

News from SMA Council

By Dr Tham Tat Yean, Honorary Secretary

1. MEDICAL CERTIFICATES – RETENTION PERIOD

In response to queries about the retention period for medical certificates (MCs), we would like to advise that MCs can be considered as part of a primary medical record, for which the recommended period of retention is 3 years.

We have also sought advice from our SMA Honorary Legal Advisor, who has advised that **from the legal point of view, MCs are medico-legal documents**, and are recommended to be retained for a period of **up to**

7 years, except for minors whose records need to be kept longer.

In addition, before destroying duplicate MC records, doctors should ensure that case notes have proper and accurate records of the MC and treatment given. Hence, doctors are strongly advised to **document case notes accurately and properly.**

2. MEETING WITH SINGAPORE ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES (SAPI)

The SMA Council met with the

President, Vice-Presidents and Directors of SAPI on 8 October 2002. Both SMA and SAPI appreciated the opportunity for the discussion and agreed to form a joint committee to look at matters of mutual concern, namely:

- i. the joint SMA and SAPI paper on the code of conduct for doctors/ pharmaceuticals, which was last issued in November 1998;
- ii. marketing practices, e.g. transparency in pricing; and
- iii. educating the public and doctors on parallel imports. ■