

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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Hello Doctors! How are all of you doing?

I am just back from Chicago after attending the American Medical Association (AMA) Annual Meeting 2024. It was held at the Hyatt Regency Chicago Hotel from 7-12 June 2024. The meeting was an enlightening and learning event for me. By comparison, the AMA is 177 years old while the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) is 64 years old.

It all started in late March when MMA received an invitation from AMA to attend their Annual Meeting 2024, which coincided with the 179th Presidential Inauguration of Dr Bruce A Scott on 11 June 2024. This was the first such invitation that MMA has received, and after discussion with the MMA Exco, it was decided that the President would attend the event. I must say it was a long trip from Kuala Lumpur to Chicago with a short transit in Doha!

## The History of AMA

The AMA is an American professional association and lobbying group of physicians and medical students. It was founded and headquartered in Chicago, Illinois in May 1847 by Dr Nathaniel Chapman who became the first President of AMA. It is a one year term presidency. Ever since then, the AMA Annual Meeting has always been held in Chicago.

Upon his graduation in 1800, Dr Chapman left for UK in 1801. He spent a year in London studying



*At the Trump International Hotel and Tower in downtown Chicago*



*With 179th AMA President Dr Bruce Scott, holding a gift souvenir on MMA Inauguration Dinner*

under Dr John Abernethy, one of the most famous surgeons of his time, and another three years in Edinburgh, where he attended lectures at the medical school of the University of Edinburgh. While in Edinburgh he became acquainted with a number of well-known people including Dugald Stewart, the Earl of Buchan, and Henry Brougham.



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Dr Chapman returned to US in 1804 and established a medical practise in Philadelphia. He gave a private course of lectures on obstetrics in the same year, which proved so popular that, in 1806 and at age of 26, he was elected adjunct to the Professor of Midwifery at the University of Pennsylvania, and soon thereafter was made chair of Materia Medica (Pharmacology).

He founded the American Journal of the Medical Sciences in 1820 and served as its editor for some years, and also served as President of both the Philadelphia Medical Society and the American Philosophical Society (elected 1807). Truly an amazing and visionary leader indeed!

## Back to the Present

179 Presidents have already served AMA, and there are many female Presidents. I noticed three female presidents who served in a row! Dr Barbara L. McAneny served in 2018/19, followed by Dr Patrice Harris, an American psychiatrist and the first African-American woman elected as AMA president in 2019/20, and finally Dr Susan R Bailey in 2020/21.



*With WMA leaders (R-L) – Dr Osahon Enabulele, Dr Jungyul Park, Dr René Héman (Chairman, Royal Dutch Medical Association (KNMG)), Dr Otmar Kloiber.*

Also attending the AMA Annual Meeting and 179th Presidential Inauguration of Dr Bruce A Scott from Kentucky (an ENT surgeon active in AMA for many years), were representatives from the World Medical Association (WMA), Prof Osahon Enabulele (Immediate Past President), Mr Otmar Kloiber (Secretary General) and Prof Jungyul Park (Chairman, WMA).

A big team of about eight delegates from the Thailand Medical Association (including the President and past Presidents) also attended. This marked the 20th year that they have been attending the AMA Annual Meeting in Chicago! Thus they brought

souvenirs for the VIP guests during a dinner hosted for the guests from abroad by the CEO and executive vice president of AMA, Dr James L Madara and his wife. The foreign guests hailed from Netherland, Germany, Israel, Japan, Thailand, and of course Malaysia.



*With Dr James L Madara (CEO & VP of AMA), his wife, and Thailand Medical Association delegates*

## Some Statistics

As of January 2024, there are approximately 1,100,101 active physicians in the US. AMA membership in 2022 was 271,660. The ratio of physicians to the population in the US (332million) is approximately 3.3 physicians per 1000 people as of 2023.

There are 159 allopathic (MD) medical schools and 41 osteopathic (DO) medical schools in the US. An osteopathic medical school is an institution that trains students to become osteopathic physicians (DOs). Osteopathic medicine emphasises a holistic approach to patient care, focusing on the body's ability to heal itself and the interrelationship between structure and function. Osteopathic medical education includes all the standard medical training received by allopathic (MD) students, but it also incorporates additional training in osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT).

## Conclusion

By interacting and networking with fellow doctors from other countries, I noticed that the problems/ issues faced by doctors and healthcare services are similar in nature. Maldistribution of doctors and specialists, shortage of certain speciality at health facilities, physician burnout, bullying at work place, unnecessary admin work for physicians that eat up time for patient care, etc.

Till next time, take care of your well-being!