

SMACF IS TURNING 5

Text by Ho Li Shan, Assistant Manager,
SMA Charity Fund

SMA Charity Fund (SMACF) is turning five in April this year and we'd like to start by thanking our wonderful donors and volunteers for riding together on this journey with us.

2017 was an eventful year for us. In October 2017, Mr Sitoh Yih Pin stepped down as an SMACF Board Member and Audit Chairperson. The Board also appointed Mr Alex Koh Wei Peng as an incoming Board Member. Mr Sitoh and Mr Koh both share the same profession in auditing and a big heart for charitable works.

Together with the Board, our pioneer batch of veteran doctors and donors, SMACF has grown from a little sprout to a sturdy young tree in just a handful of years. Since 2013, SMACF has raised a total of \$946,449*.

Current financial standing

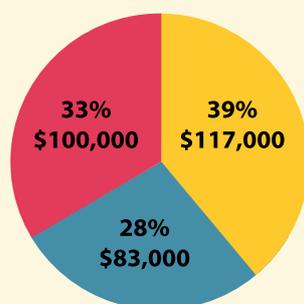
In 2017, we raised a total of \$300,000 (accurate as of 30 November 2017). We are now facing a very challenging situation

where the total amount of funds raised is unable to meet the current needs of \$450,000 per annum. The grant received from the Care & Share Movement (which matches funds raised in 2015 [34%]) will cease by June 2018 after the final disbursement is made and the remaining funds with the NUS Development Office will be fully utilised by next year.

To maintain our current reserve ratio of 1.39 while continuing to support needy medical students through our core programmes, SMACF has to ramp up our fundraising efforts to cover the huge shortfall.

2017 DONATIONS (AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2017)

■ Individuals ■ Corporate ■ Grants



What's next?

A recent study that surveyed medical students in NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine found that close to 19.5% of students come from households with monthly incomes below \$3,000 and about 14.4% of medical students engage in part-time jobs during the course of their medical studies.¹ In a positive light, we are seeing more gung-ho students who choose to bite the bullet and pursue their passion in medical studies. Despite their financial situation, they are mentally prepared to be debt-ridden for the next ten years upon graduation.

It is exactly this fighting spirit that spurs SMACF and our donors to want to do more. We know of many unsung heroes who lead by example, such as doctors who started online campaigns to mobilise the community and tapped on technology to raise more funds collectively. We also see a rising number of individuals who have entrusted SMACF to manage their legacy gifts, passing them on to those who truly deserve a helping hand.

Filling a huge gap in funding needs may be very challenging for small charities, but we are confident that we will make it simply because we are in the sector of healing and saving lives. Although our current donor representation makes up only 4% of the medical profession, we believe that with more publicity and awareness of SMACF's work, many will resonate with our cause and answer our call to action.

In celebration of our fifth year of doing good, we hope to mobilise the medical profession to come forward as one and double our donor base. This will aid our plans to continue the work we are doing so that every needy medical student can receive the assurance of continued support for living expenses throughout their education journey.

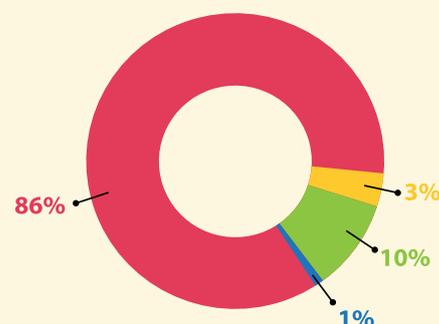
To be part of the cause, you may write to us at smacharity@sma.org.sg to request for a donation form or to submit an enquiry, or simply visit our website at <https://goo.gl/YWXXni> for a copy today.

Your kindness will help us to help more students in need. ◆

*Total receipts (donations and grants) accumulated, excluding funds with the NUS Development Office. Each year, more than 75% of all receipts are spent on charitable activities.

Charitable activities

■ Providing Financial Assistance ■ Supporting Learning Exposures
■ Advocating Volunteerism ■ Recognising Mentorship



Reference

1. Sayampanathan AA, Tan YT, Fong JM, et al. An update on finances and financial support for medical students in Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. *Singapore Med J* 2017; 58(4):206-11.

It only takes 750 individuals to pledge \$50 a month to meet our fundraising goal!

Only we can build our own legacy for the future of healthcare

Be our donor (For new donors)

Complete a donation form at <https://goo.gl/YWXXni> or donate online at <https://www.giving.sg/smacf> today and choose your preferred mode of payment to make a one-time donation.

Sign up as our regular donor (For new/existing ad-hoc donors)

Complete the credit card/GIRO component in the new donation form at <https://goo.gl/YWXXni> to pledge at least \$50/month in perpetuity.

Increase your regular donation (For existing monthly/ annual donors)

Write to us the new amount you would like to contribute on perpetuity basis and choose your preferred mode of payment.

We accept the following modes of payment: Visa, Mastercard, GIRO and cheque. All donations above \$50 qualify for 250% tax deduction and can be automatically included in your tax assessment if you provide us with your NRIC/FIN/UEN.



2013

SPROUT

- No support staff
- Registered as a charity with Institute of Public Character status
- Awarded 15 SMA-Medical Students' Assistance Fund (SMA-MSAF) bursaries annually to needy medical students from NUS Medicine

2014 TO 2015

SAPLING

- One full-time staff
- Began supporting all three local medical schools
- Began supporting two of NUS Medicine's community service projects
- Launched a Basic Donor Engagement Plan (eg, publicity efforts through *SMA News*, electronic direct mailers and events)
- Started an online fundraising campaign via SGGives (now Giving.sg) in December 2015

2016 TO PRESENT

YOUNG TREE

- Running four full-fledged core programmes with an annual budget of \$450,000
- Supporting more Voluntary Welfare Organisations, community service projects and volunteer recruitment drives
- Running an upsized Donor Engagement Plan to include personalised legacy gifts and named bursaries
- Expanding outreach to doctors and the public with our inaugural booth at SMA Medical Week 2017 and brand new Donor Management System
- Number of SMA-MSAF bursaries awarded has seen an average annual increase of 30% since 2014