

President's Message



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It was a busy end of July and early August for MMA. A number of press statements were issued to the media on various issues. Among them were the control on drug pricing, overcrowding at our government clinics and emergency departments, an ambulance accident in Perak, and claims by PERKESO that doctors were involved in the selling of medical reports to 'smoothen' the process of claims made by patients.

Claims of Doctors Selling Medical Reports

On these claims made by PERKESO, while they will be referring these cases to the authorities to investigate, it saddens me deeply to hear of such news. These claims may have not been proven yet, but these reports published in the media can paint a negative image of doctors among members of the public. I personally view this issue with great concern and wish to remind all members to at all times, keep up the good image of our profession.

NACCOL's Suggestions on Reducing GP's Operational Costs

The issue of GPs fees was again reported in the media when asking us to comment on some of the government's suggestions to reduce the operational costs for GPs in private clinics. Among the suggestions from the National Cost of Living Action Council (NACCOL) were tax rebates for GPs, offering of space in government buildings for rent and a reduction in electricity bill charges. While we appreciate these suggestions, it is not the main issue we have been asking the government to address since 2013. In our response, we had to yet again, reiterate that it is the harmonisation of the GPs fees that we have been asking for.

9th Malaysian Conference on Healthy Ageing

On 24 July, I was invited to present a talk at the 9th Malaysian Conference on Healthy Ageing, themed Ageing, Health and Community, held in KL. In my presentation, I emphasised the role of primary care in caring for our ageing population. The conference was well attended by a mix of international, regional and local delegates. I urge our members to play an

active role in this area as in the not too distant future, Malaysia will be an ageing nation and we may see an increase in the healthcare needs for our nation's growing elderly population.

Asian Collaborative Training on Infectious Disease Outbreaks, Natural Disasters and Refugee Management (ACTION)

In the same week, I was invited to be the Guest of Honour for the ACTION 2019 closing ceremony and gala dinner held in PJ. ACTION is an annual transnational project organised by medical students for medical students from different countries in the Asia Pacific region since 2004. Every year, this project provides an excellent platform for learning, sharing of information and networking between medical students. For the very first time, Malaysia was proudly selected as the host for this event in 2019.

As some of you may know, ACTION 2019 is a collaboration between University of Malaya Medical Society (UM MEDSOC), Society of MMA Medical Students (SMMAMS) and International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA). The event saw 104 participants from Indonesia, China, India, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Australia, Singapore and Malaysia.

It was interesting to note that ACTION 2019, in their programme covered infectious disease outbreaks, natural disaster management and refugee management – important topics that are rarely given attention in the curriculum of most medical schools.

iMANAGE

In end July, MMA Honorary General Secretary Thirunavukarasu and I were at the MoU signing ceremony of iMANAGE – a structured alliance of private healthcare providers to combat NCD's in Malaysia. Malaysian Association for the Study of Pain (MASPO), Academy of Family Physicians Malaysia (AFPM), Malaysian Society of Hypertension (MSH), Malaysian Psychiatric Association (MPA), National Heart Association of Malaysia (NHAM), Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society (MPS) and MMA are partners in this MoU. The objectives of iMANAGE are to

standardise care among the private healthcare providers, promote knowledge sharing through a structured support system, to improve health literacy rate, as well as relieve the burden of NCDs in the country.

Majlis Siri Ceramah Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah

On 1 August, I was privileged to be invited to *Majlis Siri Ceramah Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah*. The theme of the event was Human Rights: Reflections of the East, Perceptions of the West. A speech by Emeritus Professor Datuk Dr Hj Shad Saleem Faruqi was the highlight of the programme. In his speech, he spoke of how some of the problems Malaysia is facing now began in the early 1980s. Datuk Dr Hj Shad is also a member of the post GE-14 "Institutional Reform Committee", a member of the Malaysia Agreement 63 Committee and a Fellow of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia.

MMIHC 2019

On 6 August, MMA was honoured to be a part of the 2019 International Humanitarian Conference (MMIHC 2019) held in conjunction with Mercy Malaysia's 20th anniversary. MMIHC saw a gathering of humanitarian practitioners, academicians, government servants, non-government and private sector stakeholders for three days of discussions, lectures, panels, case studies, and networking to debate and discuss some of the most critical challenges and opportunities for the humanitarian system in the region and globally. At the event, the Titiwangsa Declaration was signed between MMA and Mercy Malaysia.

Healthcare Financing Roundtable 2

I was also invited to the Healthcare Financing Roundtable 2 session held at University Malaya. This second in a series of four roundtables was titled "Sustainable Healthcare Financing in Malaysia". The

roundtable was to seek an understanding of the complex issues that surround a healthcare financing system that aims to provide universal healthcare and to discuss options for Malaysia's healthcare financing.

Lastly, as all of us have just celebrated our 62 years of our nation's independence and soon to be celebrating our Malaysia Day on 16 September, I wish to call on all Malaysians to stand united and not let anything or anyone divide us. We may have our differences but I do believe it is only together that we can overcome them. The strength of our nation is in our diversity. In no other parts of the world will you find a nation so unique. We are indeed blessed and have a lot to be thankful for. Let's treasure what we have, our beloved nation – Malaysia!

I wish all of you a Happy Malaysia day! And to those celebrating their birthday in September, a very happy birthday to you!

Kindly note, I have taken an additional mobile number for the benefit of our MMA members.

You may contact me on either of my mobile numbers: 012-784 4419 or 017-444 7456



MMA President speaking at the 9th Malaysian Conference on Healthy Ageing



MMA President with international medical students and ACTION's Organising Committee



L-R: Dr Nadia Atiya, Dr Catherine Voo, Dr Ganabaskaran, Prof Jamiyah Hassan, Prof Balbir Singh, Ms Wong Hoi Yee



Dr L. Sivanaesan celebrates his birthday at the 1st Exco meeting held on 27 July 2019



The MoU Signing Ceremony of iManage, July 2019
L-R: Assoc Prof Dr Mohammad Husni Jamal, Dr Ganabaskaran, and Amrahi Buang



Dato' Dr Ahmad Faizal Perdaus and Dr Ganabaskaran after signing the Titiwangsa Declaration at the Mercy Malaysia International Humanitarian Conference 2019



15 August 2019 meeting to explain rationale for the harmonisation of GPs Fee schedule: MMA President and HGS (Dr Thirunavukarasu) with Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution (seated) and Dr Siti Faridah (far right) who helped arrange the meeting