

# President's Message

It's been six months since I took the chain of office of the President of Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) and much has been acquired about the difficulties and challenges faced in the medical profession. From being Chairman of the Private Practitioners Section of the MMA to the Honorary General Treasurer, moving to Honorary General Secretary and finally here I am, serving you as the President which is a position that was not achieved overnight. My passion towards this Association has always been undivided and serving the profession from a better altitude has been my ultimate intention since I stepped into MMA. After all, it is an association by doctors for doctors.

Serving as President of this association, I knew I had to balance my work in the clinic and the association. I have attended innumerable meetings, internal as well as external. For the past six months, I have tried my best to fulfil all the invitations to attend meetings within MMA and externally.

Walking down memory lane, I started my duty as President with an invitation to officiate the Malaysian Society of Infectious Disease & Chemotherapy (MSIDC)'s launch of vaccines (Vaxin Check) for adults on 24 May 2017. This event was a benchmark towards promoting adults' vaccination which I regard as important as childhood vaccination. My forthcoming weeks were occupied with several meetings and I was delighted to attend the British Medical Association Annual Representative Meeting (ARM) 2017 in Bournemouth, United Kingdom from 25-29 June 2017. It was an honour to be invited to this reputable event where I became aware on how the meeting was handled competently and professionally and decided to adapt and transform our annual AGM to the National MMA Convention and Scientific Congress in June 2018. From 13-15 September 2017, a few of the office bearers of MMA and I flew to Odaiba, Tokyo for another important conference – the 32<sup>nd</sup> Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania 2017 (CMAAO). It is an organisation which comprises of various National Medical Associations within Asia and Oceania that congregate to deliberate important and pertinent issues associated with each country. It is here that I was elected as the President Elect of CMAAO (2017-2018) and our HGS was elected as Vice Chairman. I am delighted to announce that this year in September 2018, CMAAO will be conducted in our very own country where I shall be installed as the President of CMAAO for 2018-2019. I am sure it will be a tremendous success. My attendance at International and National meetings do not end here, as I have and will be attending many more and my diary is packed till my term ends.

Despite my hectic schedule, I have attended and officiated



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several meetings. To name a few – the media launch and press release on “Allied Against Dengue” (AAD), Installation of the Chair Persons of Melaka, Selangor, Johor and Sarawak, forums, seminars and conferences.

My anguish for the new medical graduates is great. The waiting time for employment as House-officers is still at 9-12 months. I hope there is some blessing soon so that the waiting time is reduced. On the other hand my considerable worry is the uncertainty awaiting the first batch of contract officers who finish in December 2021. As communicated by Ministry of Health, only the best of the 40-50% will be employed by the Ministry of Health. What happens to the surplus doctors??? We are still trying to achieve a solution!

In August, we managed to meet Lieutenant General Dato' (Dr) Haji Yaakob bin Koming to discuss on various issues faced by our medical doctors in the Malaysian Armed Forces Health Services (MAFHS).



Meeting with Lieutenant General Dato' (Dr) Haji Yaakob bin Koming

On 24 July 2017 we had a joint meeting of MMA, MPCAM, Federation, PERDIM and various Third-Party Administrators (TPA) with Minister of Health, YB Dato Seri Subramaniam, KSU YBhg Dato Seri Dr Chen Chaw Min, Director General of Health, YBhg Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Bin Abdullah and Deputy Director General, YBhg Datuk Dr Jeyaindran in the Malaysian Medical Council. The Minister treated us to a sumptuous lunch. There was a common decision together after considerable discussion on the following:

1. Revision of the 7<sup>th</sup> Fee Schedule
2. A circular issued by Ministry of Health advising Registered Medical Practitioners not to engage in any contracts that can be misinterpreted as Fee Splitting, which is in contravention of the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act, Code of Professional Conduct and the Ethical Code of Malaysian Medical Council.
3. Obligation of a minimum consultation fee in the revised 7th fee schedule to be acceded by all registered medical practitioners.



## HELPDOC

**9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday  
and 9.00am to 1.00pm on Saturday.  
The dedicated channel for  
this is 03-4041 1140**

*Helpdoc Media Launch*

4. Charging a payment to a registered medical practitioner by a TPA or any chain clinics will be considered "Fee Splitting". This includes a commission, administrative fee and franchise contracts.
5. Contracts between the TPAs and their clients and the registered medical practitioners must be appraised by the Medical Division of the Ministry of Health to be perceived that it does not jeopardise patient health care as well as the Private Healthcare Facilities & Services Act. Any arrangement should be in the interest and welfare of patients. As for doctors, they should comply with all existing Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.
6. All registered medical practitioners should not have any business relations with those TPAs not registered with the Ministry of Health.
7. There should be continuous discussions between MMA and the TPAs to create a collective agreement that is adequate and fair to all concerned.

Then, on 26 August 2017, a support group for doctors called "HELPDOC" was launched by Dato Dr Azman Bin Haji Abu Bakar of the Ministry of Health. This is a phone service intended to enable doctors to air their grievances especially those who feel harassed at work and those being bullied at work. Those who face psychological problems will be referred to Psychiatrists on our panel. "HELPDOC" is based on an impartial and neutral concept where confidentiality will be safeguarded. This is accessible to doctors at all levels of seniority. I must declare that the response has been exceedingly acceptable. I would like to convey my deepest appreciation to Dato Dr Azman who has been very cooperative and has made concerted efforts to solve these issues with encouraging conclusions. I will fail in my duty if I do not convey my acknowledgement to the task force committee, Dr Nesamani who is leading this committee and being assisted by Dr Arvind Alaga, Dr Arasu, Dr Myelone and Dr Gayathri who have contributed and devoted their time in making this project a success. The "HELPDOC" help line in MMA is available from 9.00am to 5.00pm,

Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 1.00pm on Saturday. The dedicated channel for this is 03-4041 1140.

On 1 July 2017, we saw the execution of the amended Medical Regulations 2017 and enforcement of the Medical Act 2012. This sudden announcement by the Minister of Health has created a huge impact and confusion among the medical practitioners concerning the prerequisites for renewal of Annual Practising Certificate (APC) and mandatory indemnity insurance obligation. It is imperative that Medical Practitioners accrue 20 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points per year. This acquisition will begin on 01 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 for APC RENEWAL 2020. MMA has upgraded and enhanced its software and further developed and launched the MMA MOBILE APPS. As part of MMA's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the privilege of this service is provided to both members and non-members without any fee! This endeavour of developing the mobile apps has been rendered to smoothen the process of point accumulation for all registered medical practitioners. This mobile app is also applicable for all CPD providers too. Our goal is to automate the system so that registered participants can check the accrued CPD points easily and effortlessly in real time. Presently, MMA is suggesting collaborating and working together with the Academy of Medicine Malaysia (AMM) in collecting points using the mobile apps for all specialists. I believe our desire and objective to assist will be viewed unequivocally. The Indemnity insurance is to begin on 1 January 2020 and end on 31 December 2020. There will be no necessity for APC points and indemnity insurance for 2019.

In the preceding months, I have demonstrated my best to do everything that I could to engage the press via print and electronic media and have been very vocal "WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR". The remaining months, will be my effort to accomplish and fulfil my vows to serve the profession and association better. As President of MMA, I hope I will able to accomplish and upgrade the image of medical practitioners both in the Public and Private sector to a new level.



*Meeting with YBMK at MMC*