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PPSMMA Updates

Greetings from PPS! It has been a really busy six months in the office trying to sort out issues concerning private practitioners.

We have engaged with the Third Party Administrators (TPAs) and Managed Care Organisations (MCOs) a few times and have formed a better understanding and working relationship.

Even though our 13th Fee Schedule has been gazetted and the consultation fees for the general practitioners should be between RM30 and RM125 (which is what the TPAs and MCOs should be paying us), it has not been applied. We are actually being short-changed by accepting this. Most of us have already signed an agreement with the TPAs and MCOs before the 13th Fee Schedule; by law, those agreements will not be valid because we are not supposed to give block discounts to them. We will be meeting them again in December to sort this out.

Firstly, I suggest we requote and sign new agreements with the TPAs, MCOs and the clinics. Secondly, we have to apply the standard consultation fees for all patients, as stipulated in the 13th Fee Schedule. It was brought to our attention that some doctors have provided quotations to the TPAs and MCOs with RM0.00 consultation fee.

TPAs and MCOs are complaining about how doctors are overprescribing and manipulating drug pricings, the number of tablets and the type of medications given. These issues could be solved if we apply the standardised consultation fee and stop manipulating prescriptions, as we have to be fair. We assured the TPAs and MCOs that this manipulation will stop or else they will be allowed to terminate that particular doctor's service. We will be able to manage with the approved consultation fee and standardised drug charges. We are in the midst of compiling the standard drug charges and will discuss it at our PPS National Working Committee meeting before presenting it to the MMA ExCo, TPAs and MCOs for their approval. I hope that once this is done, the doctors will adhere to the terms. We have to work together and unite in this matter so that we can sort out this problem. We have also engaged lawyers to look into the TPA/MCO agreements.

Another main issue concerns the Foreign Workers Medical Examination Monitoring Agency (FOMEMA). FOMEMA is busy with roadshows and has yet to revert on a new meeting date in replacement of the one they cancelled earlier. We will try to meet them by the end of this year to further address the issue and reach an agreement. Please give us some time as I assure you we are working hard and even compromising our clinic hours to get through to the relevant people or agencies. We are trying our best. We will update you in the next issue.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.