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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**I**t is indeed an honour for me to be elected to serve as the President of MMA for the term 2024/25 and to write my first message as President for Berita MMA.

The recent AGM in Kuching in September was very well organised and attracted many of our members and their families to visit Kuching, and participate in the meetings and also foster friendships. It was also a proud moment for me to be installed as the President in my home city.

As I start my term as the president, I do reflect on my long involvement with MMA. I served in the state committee continuously for 11 years till I stepped down last year to take up the post of President-Elect.

My involvement as the Sarawak State chairman from 2016-2018, and as a MMA council member from 2014-2018, was an invaluable learning experience which helped me in my personal development.

In the coming year, I hope that my experience working in the public sector and also in other leadership positions in healthcare, the MMC and the community will allow me to look more comprehensively at issues affecting the healthcare sector.

My main focus will be in doing all that we can to provide and lay the groundwork for a better and more certain future for our doctors. This encompasses looking at their right to job security, specialist training options,

work life balance, recognition of their efforts in terms of salaries and on call allowances, and also their mental health. Having said that, there are also issues in the private sector like the Fee schedule harmonisation, role and oversight of TPAs and increasing insurance premiums that warrants renewed attention.



*Installation ceremony by Outgoing President*



*With the guest of honour*



*MMA Council 2024/25*

A lot of issues have ongoing engagement with the government and this is a usually continuous process being. The plan to increase our healthcare expenditure in terms of percentage of our GDP must be accelerated. This is not only for infrastructure development but also should be for the improvement of its most important asset, its healthcare personnel.

Increased on call allowances are something that recognises the work that doctors do in ensuring 24 hours care to patients in hospitals. This duty has never been a choice but a necessity and as, such entails many sacrifices by doctors. They should be appropriately acknowledged.

Hopefully the conundrum of contract doctors and permanent posts will be settled soon, but opportunities for post graduate training needs to be enhanced with doctors being given the choice to choose the pathway which is suitable for them. This has to be a win-win situation as we cannot afford to lose doctors to resignations and migration as has been the case in the last few years.

The retention of senior specialists and sub specialists is also an important issue which we will bring up, and hope that the Government will look into this urgently. These senior doctors not only provide invaluable care to patients but are also needed to teach and mentor the younger doctors. Many have been stagnating at UD56 scale for many years.

Once again I would like to thank all our members for trusting in me to lead MMA this coming term. I am grateful to have hard-working, experienced Exco and Council members to assist and guide me. We also have a very able secretariat to assist as we plan the programmes and the activities for the coming year. We all will definitely do our best to further the aims and aspirations of our doctors, MMA and healthcare in the country.

*MMA annual banquet with guest of honour, Prof Datuk Amar Sim Kui Hian (Deputy Premier of Sarawak)*

