

A Report on the Role of SCHOMOS in the Malaysian Healthcare System

SCHOMOS 2017/2018



mma
MALAYSIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



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SECTION CONCERNING HOUSE OFFICERS, MEDICAL OFFICERS AND SPECIALISTS (SCHOMOS)

Our Early Years

The Section Concerning House Officers Medical Officers and Specialists (SCHOMOS) was originally formed in 1971 by a group of housemen in Penang General Hospital, with the guidance of the MMA President, Mr. Thuraisingham. This rooted from the realization that many young doctors, especially those in the Government service, were not active in the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA). The first chairman was Dr. Yeo Guan Teik. Sadly, five (5) years later, SCHOMOS was disbanded.

Ten (10) years later, in 1981, SCHOMOS was reactivated following the resolution in MMA's 21st AGM at Kuching, Sarawak. The resolution was moved by Dr. Tan Heng Soon (Proposer) and Dr. Alex Matthews (Seconder). It called for a revival of SCHOMOS as well as to incorporate "specialists" in the organization and stated "That the Malaysian Medical Association set up a sub-committee to advocate the interest of the Government doctors". It had its first national workshop on 29th November 1981. Following the revival, a national committee was elected, branches at state and hospital levels were established and SCHOMOS was registered as a section of the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) in 1991.

Our Objectives

The objectives of SCHOMOS are:

1. It shall be the consultative body to the MMA, in matters pertaining to the doctors in the public sector. All consultative processes, requests and decisions, which SCHOMOS has with the Government and with other bodies outside the MMA, shall be done through the MMA. Between them and to that end it may discuss service, training and other matters, with the prior consent of the MMA Council.
2. To inform doctors in the public sector who are not yet MMA members, of the activities of the MMA and to encourage their involvement as members of the MMA.

OUR WORK

Revival of SCHOMOS

When the resolution was passed unanimously and the MMA Council decided on the revival of SCHOMOS, Dr. Wong Sai Hou was appointed as the coordinator. In his draft of the “Terms of Reference (TOR)”, he proposed for the following:

- (i) SCHOMOS to be a section of the MMA and not function as a standing committee.
- (ii) SCHOMOS to obtain the approval of the MMA Council and the Registrar of Societies (ROS) if it wants to be a section of the MMA.

These recommendations were not taken into consideration until 1987 when the issue of recognition of SCHOMOS surfaced. In an MMA Council meeting in Johor Bahru on August 13, 1988, it was decided that SCHOMOS should be a section under MMA and the TOR was subsequently forwarded to the ROS. In April 1990, a MMA Delegation headed by the President met the ROS and clarified that:

“ROS had registered SCHOMOS as a “Section” of the MMA under the Societies Act of 1966.

Once the formalities were sorted out, SCHOMOS’ real work begun.

“The road before us is yet unmarked but the air is clean and fresh holding infinite possibilities for a bright future through our joint effort in a united strong and consolidated body, SCHOMOS, to look after our interest, rights and privileges”

~Datuk Dr. P. Krishnan (Berita MMA 1988)



National Annual General Meeting

The First official AGM following registration by ROS was held on 20th February 1991. The highlights of the meeting were as follows:

- (i) Ways to improve SCHOMOS representation at the ground/district level,
- (ii) Possibility of setting up a joint panel between MMA, SCHOMOS and Ministry of Health (MOH).

Across the years, many delegates have played an active role in various discussions which include the quality and quantity of medical graduates, *Mesyuarat Bersama Kerajaan* (MBK) papers, postgraduate scholarships, housemanship, medical officers' postings and industrial sponsorships. Details of the issues are highlighted in the monthly "Berita MMA-SCHOMOS" articles. There seems to be a growing interest in SCHOMOS and this is witnessed by the heavily contested SCHOMOS posts (Berita MMA, July 2016).

Development of Grassroots Level SCHOMOS

1992 was the 1st year when all the provisions of the amendments to the MMA Constitution with regards to SCHOMOS became legally bound. Berita MMA (February 1992) stated that the formation of District Representatives and the development of grassroots level SCHOMOS representative list was formed in this year. By June 1992, State SCHOMOS became more efficient and more effective in their respective states. Their representation at the National Working Committee (NWC) meetings had also improved.

National Working Committee (NWC)

The National Working Committee (NWC) was formed in 1987 mainly to replace the annual delegates meeting which was held in the past; where doctors from some states gathered to discuss their problems. The problem with the delegates meeting was that states without SCHOMOS committee went unrepresented and there was no continuity from a delegate meeting to another. In 1990, a SCHOMOS committee had been established in all states and there was representation from all the MMA Branches. The committee met three times a year.



Membership Drive

SCHOMOS has always been active in recruiting its member. The single most important task for all members of the MMA is to recruit at least one member each. For the term 2017/18, SCHOMOS have planned to focus on membership drives, targeting 1400 new members nationwide with at least 10% of them pledging to be life members.



TAKING A LOOK AT THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

Singapore


Singapore has 3 main medical schools. Graduates of Singapore medical schools and those with primary medical qualifications registrable under the Medical Registration Act (First Schedule) are eligible to apply to the Residency Programme. This includes HO's (House officers) and MOs (Medical Officers). Graduates with non-registrable medical qualifications may be considered on a case to case basis. Graduates from overseas need to secure an offer of employment as a doctor from MOHH (Ministry of Health Holdings) or local healthcare institutions before they are eligible to apply (www.moh.gov.sg).

The National University Health System (NUHS), a joint venture between National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Ministry of Health Holdings (MOHH), groups the National University Hospital (NUH), the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, Faculty of Dentistry and creates synergies to advance its tripartite mission of excellence in clinical care, translational clinical research and education. This administrative system ensures institutional officials and residents are provided with administrative support and is a mechanism for voice in affairs affecting the residents and graduate medical education programmes.

The Singapore Medical Association (SMA) has been a representative voice of the medical profession (public and private sectors) and medical students in Singapore through its combined efforts since its establishment in 1959. In recent years, SMA had also participated in numerous closed-door consultations with various ministries and government organisations and raised concerns on matters such as fee guidelines, Medical Registration Act and the complaints and disciplinary processes within the Singapore Medical Council.

Indonesia

Indonesia is in the midst of a series of transitions, ranging from demographic and epidemiological, to social, economic and political. Responding to the increasingly complex epidemiological pattern in the midst of multiple macro-transitions, is one of the major challenges for the country's health system (Health Systems in Transition, 2017). The Indonesian Medical Council or INAMC is an autonomous body, independent, non-structural and responsible to the president. INAMC has functions, and duties as mandated in Article 7 of the Medical Practice Act number 29 of 2004 (UUPK) which are to register



doctors and dentists, to legitimate the professional education standards of doctors and dentists, and to provide guidance to the implementation of medical practice conducted with related institutions in order to improve the quality of medical services.

In performing the function and duties referred to in Article 7 of UUPK, INAMC has the authority under Article 8 of UUPK to approve and to reject the application for registration of doctors and dentists, to issue and to withdraw the registration letter of doctor and dentist, to legitimate the competence standard for doctor and dentist, conducting the testing toward the registration requirements, to legitimate the implementations of the branch of medicine and dentistry, to provide guidance concerning profession ethics set by the professional organization for doctor and dentist, to record the names of doctor and dentists who get the sanction from professional organization due to the violation of profession ethics.

The Indonesian Medical Association or *Ikatan Dokter Indonesia* was formed in 1943 and became a member of the World Medical Association (WMA) in 1953. The association currently plays a role in advocating for the improvement of health care rates and distribution of medical fees that are fair to doctors, propose remuneration policies for doctors and work with various agencies to set standards for various health care services provided by doctors.

Thailand

The government of Thailand is trying to produce more doctors each year but many are concerned that this approach of quantity over quality may create an even bigger problem in the future. To meet the challenge of shortage, the government launched the Primary Care Cluster scheme in late 2016, commonly known as the “family doctor programme”. At present, Thai public hospitals are already struggling with doctors leaving to join the private sector. Freshly graduated doctors are required to work in a public hospital for at least 3 years as an intern in order to pay back their tuition fees. State subsidised healthcare has been an important political issue for various Thai governments for decades and the military government has been hinting that it might end universal healthcare services (Channel News Asia, May 2017).

The Medical Association of Thailand (formerly known as the Medical Association of Siam) was formed in 1921. The association aims to promote fellowship among doctors, promote welfare of the members, support Academic Mission Research and medical services and publish knowledge about doctors and



public health to the people. Apart from its monthly publication of the Journal of Medical Association of Thailand, the association also provides consultative support for members with professional legal problems, supply accommodation for members at the club house, provide research grants to members and organize lecture tours.

To conclude, in comparison to our neighboring countries and the support they provide to the overall medical profession, MMA has indeed created a unique section. The existence of SCHOMOS specifically to look into the welfare and development of public healthcare personnel (House Officers, Medical Officers and Specialists) puts Malaysia at a different platform in terms of looking into the needs of its medical community. It also reflects the importance given towards addressing the needs of medical students and government doctors without compromising the needs of private practitioners.

At the international level, the World Medical Association, which was founded in 1947, initiated the efforts to look into junior doctor's welfare by creating Junior Doctor's Network (JDN) in 2010. JDN was formed to create a platform for junior doctors worldwide to ensure their voice is heard both within the WMA and globally; a role SCHOMOS has been playing for Malaysian junior doctors since its formation in 1981.



THE ROLE OF SCHOMOS IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF HEALTHCARE IN MALAYSIA


Over the years, SCHOMOS has had numerous successes in seeking to identify, address and seek the cooperation of the Malaysian government in resolving issues relating to welfare, salary, allowances, and working conditions of doctors in government service. From the time of formation following a resolution at the AGM in 1981, SCHOMOS has maintained its position in the MMA as a section deeply concerned about matters pertaining to doctors in the public sector.

1983 was an exceptional year for SCHOMOS. Under the Chairmanship of Dr. Amir Farid Ishak, SCHOMOS voiced concerns over the large number of resignation of doctors from the public sector primarily due to unsatisfactory service conditions. SCHOMOS, through MMA, had submitted a Memorandum to the Ministry of Health on the service structure and other benefits for doctors namely:

- (i) Clinical allowance for medical officers
- (ii) Review of specialist allowance
- (iii) Better promotion prospects for specialists
- (iv) Increase in allowance for public health officers/Administrators
- (v) Better promotion prospects for medical officers

A series of meetings with the Ministry of Health and the Public Service Department culminated in the meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister. It was at this meeting that the Government introduced certain incentives to help retain doctors in public service. Amongst the incentives introduced were:

- (i) Automatic Promotion to Senior Time Scale (upon completion of 5 years of service)
- (ii) Recognition of the 1-year posting of House Officers



In **1991**, the government announced an increase in specialists' allowance which will be backdated to January 1990 and that doctors should not be made to work more than 24 hours at a stretch. Sufficient rest was asked to be given to a medical officer doing an active call."

This was a positive outcome of the consistent advocacy work done by SCHOMOS in ensuring the concerns of doctors in public services are heard and understood,

The continual dialogue between MMA and the Government on the plight of doctors in public service is indeed a long-standing one. However, SCHOMOS will continue to be the "voice" of reason for the Government and play its role in ensuring the concerns are met with acceptable conditions. Some of the other significant breakthroughs that have come about due to support from various government agencies are:

- (i) Out-of-hours allowance for doctors going on call after office hours. This was announced by MOH at the NWC Meeting in November 1994.
- (ii) Purchase of quarters for rental for Government doctors in the more expensive cities such as Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru.

"Because of SCHOMOS and MMA constantly raising issues with the Ministry of Health, we have brought better working and living conditions for the doctors. Doctors now have better salaries and quality of life, reduced working hours with more leave given and faster promotions"

*~Dato' Dr. N. K.S. Tharmaseelan
(Council Rep on SCHOMOS)*

"It is therefore beyond reasonable doubt that SCHOMOS has played a vital role every step of the way in ensuring the wellbeing of government doctors and these working papers have culminated in the jewel of SCHOMOS' crown-the much coveted time-based promotional exercise"

*~Dr. S. Sivabala, Hon. Sec of
SCHOMOS, 2010/2011*



SMART PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMES

Introduction

The benefits received by the Government doctors today are the fruit of the relentless efforts of SCHOMOS and the MOH. SCHOMOS, through its smart partnership and engagement programmes with various agencies, has been able to push through its agenda to highlight and address the various plights of House Officer, Medical Officers and Specialists. Meeting relevant government agencies at regular intervals has also ensured a rather smooth implementation of all policies concerning our benefit. The following are some of the examples of partnerships and engagement between SCHOMOS and various agencies and its success stories:

Mesyuarat Bersama Kerajaan (MBK)

MBK is a Council which consists 17 various unions and associations. Since its inception in 1992, the Council is responsible in caring for the welfare of civil servants. It is a platform for representatives of each union and association to meet relevant authorities and sort our issues relating to emolument, allowances and welfare. There are four meeting held in a year; two for paper presentations and discussion at MBK level and two for presentation of the papers to *Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam* (JPA).

SCHOMOS has been playing a major role in MBK since its formation. It is, in fact, the only association that represents government doctors in Malaysia. Many past SCHOMOS Chairpersons have been selected as Chairpersons of MBK; namely Dr. Mastura Ismail and Dato Dr. Vasan Sinnadurai. Through MBK, SCHOMOS had succeeded in gaining approval for new allowances or increases in existing allowances. The following are some of our success:



(i) On-call allowance for doctors

In 1993, SCHOMOS proposed for an increase in the on-call allowance of doctors which was RM 25/on-call duty doctor. At the 9th MBK meeting, SCHOMOS presented papers which included the proposal to review and increase on-call allowance. After continuous dialogue and persistency from SCHOMOS, the on-call allowance was finally increased in year 2005 to RM 100 on normal working days and RM 110 on weekends and public holidays. Today, amongst others, government doctors receive allowances for cost of living, housing, critical services. Doctors who are more senior get an 'elaun keraian' while the on-call allowance is on a per claim basis.

(ii) Introduction of critical allowance

In 2004, SCHOMOS proposed for increase in critical allowance for MOs, HOs and Specialists. Dr. Mastura Ismail and Dr. Krishna Kumar proposed for 50% increase in Critical Allowance for MOs working in Sabah and Sarawak at the 9th MBK Meeting.

(iii) Handphone allowance

In 2008, SCHOMOS, represented by Dr. Mastura and Dr. Harvinder Sigh also proposed for handphone allowance. JPA had introduced the allowance for government doctors of Grade UD54 and this benefit was later extended to all other civil servants.

(iv) Standardization of service and salary scheme for medical lecturers

In 2004, SCHOMOS presented a proposal to standardize the service scheme for all medical and dental lecturers from grade 45 to grade 54 as well as increase the on-call allowances. The increase from RM500 to RM 750 was implemented starting 1st January 2008.

(v) Limited private practice in government hospitals

In 2004, SCHOMOS had also proposed for limited private practice in government hospitals. Selayang Hospital and Putrajaya Hospital were selected as pilot hospitals for this programme. It was agreed for implementation in 2005 and has since been expanded to many other hospitals; almost 11 hospitals nationwide.



(vi) Increase in incentive for public health specialists

On 26 March 2009, Dr. Mastura Ismail and Dr. Harvinder Singh attended the MBK meeting and presented SCHOMOS' proposals which were submitted 5 months prior to the meeting. SCHOMOS proposed for an increase of the public health incentive for public health specialists. In the same year, the increase in specialists' allowance was implemented starting January 2009; 20 years after the last review in 1989. There was also approval from MOH for locum in private health care settings and the allowance for Compassionate Lists were introduced to reduce backlog of elective surgical cases that were performed during weekends. Specialists are paid based on sessional rate of Rm200/hr whereas Medical Officers to be paid at RM80/hour. Hardship allowance for rural posting based on specific locations was also introduced.

(vii) Flying Doctors Allowance (FDA)

In 2015, the FDA allowance for MOH and insurance coverage for flying doctors in Sabah and Sarawak was approved (Presented By Dato Dr Azhar) but pending its implementation due to the country's financial situation. The matter was brought up during a National SCHOMOS AGM and a team led by Dr. Vasu Pillai is looking seriously into this matter.

(viii) Maternity and Paternity leave

In December 2017, SCHOMOS had proposed for a 4-month-long maternity leave and 2-week-long paternity leave for parents with newborn babies. The proposal is currently pending approval.

(ix) Advanced Competency Programme (ACP)

Dr. Mastura Ismail had proposed for the change of sabbatical leave taken by specialists and sub-specialists to ACP. The proposal for change was accepted by MOH.

(x) Extension of on-call allowance

Another successful effort by SCHOMOS is the extension of the on-call allowance to hospital directors who are doing on-calls.

(xi) Papers presented in 2016

In the year 2016, a series of meetings were held with MBK starting in January 2016 in Kuching, followed by 'Bahagian Saraan' JPA in February 2016 and the final meeting on 10-12th May 2016 at Institute Semarak, FELDA, Kajang. Three papers were presented by Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga and the following outlined SCHOMOS' request:

- SCHOMOS requested for an increment of 100% for the medical report fee
(proposed by Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga)
- SCHOMOS requested for an increment of RM500/month after every 3 years of service as a specialist in UD53/54 (proposed by Dr. Vasu Pillai Letchumanan)
- SCHOMOS requested RM3,000 per month as a sub-specialist allowance
(proposed by Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga)

(xii) Papers presented in 2017

In March 2017, Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga and Dr. Vasu Pillai Letchumanan attended the MBK Meeting at JPA and presented the following papers. The MBK Meeting in December 2017 was attended by Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga and Dr. Kevin Ng and the proposals received the following outcomes:

- Re-introduction of the appointment of Medical Officer as Registrar at MOH hospitals. This will be done based on the "enhancing parallel pathway". The proposal was put forward by Dr. Arvindran.
- Proposal to increase leave and service day of officers who follow the closed system during their medical degrees. The outcome of this proposal was that officers will be allowed to use the "academic leave" of 14 days per semester. Further improvement, including to the service years will be discussed during the meeting with MOH. The proposal was put forward by Dr. Vasu Pillai.
- Proposal for sub-specialists allowance. This proposal was said to be not suitable by the "MOH Convention of Specialists 2017" at this point in time as the present focus is to increase the number of sub-specialists.

In addition to the above, Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga added the following proposal in the December 2017 meeting:

- Proposal to increase Maternity Leave up to 120 days/delivery and Paternity Leave to 14 days. This proposal is in line with the current government's manifesto in putting women and mother's first. The proposal by SCHOMOS is also extended by MOH to the entire civil service.

Many of the benefits and privileges enjoyed by the government doctors today are founded from years of persistency and continuous communication by SCHOMOS via MBK. Although some proposals will take a few more years of continuous battle, SCHOMOS will continue to engage with MBK and MOH. The proposals brought forward by SCHOMOS in meetings with MBK, once approved, is often extended to other areas of the civil service and therefore creating a ripple effect throughout the government agencies and serve as an agent of change.



Engagement with Various Partners


Meeting with KSU

Various workers' organizations from different health sectors attend this meeting to enable better understanding between the health care workers and the mainstream administration. On 12 August 2015, SCHOMOS has its first meeting with the new KSU of MOH, Dr. Chew Chaw Min. At the most recent meeting on March 2017, which was attended by Dr. Arvindran Alaga, SCHOMOS requested for all specialists who have attained UD 54 till end of 2012 to be considered for the UD56 posts. The request was granted. Prior to this, the circular had stated that they were going to consider the candidate of UD54 till 2010 only.



Ministry of Health (MOH)

SCHOMOS engages MOH at various levels. It always tries to bring up and solve issues concerning junior doctors. However, these efforts have been intensified in the last 3 years with *Bahagian Perkembangan Perubatan* under the lead of Dr. Arvindran, Dr, Vasu and the Exco members. SCHOMOS had also played an important role in highlighting the plights of junior doctors being overworked, bullied by seniors as well as suffering from depression. In April 2012, following the death of Dr. Lee Chang Tat, 29, Dr. Mary Cardosa, President of MMA urged MOH to review the shift system and conduct a study on the mental health of junior doctors (The Star Online, April 2012). In August 2017, MMA launched Helpdoc, a 24-hour line to provide support and guidance to doctors particularly trainee doctors going through the difficult transition in the medical career (Free Malaysia Today, August 2017). Under the Helpdoc, SCHOMOS played an important role in solving doctor's issues.




SCHOMOS also had a round table discussion with Datuk Dr. Jeyaindran, Deputy Director General of Health, MOH during the ABC of Housemanship Seminar and these were among the issues discussed:

- (i) E-GL from HRMIS for house officers (to include the treatment facilities for the parents of contract house officers as stated in the House Officers Contract).
- (ii) Request for MOH to consider UD56 for senior medical who were directors in district hospitals and pillars of many departments and health clinics.
- (iii) Suggestion for Government to create a special fund to give allowances or loan facilities for those who are enrolled in the parallel pathway and Masters Programme without HLP.
- (iv) A survey and research on registered housemanship in Malaysia with the participants of the ABC of Housemanship Seminar was carried out and submitted to MOH. The survey found that out of the 210 respondents, 97.1% are aware of the “Contract HO System” but the majority of them are worried of the potential of victimization and biasness. 98% of the respondents would like to continue with post graduate studies but 79.3% plan to migrate overseas. The majority of respondents fear of being incompetent at the workplace. SCHOMOS is currently in discussion with MOHE to conduct a research regarding alternative career pathways for future doctors.

Dr. Arvindran and Dr. Ravi Naidu also attended a constructive meeting with the Bahagian Perkembangan Perubatan, chaired by Dr. Mohd Fikri B. Ujang regarding “Transformation of Malaysian Housemanship Training Programme”. At the meeting, SCHOMOS highlighted the following issues:

- (i) Implementation of Contract System including the numbers/percentage of HOs being absorbed as MOs and the projected statistics.
- (ii) Transparency of the implementation of the Certificate of Completion of Posting (CCP) and Certificate of Completion of Houseman Training (CCHT).
- (iii) Standardization of the method of assessment by training more trainers.
- (iv) Criteria to be absorbed by MOs.
- (v) Opportunity for HO who intend to specialize in clinical areas and those keen to venture into primary care after completion of housemanship.
- (vi) Opportunity for non-clinical pathways.

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- (vii) Reduction of waiting period to enter housemanship training.
 - (viii) The need for effective method of communications and soft skills in training and assessing houseofficers.

Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)


SCHOMOS had always tried to engage with MOHE and an initial meeting was finally set between Dr. Ravindran Naidu, Dr. Vasu and the top management team of MOHE in November 2016. The discussion centered on the topic of medical education in Malaysia; particularly the qualifications for entry into medical school either locally or into foreign universities. The following were some of the points of discussion:

- (i) MOHE has no control on quality of foreign medical graduates.
- (ii) MMC was advised to revoke licenses of the universities which accepted graduates below the minimum requirements.
- (iii) MOHE has stopped issuing No Objection Certification (NOC) for students going to foreign medical colleges.
- (iv) The Clinical Master Programme curriculum was being reviewed under the National Master Programme Curriculum.
- (v) MOHE is trying to increase the number of postgraduates by increasing the number of MOH hospitals which have been approved a training facilities.
- (vi) MOHE agreed to support MMA membership drives in the universities.

(Source: Berita MMA, November 2016)

In their meeting with MOHE on 8 September 2017, SCHOMOS, led by Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga offered the following suggestions and views:

- (i) Improving quality and control quantity of medical graduates. MOHE is committed in producing excellent medical education by controlling number of medical students following moratorium imposed for new medical colleges/programmes till 2021 by the Government.
- (ii) For more seats to be offered for the Masters Programmes for the upcoming academic year. SCHOMOS also proposed for an extension in the validity of exam results.
- (iii) For more house officers to be trained in University Hospitals.

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- (iv) For NSR/APC payment to be absorbed by each university. The proposal is now being implemented by MOHE.

(Source : Berita MMA, September 2017)

Integrity Unit, MOH

SCHOMOS met three (3) times with the Integrity Unit of MOH. SCHOMOS constantly seeks the advice of the Head of Integrity Unit, MOH with matters pertaining to industrial sponsorship. The meeting highlighted that such sponsorships can be channeled through societies that have proper accounts, documentations, minutes and transparency. MMA meets this criterion and have started engaging with the umbrella body of pharmaceutical companies, Pharmaceutical Association of Malaysia (PhAMA), to iron out details of this collaboration. The final draft is awaiting implementation by JPA.

Meeting with other government agencies

SCHOMOS continues to meet with other relevant agencies to discuss matters pertaining to government doctors. Amongst the other agencies are:

- (i) Auditor General

SCHOMOS and the MMA Exco met with the Auditor General YBhg. Tan Sri Haji Ambrin Bin Buang and the external auditors for MOH in 2016.

- (ii) TN50 Dialogue

Dr. Arvindran a/l Alaga attended the TN50 Dialogue with Tan Sri KPPA on behalf of SCHOMOS and MBK in October 2017. The suggestions put forward at this dialogue are as follows:

- To train more specialists and sub-specialists with better pay scale.
- To further extend moratorium for medical colleges and programmes.
- To identify measures to curb NCD.
- To train more House Officers in university hospitals.

Overall, the working relationship and smart partnerships between SCHOMOS and various agencies have helped shaped the healthcare system in Malaysia in general. Specifically, this smart partnership helped SCHOMOS to bring forward issues regarding Medical Report for MOs, Specialist Allowance for Specialists and Registrar Allowance for MOs.. At a macro level, many proposals that were presented to JPA via MBK such as critical allowance, handphone allowance and increase in maternity and paternity leave benefitted the entire civil service. SCHOMOS is also very supportive of MBK papers presented at JPA meetings.

(i) Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council

A meeting was recently held to discuss collaboration with SCHOMOS.





CORPORATE COLLABORATIONS

Although SCHOMOS focused on the general well-being of government doctors, it also brought in many perks for the members. SCHOMOS introduced the following collaborations for the benefit of its members:

Automobile

NAZA

Members and their family members can get extra 3% rebate (for all the cars) with prevailing promotions for selected models. This includes 12 months of free access to Subang Airport Sky Lounge.

Renault

Members and their immediate family members can get extra RM 2000 rebate, on top of current promotions (for all cars) with five years of free service and warranty for selected models.

Audi

Life members and their immediate family members can get an extra 8% rebate (for all cars) with five years of warranty and two years of free service.

Property

PDG Development SDN BHD

Members can now purchase properties in Melaka (Ozana Residence and Cheng Bestari) with exclusive discounts of RM 10000 and RM 5000 respectively with no legal fees charged.



Travel

Air Asia

In 2015, SCHOMOS had succeeded in striking a deal with Air Asia for members and their immediate family members to be entitled to discounted premium flex rates on all Air Asia flights. Some of the benefits made available are:

- (i) Flight can be postponed without penalty up to two hours before departure.
- (ii) Free premium seat selection
- (iii) Free meal combos
- (iv) Free 20kg baggage allowance

“Five a Travel”

Members and their immediate family members can enjoy exclusive discounts worth 10-15% for their travel and tours.

Fitness

Chi Fitness

SCHOMOS had also negotiated for good deals with Chi Fitness for its members.

SCHOMOS continues to initiate talks with many new vendors for potential corporate partnerships.



TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

SCHOMOS continuously develops the knowledge and skills of its medical graduates and fellow members. The following are a few of the programmes that have been part of this development programme:

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

On 10th August 2004, at the MOH, SCHOMOS was invited for a Brain Storming Session on Revising the *Penilaian Tahap Kecekapan* (PTK). The outcome of that session was the introduction of CPD to replace PTK for all doctors serving in all the ministries. This was implemented with the understanding that the method of evaluation using PTK has never been accurate and therefore needed a revamp. CPD is a credit point system for health professionals and it has a generic format applicable to all health personnel. This system was implemented in all ministries with doctors in January 2005 (Berita MMA, August 2004). MOH was the first Ministry approved by the Public Service Department to use CPD points as a measuring tool. With the new Medical Act 2012 which came into force in July 2017, the APC renewal from 2020 onwards (application in 2019) will be subject to the achievement of a minimum of 20 CPD points and Professional Medical Indemnity coverage.

Rights and Responsibilities of Government Doctors Seminar

For the last few years, the MMA has been communicating with the Health Ministry on the issue of inadequately trained and motivated new medical graduates. The concern was primarily the rapid expansion of private, and to some extent, public medical colleges. There seems to be many medical students who have less than stellar academic results and some who are not interested in the field. A combination that leads to a higher proportion of new doctors who are inadequately prepared for the grueling “Vocational Training” course known as “Housemanship”.

To address this problem, the MMA, through SCHOMOS, has been holding courses on “The Rights and Responsibilities of Government Doctors” all over the country for several years now (The Star Online, 2017). R & R Seminar for government doctors were initially held annually since 2008 and later being organized twice a year since 2013. The Seminar is organized primarily to sensitize doctors on the latest issues and provide them a platform to have a dialogue session with the administration and MOH.





MMA “Towards Excellence Series”

SCHOMOS and PPS, together with the contribution of the Society of MMA Medical Students (SMMAMS), successfully organized the “Towards Excellence Series” on 20 February 2016. This series consisted of the ABC of Housemanship Seminar, Women Empowerment Seminar, Conference of Minds and Housemanship Seminar.

ABC of Housemanship Seminar in Malaysia

The ABC of Housemanship Seminar was held as part of the “Towards Excellence Series” project. The main objective of this Seminar was to expose our future doctors to the working culture in our hospitals. This first ever Seminar was held in 2015 and attended by more than 150 medical graduates and final year medical students; some even from Sabah and Sarawak. Among the issues that were highlighted is the potential problems that junior doctors could face and what was expected of them when they are posted in each department. Participants were exposed to the art of effective communication and given the opportunity for some hand-on experience with common procedures. The feedback for the first event was very encouraging and SCHOMOS planned to continue to make this seminar an annual event.

The second of such seminar was organized on 24-25 March 2017 at the National Cancer Institute in Putrajaya. The launch of the e-Google registration form saw an overwhelming response from the medical graduates who were waiting for postings. A total of 250 registrations were recorded in just within the first two weeks. The seminar included talks by learned speakers and interactive sessions for participants to attain hands-on experiences. The participants were enthusiastic and eager to revise their procedures.

The third of such seminar was organized in collaboration with Perdana University in November 2017. The importance of this Seminar was evident with the registration of 210 participants within a month. However, due to logistics constraints, SCHOMOS only managed to accommodate 160 participants.



Women Empowerment Seminar



A Women Empowerment Seminar was organized for doctors and the public to empower women to step up as leaders and promote gender equality. Various distinguished women speakers were invited to share their experiences to approximately 160 participants. The seminar ended with a forum to encourage lively discussions between participants and the speakers. The Seminar was also held on 20 February 2016 as part of the SCHOMOS and SMMAMS' "Towards Excellence Series project".

Conference of Minds


As part of the "Towards Excellence Series" as well, a Conference of Minds was organized by SCHOMOS. This programme brought together many Past Chairpersons of SCHOMOS who had contributed many working papers in MBK. Sharing of past experiences took place and ideas were contributed for future papers. Previously, similar meetings known as "Think-Tanks" were carried out.

Other Initiatives

Other initiatives that are carried out to address this issue are:

(i) *Program Transformasi Minda*

"Program Transformasi Minda" (PTM) started in January 2013 as a substitute for "Kursus Induksi". It consists a five-day programme where civil servants are exposed to the structure and organization of the civil service. This programme provides exposure and adaptive mind in the early stages of appointment of officials in the government sector. During its implementation as "Kursus Induksi", MMA(SCHOMOS) was given the opportunity to introduce its organization to the house officers and recruit new members. Upon the programme being replaced by PTM, MMA lost its slot.



Following this change, the SCHOMOS EXCO worked relentlessly to regain its place in the PTM programme. The request was finally heard and accepted by the Medical Development Department. In July 2011, Dr. Harvinder Singh successfully arranged a slot for SCHOMOS during *Modul PTM Pegawai Perubatan Siswazah*. This gave SCHOMOS a chance to introduce MMA and have an interactive session with the HOs (Berita MMA, September 2015). Starting from October 2015, SCHOMOS was given a 30-minute slot to introduce MMA to aspiring young doctors in each PTM (Berita MMA, November 2015).

Till today, SCHOMOS continues to actively participate in this programme by the MOH to meet the new house officers and share with them the benefits of joining MMA and the latest healthcare issues. It is an avenue to expose the young doctors to MMS and recruit them into this esteemed society.

(ii) Regular Meetings with House Officers

Regular meetings with house officers are held during Continuous Professional Development (CPD) talks to allow them to raise concerns or address any issues they may have.

(iii) SCHOMOS Guidebook 2016

The publication of a SCHOMOS guidebook was published in 2016 to provide advice and guidance for house officers. The topics covered in this handbook vary from how to fill in forms properly to medical indemnity to social media guidelines. There is also a segment on “The road to post graduation in Malaysia and the alternative pathways” which outlines the ways to do post-graduate examinations in Malaysia. In sum, the content of the guidelines is elaborate and there are even flow charts explaining the journey from medical student to houseman.

(iv) Sports

In the recent years, SCHOMOS has organized many sports event for its members at various states. The following are some of the sports events organized:

Inter-state Sports Activities

Various inter-state sports activities are being held among government doctors to foster better relationships in a non-working environment.



SCHOMOS Charity Health Run

The Charity Health run, sponsored mainly by UCSI University saw the involvement of many members. Other activities that were organized then were CPR Training, Free Health Screening and Lucky Draws. To-date, this is the largest event by SCHOMOS with approximately 1900 participants.





Cyber Sports Tournament

SCHOMOS Cyber Sports Tournament (SCST) successfully kick-started on 22 April 2017. It was the first national e-sports tournament to be organized exclusively for doctors, medical graduates and medical students. This tournament was yet another unique activity organized by SCHOMOS in line with its track record over the years for organizing unique events tailored to the needs of its members. This tournament has now been administered as an annual event for SCHOMOS and its members. The next tournament is scheduled on 20th April 2018.

(v) Registry of Society Malaysia (ROS)

In 2015, the ROS had approved SCHOMOS' constitution amendment presented by Dr. Arvindran and Dr. Vasu (which was passed in an AGM in Kota Bharu) to encourage the house officers in their first two years to become a MMA Life Member with the reduced fee of RM 1,500. Following this, many have joined as Life Members.

(vi) SCHOMOS Facebook Page

The SCHOMOS Facebook page was initiated by the Past Chairperson, Dr. Rosalind and the NATIONAL SCHOMOS Committee members since 2014/2015 onward had ensured that it remains active. This move enables its followers, mainly its members to connect for all the latest updates. At present, there are over 2100 members.



OUR CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT

Although SCHOMOS has come a long way in our dialogue with the Ministry of Health, its journey continues for the following issues:

Medical Act 2012

The new Medical Act 2012 came into force on 1 July 2017 and heralds many new challenges to both government and private medical practitioners. The following are some of the changes:

(i) Increase in Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) Fees

The increase in the MMC fees will affect SCHOMOS members and new doctors the most. Therefore, SCHOMOS negotiated with the MOH on this matter and ensured that the APC cost is covered by the Government for doctors in the public sector.

(ii) National Specialist Registry (NSR)

All specialists will be required to register under the new NSR, which has now been put under the purview of the MMC. Registration in the NSR is mandatory for all specialists. The fee for registration and renewal was claimable from the respective hospitals subject to the approval of the hospital director. SCHOMOS will work to maintain this privilege.

In conclusion, the new Medical Act 2012 has just come into force and with all the new implementations; there will be many adjustments to be made. SCHOMOS will be engaging with relevant parties to discuss all the above matters (Berita MMA, August 2017).

(iii) Medical Indemnity

Although Professional Medical Indemnity coverage is covered by the MOH and the Malaysian Government for all government doctors who practice in the public sector, SCHOMOS advises its members to self-purchase additional Medical Indemnity to ensure personal legal representation for all matters pertaining to the professional practice (including MMC inquiries) which is not covered by the Government Indemnity.



Voicing Concerns of Doctors from Public Sector

SCHOMOS will continue to serve its original purpose; which is to voice the concerns of doctors from public sector. Although it has come a long way since its early beginning in 1981, there is still much to do. It will continue to remain true to its objectives and serve its community in the public sector.


Promotions of Jawatan Utama Sektor Awam (JUSA)

In 2013, SCHOMOS carried out a JUSA Survey and submitted 50 names. In 2016, SCHOMOS had submitted two lists to MOH and JPA respectively; a list 81 Specialists (MMA members) and a list of 50 eligible candidates for JUSA in Malaysia (Non-members of MMA). Following this, for 2017/2018, a sum of 113 JUSA posts were granted. Despite there being a recent promotion exercise for the JUSA positions, the results left many disappointed and frustrated. SCHOMOS is always engaging with the Public Service Department regarding this matter. This is a cause that will be continuously championed by SCHOMOS.

Payment Rise for Doctors Serving Under Flying Doctor Service (FDA)

In 1973, the Flying Doctor Service (FDS) was introduced to provide basic health services to people living in remote areas. The FDS also provides medical emergency evacuation (MEDEVAC) of seriously ill patients from the locality to the nearest appropriate hospital, from rural health clinics to hospital and from hospital to hospital. The FDS team comprises a medical officer, a medical assistant and two community nurses who visit the locations once a month or once in two months. Besides FDS, another important sector in Rural Health Development is the Village Health Promoter Program (VHP).

Many doctors decline offers to serve in rural Sarawak due to the lack of basic amenities as well as entertainment. Many who are serving in smaller districts have to provide services to areas that cannot



be connected via roads; leaving FDS as the only method of delivering health care services to the community. The doctors are currently given an allowance of RM 35 per day to visit these areas and another RM 35 for food allowance. The National SCHOMOS team led by Dr. Vasu Pillai organized serious discussions with via the State Health Department JKNS-MMA Consultative Meetings held once every two months (Berita MMA, August 2016). SCHOMOS hopes to be able to realize its purpose of advocating for pay rise for these remarkable group of doctors.

The FDA allowance for Sabah and Sarawak was approved two years ago but it was only announced by JPA recently that it will be implemented, pending out economy's recovery.

Industrial Sponsorship

SCHOMOS continues to seek the support of the Integrity Unity (MOH), Pharmaceutical Association of Malaysia (PhAMA) and the Medical Device Associations (MMDA and AMMI) to formulate a guideline to facilitate industrial sponsorship for doctors going for conferences overseas. This is via a transparent and proper system with good check and balance mechanisms in place. SCHOMOS works closely with the Ministry to ensure protocols are in place to allow industrial sponsorships to be channeled via the MMA.

Continuous Training and Development

The Rights and Responsibilities Seminar and ABC of Housemanship with a medico legal seminar will continue in 2018. Apart from conferences, team building activities and physical activities like marathon tournament are in the pipeline.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, SCHOMOS has remained true to its objectives and serve as a voice for the public doctors since its revival in 1981. The road has been tough and windy but through patience, persistence and continued efforts, SCHOMOS will continue to remain relevant and necessary in the progress and development of healthcare in Malaysia.



SCHOMOS has proved that it has participated in the transformation of the healthcare in Malaysia, This document served to consolidate efforts by past/present Chairman and Exco members and to pave a way forward.

“YOU MUST BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD” – Mahatma Gandhi



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. MMA Exco and Council 2017/18
2. SCHOMOS Exco and Council 2017/18
3. Past SCHOMOS Chairpersons

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