lee Seo Munh
- Dr Peter Loke
- Dr Habebul Rahman
- Dr Leslie Tay
- A/Prof Cumhert Tao
- Dr Seow Wan Tew
- Dr Luke Toh
- Dr Jason Yap
- Ms Rebecca Chew
- Mr Christopher Chong
- Mr Edmund Kronenburg
- Ms Kuah Boon Theng
- Mr Lai Siong Phong
- Ms Mak Wai Munn
- Dr Albert Min Yee Soo
- Mr Tham Hau Hean
- Mr Eric Tin
- Mr Edwin Tang

SMA CMEP Activities in 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event name</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 - 10 Jun</td>
<td>Medical Ethics, Professionalism and Health Law Course</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Jun</td>
<td>Health Law Seminar for Singhealth Residents</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Mar</td>
<td>Health Law Seminar for Singhealth Residents</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 28 May</td>
<td>Medical Ethics, Professionalism and Health Law Course</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Apr</td>
<td>A Medical-Legal Seminar: SMC Disciplinary Process</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 May</td>
<td>Health Law Seminar for Singhealth Residents</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 23 May</td>
<td>Medical Ethics, Professionalism and Health Law Course</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>SMA Seminar: The Utility (Benefits and Limits) of Ethical Codes in Teaching and Training of an Ethical Clinician</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Jul</td>
<td>Core Concepts in Medical Professionalism</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Jul</td>
<td>Health Law Seminar for Singhealth Residents</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 22 Aug</td>
<td>Medical Ethics, Professionalism and Health Law Course</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Oct</td>
<td>Medical-Legal Seminar on Mental Capacity</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 - 25 Oct</td>
<td>The Annual National Medical-Legal Seminar 2015</td>
<td>127 (Day 1) 123 (Day 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other SMA Activities in 2015

- The 46th SMA National Medical Convention, (‘Medical and Surgical Health’), was held at Sheraton Towers Singapore on 25 July 2015. In line with SMA’s commitment toward doctors and patients, the annual convention addressed topics that are of current interest to both the medical profession and the public.

Around 400 members of the public attended the symposium, which covered various issues related to urological health and prostate problems. The lunch and medical symposium, attended by close to 100 doctors, introduced recent advances in treatment and featured a share-and-learn platform on managing urological conditions. The SMA Council thank Dr Ng Chee Kwan and Dr Simon Chong Shih Jian, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Organising Committee, respectively, as well as all the speakers for making the convention a resounding success.

- This year’s SMA Lecture, entitled ‘Medicine and Diplomacy’, was delivered by Prof Tommy Koh, Singapore’s Ambassador-at-Large. Held on 7 November 2015 at One Farrer Hotel & Spa, the lecture saw a turnout of close to 100 doctors and healthcare professionals. In his lecture, Prof Koh set forth that doctors on humanitarian medical mission are indirectly promoting good relations with other countries, thus representing Singapore on the world stage. The full transcript of the lecture is covered in the December issue of the SMA News.

- SMA, in collaboration with Singapore Cancer Society, conducted a series of cancer education seminars targeted at general practitioners. The seminars shared updates about the various cancers and treatment options available to patients. In 2015, the topics covered were cervical, colorectal and prostate cancers. Lung, gastric and breast cancers will be covered in the 2016 seminars.
Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ)

Lifelong learning is an integral part of a medical doctor’s professional development. Since 1960, SMJ has provided doctors with free access to scientific research papers, insightful commentaries and reviews on a wide variety of topics, including practice guidelines and medicolegal issues, as well as continuing medical education (CME) articles for self-learning. SMJ has remained an open-access journal, as we recognise that broad access to research results and up-to-date medical information is an essential component of lifelong learning. Our members, who enjoy the waivered charge, are also encouraged to share their knowledge and research results with the medical community.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

Although SMJ remains committed to publishing high-quality research papers and articles that add to the knowledge of physicians in Singapore, we have also seen more submissions from around the region and beyond, attesting to the increasing reach of the journal. In 2015, a total of 429 manuscripts were received from 30 countries. Singapore papers accounted for slightly over 50% of the manuscript submissions, followed by submissions from ASEAN, the Middle East, East Asia and South Asia. The manuscript acceptance rate remained constant, at around 40%.

SMJ publishes papers that cover all aspects of human health. These include commissioned reviews, commentaries and editorials, original research, CME articles, short communications in the form of letters to the editor, as well as a small number of rare case reports. Last year, a total of 183 articles were published, with original research papers making up the bulk of them. Our monthly SMC Category 3B CME articles attracted an encouraging number of submissions from local practicing doctors. A total of 9,352 submissions were received for the 24 CME questionnaires.

In 2016, SMJ aimed to encourage more of our readers to access the journal electronically, in keeping with the global call to save the environment by reducing our carbon footprint. To optimise the online user experience, we have plans to upgrade the SMJ website to enhance its mobile responsiveness, search functions and web navigation.

To improve our publication turnaround time, resources have been allocated in 2016 to enable all accepted articles to be e-published ahead of print and indexed in PubMed within five months of acceptance. With this move, we hope to boost the impact and accessibility of papers published in our journal.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

The highlights of 2015 were undoubtedly the four themed issues. The first was the Science of Love issue in February, which covered a spectrum of loves in healthcare — from a doctor’s passion for his profession and patients to finding love in the wards. July saw the Doctors in Training issue, which highlighted issues faced by trainee doctors and medical students, with a focus on the residency programme. In conjunction with Singapore’s 50th year of nation building, the August For Patients, For Nation issue featured a series of articles that celebrated the nation’s past achievements and looked to the future horizon of Singapore healthcare. In October, SMA News collaborated with the Singapore Armed Forces Medical Corps to publish the Military Medicine issue, which showcases the practice of military medicine in Singapore.

Through our monthly columns, SMA News aspires to ignite a positive change in the practice of medicine and management of patients in Singapore. To this end, the Feature column, the mainstay of each edition, aims to explore important issues in healthcare. Meanwhile, personal opinions and analyses of medical issues are discussed respectively in the Opinion and Insight columns. In the Interview column, we feature prominent personalities who inspire with their success stories. To equip doctors to develop good ethics, professionalism and a robust knowledge of health law, the faculty at SMA CMEP contribute monthly articles to their eponymous column in SMA News, while the Executive Series column hosts the discussion of matters relevant to medical practice management. 2015 saw the birth of a new column, OP Matters, which explores a wide variety of topics that are of interest to doctors in general practice. On a lighter note, the Indulge column continues to entertain with mini travelogues, art, book and music reviews, and write-ups on unique hobbies.

2015 saw a revamp of the newsletter’s page layout and masthead. The result is an updated look and feel from the January 2014 issue onwards. With clearly defined sections, clean and reader-friendly fonts, as well as clever use of graphics and colours, the newsletter has become easier to read, both online and in print. We hope readers will enjoy the new face and content of SMA News in 2016.
# Key Financial Highlights

## Group Statement of Income and Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>$3,240,561</td>
<td>$3,245,887</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$2,946,847</td>
<td>$2,818,635</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surplus for the Year After Tax</td>
<td>$293,714</td>
<td>$427,252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Income

- Subscriptions: $713,259 / $717,050
- Commissions: $1,139,300 / $1,046,082
- Rebates: $162,921 / $170,157
- Courses and Events: $563,823 / $463,761
- Investments: $60,646 / $194,218
- Publications: $515,728 / $569,487
- Others: $84,884 / $85,132

### Expenditure

- Administrative and Operating Expenses: $553,469 / $591,017
- Courses and Events: $512,514 / $431,099
- Publications: $280,791 / $284,286
- Staff and Related Expenses: $1,600,073 / $1,512,233

### Group Statement of Financial Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>$3,240,561</td>
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## Assets

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<td>Non-current Assets</td>
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<td>Current Assets</td>
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<td>Total Assets</td>
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<td>$7,112,082</td>
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## Equity And Liabilities

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<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity Attributable to Members of the Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-current Liabilities</td>
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<td>Current Liabilities</td>
<td>$503,543</td>
<td>$493,699</td>
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<td>Total Equity and Liabilities</td>
<td>$7,415,421</td>
<td>$7,112,082</td>
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