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Hello Doctors. Hope all of you are keeping well.

As you know MMA has two indemnity providers, namely Medical Protection Society and MEDEFEND. Last 30 January 2024, the MMA Exco related to Medefend attended a courtesy breakfast meeting with Mr Flavio Piccolomini, President of Marsh McLennan International, who flew in from London.

It was the first meeting for MMA with Mr Piccolomini. We had a fruitful discussion on understanding the medicolegal issues here, and how they can better serve the needs of MMA members. MMA was represented by Dr Azizan (MMA President), Dato' Dr Kalwinder Singh (MMA President-Elect), Datuk Dr Arasu (MMA Hon. General Secretary) and Dr Sivanaesan (MMA Deputy Secretary in charge of overseeing Medefend).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MMA supports the parallel pathway programme for the training of specialists in MOH hospitals and clinics in Malaysia, in addition to the Masters programme run by local universities. On 3 February 2024, SCHOMOS organised a hybrid event forum at MMA House on the hot topic of "Specialising in Malaysia". Some of the issues brought up to the panellists were related to the parallel pathway.

Invited speakers included Dr Cheah Wee Kooi (DG of MOH), Prof Dr Jamalludin Bin Ab Rahman (from IIUM), Dato' Dr Tharmalingam Palanivelu (MRCP programme representative), and Prof Dato' Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman and Dato' Dr Krishna Kumar Hari Krishnan who represented the O&G fraternity.

The Shortage of Specialists

This matter is a cause for concern. A recent statement from the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia highlighted a worrying population-to-specialist ratio of 10,000:4. This is in contrast to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development) average of 10,000:14.33.

Furthermore we are aware of the government's ambitious target of achieving 28,000 medical specialists by 2030, while our current count stands at less than 13,000 specialists across both public and private sectors, with approximately 9,000 serving in MOH facilities.



Courtesy breakfast with MEDEFEND

Thus, MMA is definitely concerned on the issues related to parallel pathway programmes and the Masters programme, in producing the much needed specialists.

On 13 February 2024, MMA finally managed to make a courtesy call to the new Hon'ble Health Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Bin Ahmad, after he has been in office for two months. The other top MOH official that we met was the new Deputy DG of Health (Medical) YH Dato' Indera Dr Nor Azimi binti Yunus (who represented another DG who was overseas).

YB was aware of the issues raised by MMA (PPS and SCHOMOS) which were presented to him, as he was the Health Minister previously in 2018/19 before the change in Government, and the PPS issue of deregulation of the fee schedule failed to be gazetted then. YB asked for more time for him to look into it.



Meeting with MOH; flanking Dr Azizan is the (Minister of Health and Deputy DG of MOH

Of course, we also brought up the contract doctors issues of unfair salary schemes and their grades, where their total years of service under contract were not taken into consideration. We re-emphasised the need for more permanent positions, and transparency in the selection criteria for these posts.

Besides that, the issue of on-call allowances was also brought up. Although the Health Minister had stated that the new on-call rates will be announced soon, we took the opportunity to reiterate MMA's stand on the matter and our proposed rates. MMA also mentioned the need for healthcare reform to take place such as healthcare financing, human resources planning, electronic medical records and various others as mentioned in the Health White Paper.

To end on a happy note, I was able to attend MMA Negeri Sembilan's Installation Dinner on 3 February 2024 and MMA Kedah's Annual Dinner on 16 February 2024. Serving as the Chairman of MMA Kedah, Dr Edwin Jude and his committee members have been highly active. The Kedah branch has been full of activities to voluntarily serve the needs of the community. Well done and thank you!