



Singapore  
Medical  
Association

For Doctors, For Patients

60

YEARS OF ADVANCING  
SINGAPORE HEALTHCARE

# Country Report

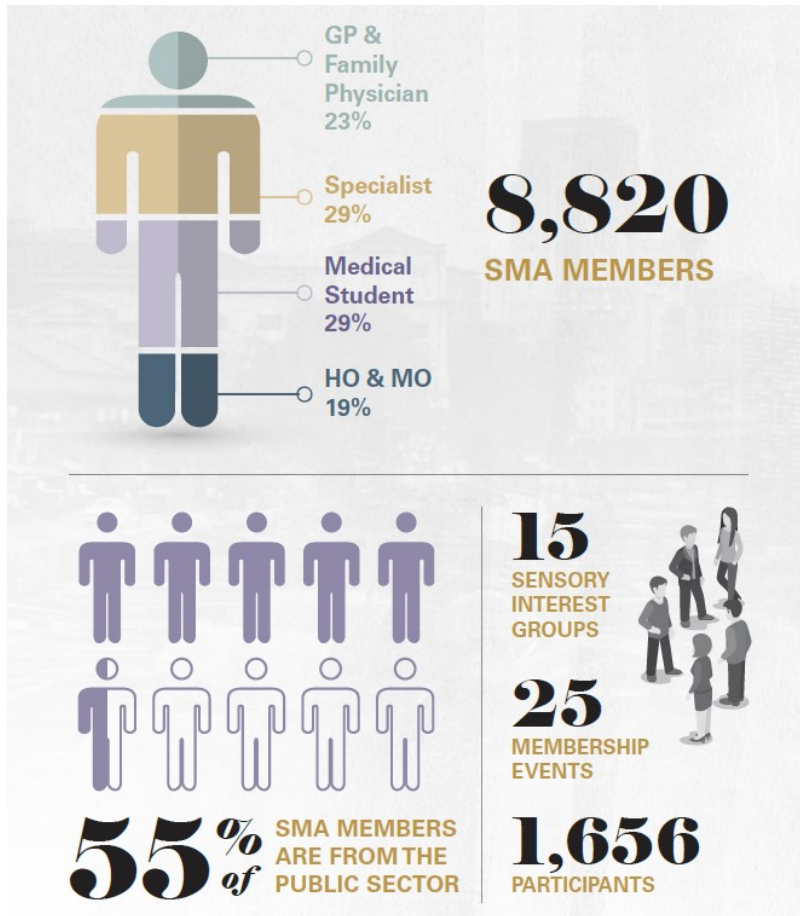
34<sup>th</sup> CMAAO General  
Assembly and 55<sup>th</sup> Council  
Meeting 2019

Goa, India

# OVERVIEW

- Key Statistics in 2018
- 59th SMA Council (2018/2019)
- Advancing PROFESSIONAL STANDING
- Advancing PATIENT INTERESTS
- Advancing COLLEGIORITY
- Advancing MEDICAL TRAINING
- Advancing KNOWLEDGE
- Advancing MEDICAL PRACTICE

# KEY STATISTICS IN 2018



# 60TH SMA COUNCIL (2018/2019)



# 60TH SMA COUNCIL (2019/2020)

|                              |                           |                             |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| President                    | Dr Lee Yik Voon           |                             |
| 1st Vice-President           | Dr Tan Yia Swam           |                             |
| 2nd Vice-President           | Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh |                             |
| Honorary Secretary           | Dr Lim Kheng Choon        |                             |
| Assistant Honorary Secretary | Dr Benny Loo Kai Guo      |                             |
| Honorary Treasurer           | Dr Ng Chee Kwan           |                             |
| Assistant Honorary Treasurer | Dr Bertha Woon            |                             |
| Members                      | Dr Anantham Devanand      | A/Prof Nigel Tan Choon Kiat |
|                              | Dr Tammy Chan             | Adj Prof Tan Sze Wee        |
|                              | A/Prof Chin Jing Jih      | Adj Asst Prof Tan Tze Lee   |
|                              | Dr Chong Yeh Woei         | Dr Toh Choon Lai            |
|                              | Dr Lee Pheng Soon         | Dr Wong Chiang Yin          |
|                              | Dr Ng Chew Lip            | Dr Wong Tien Hua            |
|                              | Dr Noorul Fatha As'art    |                             |
|                              |                           |                             |



# ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL STANDING

*Advocacy work, leadership role and ongoing engagements*

## ➤ **Fee Benchmarks**

In 2017, by the invitation of Ministry of Health Singapore (MOH), an SMA Representative sat on the MOH Fee Benchmarks Advisory Committee, to help formulate a new list of benchmarks for common medical procedures. The first tranche of fee benchmarks for 222 common surgical procedures was release in November 2018.

## ➤ **Medical Registration Act**

MOH proposed amendments to the MRA, specifically in the area of disciplinary proceedings, prompted a response from SMA. At the public consultation held in October 2018, SMA recommended that complainants should be made to pay the costs of frivolous appeals against the decision of a Complaints Committee.

## ➤ **Healthcare Services Bill**

The draft Healthcare Services Bill, which will replace the current Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act, was released in late 2017. As this is a major piece of legislation that will affect all registered healthcare institutions, SMA provided feedback on different components within the Bill and the related regulations, submitting recommendations on critical areas.

## ➤ **Telemedicine**

SMA and the College of Family Practitioners Singapore (CFPS) issued a joint advisory on doctors' participation in telemedicine and online issuance of medical certificates (MCs) in January 2018, reminding our respective members of their responsibilities to their patients and cautioning them about the issues that may arise when issuing e-MCs.

# ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL STANDING

*Advocacy work, leadership role and ongoing engagements*

## ➤ **Medical Indemnity**

SMA met with representatives of Medical Protection Society (MPS) over several occasions in 2018 to provide member feedback, including concerns over any increase in subscription rates that are not clearly communicated.

## ➤ **Income Tax**

Following Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS)'s audit of income tax declared by medical practices, SMA received requests for help from affected anaesthesiologists to seek clarification on some of the tax issues raised. In September 2018, representatives from SMA, MOH and IRAS met to discuss the issues, and what followed were an SMA Seminar that touched on IRAS's approach to business arrangements in October and a dialogue session between IRAS and the affected doctors in November.

## ➤ **Residency System**

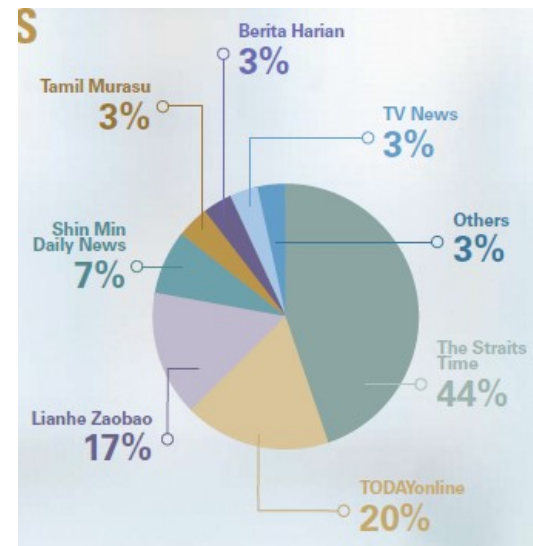
Since the Residency system was first mooted, SMA has been engaging with MOH to seek clarification on the rationale for switching and to highlight our concerns regarding implementation issues.

# ADVANCING PATIENT INTERESTS

*Doctor-patient relationship, rights of patients*

## ➤ Media Citations

In 2018, the local media highlighted several of SMA's official positions, recommendations and studies on relevant healthcare matters that impact the profession and our patients. Some of these issues include our stance on medical fee benchmarks, electronic health records and telemedicine, among others.





# ADVANCING **PATIENT INTERESTS**

*Doctor-patient relationship, rights of patients*

## ➤ **Patient Privacy**

The National Electronic Health Records (NEHR) system with its controversies surrounding patient privacy rights and cybersecurity has been closely followed by SMA since MOH first announced its plan to make contribution to the system mandatory. Together with Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS) and College of Family Practitioners Singapore (CFPS), SMA carried out a survey on the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of the public regarding the NEHR.

## ➤ **Mediation**

We believe that not every patient complaint against a doctor needs to be escalated to the SMC, as some issues between the patient and doctor are a result of miscommunication. In 2018, we handled 14 patient complaints, a considerable drop from a high of 34 cases in 2012.

## ➤ **Medik Awas**

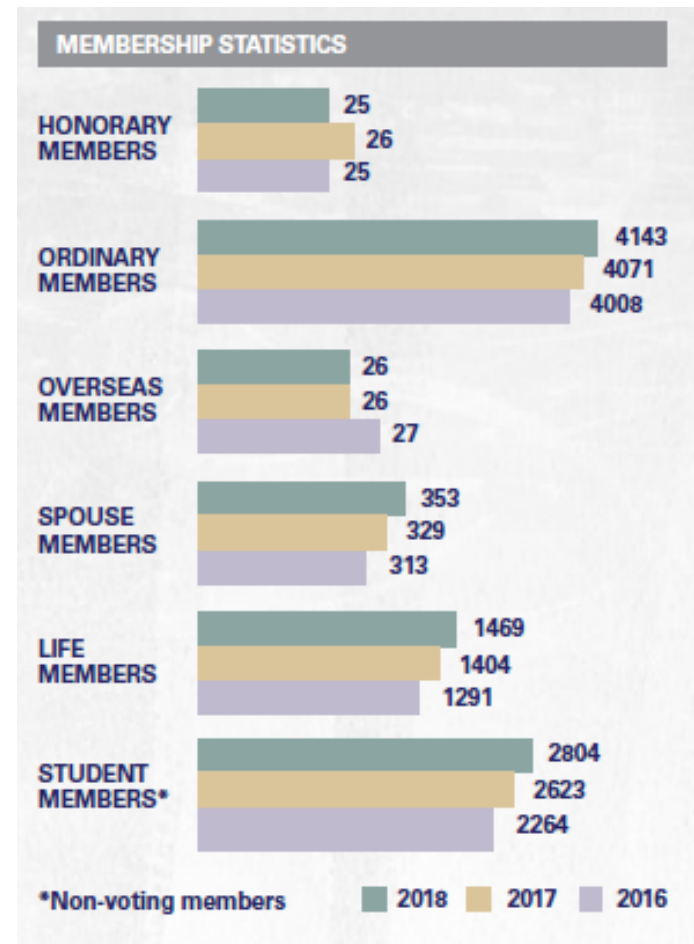
The Medik Awas programme was started in 1970 with the aim to prevent medical mishaps among members of the public through the issuance of cards and amulets that alert medical and dental personnel of their specific health problems and allergies. To date, we have issued a total of 35,609 Medik Awas cards and amulets.

# ADVANCING COLLEGIALITY & ENGAGEMENT

Membership, social activities and interest group, and SMA news

## ➤ Membership

| MEMBERSHIP TALLY  | 2018        | 2017        | 2016        |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total no. of members (at beginning of year)                   | 8479        | 7928        | 7361        |
| Add   |             |             |             |
| No. of new members  | 812         | 781         | 783         |
| Less  |             |             |             |
| No. of resignations/ decreased / expiry of student membership | 410         | 135         | 131         |
| No. of struck off in arrears                                  | 61          | 95          | 85          |
| <b>Total no. of members (at end of year)</b>                  | <b>8820</b> | <b>8479</b> | <b>7928</b> |



# ADVANCING COLLEGIABILITY & ENGAGEMENT

*Membership, SMA news, social activities and interest group*

## ➤ SMA News

SMA News has been a key platform for SMA to inform our members about important matters, such as changes in government policies. It is also a channel for our members to share and engage with the profession.

- Physical and mental health of medical practitioners
- How to derive joy and purpose at work
- Generalist versus specialist training; telemedicine
- The future direction of healthcare
- Investing in future-ready doctors
- Protecting patient privacy
- Fee benchmark



# ADVANCING COLLEGIALITY & ENGAGEMENT

*Membership, SMA news, social activities and interest group*

- **Uniting the Profession**

Our annual events, which bring together senior doctors, doctors in training (DITs) and medical students, aim to promote camaraderie and inter-generational engagement among our members. Every year, SMA collaborates with partner organisations to co-host events such as the Inter-Professional Games (IPG).



# ADVANCING MEDICAL TRAINING

*Medical students and Doctors in Training*

## ➤ **Facilitating Dialogue**

The DIT Committee met with Director of Medical Services (DMS), A/Prof Benjamin Ong, to address questions that medical students and residents have about the direction of the residency programme, in light of talks that medical training will shift to a more generalist approach.

## ➤ **Empowering the next Generation**

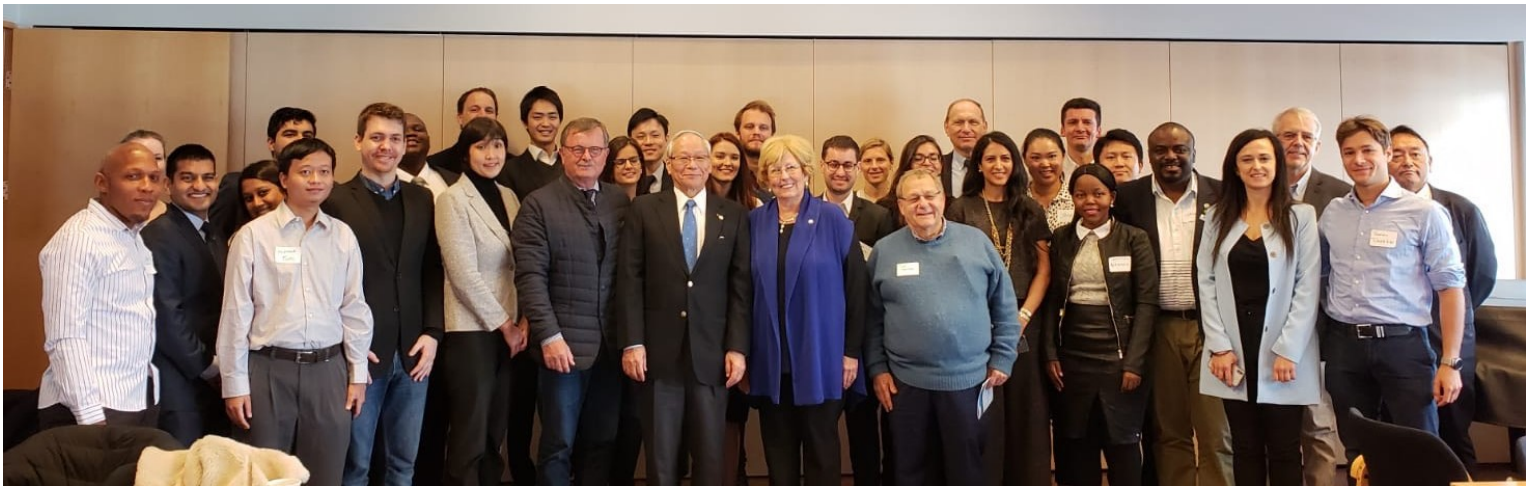
Throughout 2018, we organised and participated in networking sessions and meetings with local and overseas medical students through their representatives. Thanks to these conversations, we are now better able to understand the challenges they face, and are actively exploring potential collaborations between SMA and these student bodies.

# ADVANCING MEDICAL TRAINING

*Medical students and Doctors in Training*

## ➤ International Representations

In September and October 2018, representatives of the SMA DIT Committee attended the Junior Doctors Network (JDN) of CMAAO and WMA, respectively. SMA's participation in the JDN provides young doctors with platforms to share experiences and challenges, as well as ensures that their voices are heard not only locally but also globally.





# ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE

*Continuing Medical Education (CME) events and Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ)*

## ➤ **SMA Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism (CMEP)**

In Jan 2018, SMA CMEP officially launched its website to allow for easier navigation and enhance search functions for users.

## ➤ **Telemedicine**

To prepare our members for the inevitable transition from paper to digital, we conducted a seminar, “Decipher the Clinic Management System and Be Ready for the National Electronic Health Records” in August 2018.

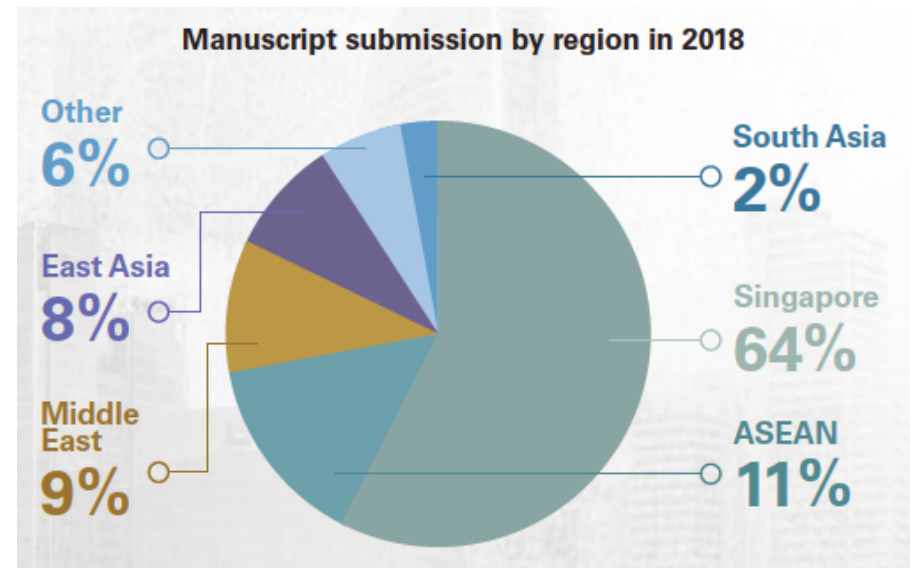
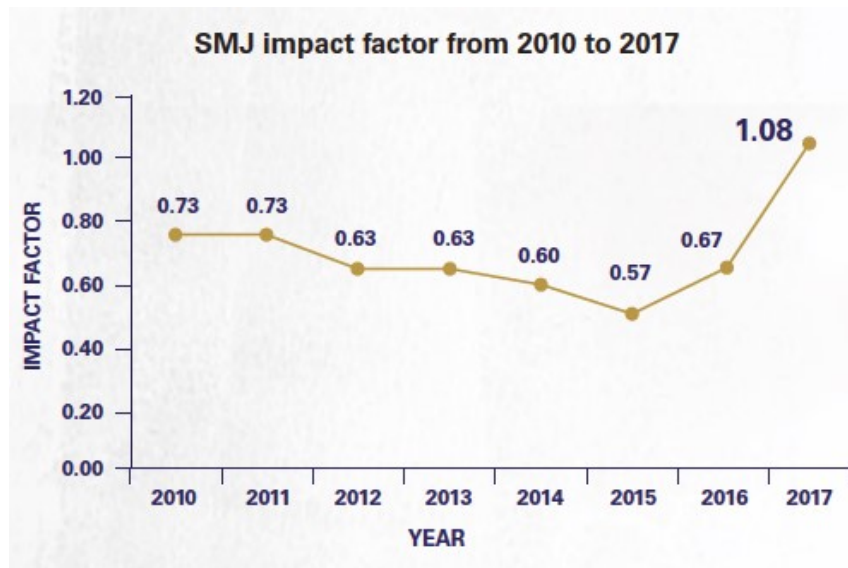
## ➤ **SMA Lecture 2018**

A/Prof Yeoh Khay Guan, Dean of Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore and Deputy Chief Executive of National University Health System delivered the lecture titled ‘The Future of Medical Education’. The Lecture explored the implications of shifting trends in Singapore healthcare and its impact on medical education.

# ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE

*Continuing Medical Education (CME) events and Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ)*

## ➤ Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ)



# ADVANCING MEDICAL PRACTICE

*Supporting members in their practice*

## ➤ SMA eMarket

An e-procurement platform for medical supplies set up in Oct 2017 in response to a member survey. Multiple roadshows and training sessions were done last year to guide members in utilising the portal.

## ➤ SMA Clinic Assistant Place and Train Programme

A collaboration between SMA and Employment and Employability Institute (e2i), aims to help SMA members identify, hire and train suitable candidates for the position of clinic assistant. Following the completion of its first run in 2017, we reviewed and made improvements on the programme based on the current requirements of our members' practice.



**Thank you!**