



President's Message

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Greetings from MMA House, I am already in the second month of my one-year term. There is so much to do and time seems to be passing by fast, but I assure you again that the EXCO and Council have been working and doing our best. Every day, there is some form of engagement with the different wings of MMA by phone calls, email and Whatsapp messages, sometimes in the wee hours of the day.

I attended a meeting on 26 September with Dr Rabindra, WHO Representative for Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore, and other stakeholders/partners in community work to engage and see how we can help the community beyond COVID-19. It was a very interesting meeting and we have been asked to prepare our concept papers to see how we can collaborate. I believe this will be a milestone for MMA, and I want to form a strong bond with WHO. This is so that we can do community work (which is one of our objectives) on a larger scale and in a more organised manner. MMA should be recognised by international bodies like WHO.

On 26 September, I also attended the National Cancer Society of Malaysia's (NCSM) dinner where NCSM recognised our contributions to public health and MMA was given an award. HRH Sultan Nazrin Shah, the Sultan of Perak and his wife Tuanku Zara Salim graced the occasion with their Royal presence.

YB Tuan Khairy Jamaluddin, the Minister of Health, was also present.



The stakeholders were called to the Ministry of Health on 27 September to engage on foreign equity investment in Malaysian healthcare. We discussed this in depth many times in EXCO and Council however, we put our foot down and said that it is a big 'NO' for general practitioners at this juncture. However, we engaged with other stakeholders and had a good exchange of knowledge and ideas.

In the 2nd council meeting, we will be finalising our plans to meet medical students and bring them into MMA early to guide and expose them to the realities of healthcare. I will update on the plans to visit hospitals to meet the junior doctors next month.

We have also called for a meeting with other stakeholders to discuss the healthcare reforms that MMA mooted earlier. Dr Koh, our Immediate Past President, is a member of the advisory council. We will take inputs from all stakeholders and present it in the White paper meetings. This move is to enable us to discuss and deliberate on ideas from the grassroots.

It is also time to play an active part in preventing NCDs by starting early with young school-going children. There should be a strict SOP in place in all school canteens and hawkers around school compounds on the type of food they sell. If we want to reduce NCDs, then this is the only way; no sweet beverages should be sold, and a reduction in salty, oily and fatty food.

I believe if we educate children early, they will be more health conscious as they grow up. We will put up a proposal to the Education ministry. This is in line with our aims and objective of MMA.

We are also speaking to the subsidiary of the LANCET Journal for MMA to do a review on their project on how climate change will impact healthcare. This will also be great for MMA's image on a global level.

Our team in MMA is open to ideas, so please send us your suggestions and let us discuss it; if it will benefit the members and the association, why not?

I take this opportunity to wish all Hindu members, Happy Deepavali. Enjoy and stay safe. Let's eat healthy and teach the young to follow suit. **BMAA**

“It's time to be proactive in preventing NCD's by starting with young, school-going children.”