

# ADVOCATING CHANGE

COUNTRY REPORT



Singapore  
Medical  
Association

# OVERVIEW

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- Enabling Lifelong Learning

# 62<sup>nd</sup> SMA COUNCIL (2021/2022)

President	Dr Tan Yia Swam	
1st Vice-President	Dr Ng Chee Kwan	
2nd Vice-President	Dr Tammy Chan Teng Mui	
Honorary Secretary	Dr Ng Chew Lip	
Assistant Honorary Secretary	Dr Benny Loo Kai Guo	
Honorary Treasurer	Dr Daniel Lee Hsien Chieh	
Assistant Honorary Treasurer	Dr Chie Zhi Ying	
Members	Dr Anantham Devanand	Adj Prof Tan Sze Wee
	Dr Lee Pheng Soon	Adj A/Prof Tan Tze Lee
	Dr Lee Yee Mun	Dr Tan Zhenwen Tina
	Dr Lim Kheng Choon	Dr Toh Choon Lai
	Dr Ivan Low Jinrong	Dr Wong Chiang Yin
	Dr Low Tchern Kuang Lambert	Dr Wong Tien Hua
	Dr Raj Kumar Menon	

# Our Members

SMA  
MEMBERSHIP

>8,528  
MEMBERS



# Advocating for the Profession

## ADVOCACY & REPRESENTATION



## HEALTH INSURANCE

- SMA issued a position statement on Integrated Shield Plans (IP), highlighting issues related to panels, fees, and management expenses and commissions. In the following month, the Ministry of Health (MOH) appointed the Multilateral Healthcare Insurance Committee (MHIC) to provide a platform for healthcare providers, payors, consumer representatives and the government to collaboratively address issues related to health insurance.
- In response to feedback from members about the difficulties faced while applying to join IP panels, SMA raised this matter to LIA, who then provided a useful list comprising the processes, requirements and considerations of the various insurers.

# Advocating for the Profession

## WELFARE OF JUNIOR DOCTORS

The Doctors-in-Training (DIT) Committee continued to lead efforts to improve the working conditions of junior doctors in public healthcare institutions.

## MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKER MEDICAL EXAMINATION FORM

Back in 2018, SMA had highlighted concerns about home-based medical examinations of MDW, which led to the scenario where a doctor would have to certify the medical examination form without having a chance to physically examine the MDW. We are pleased to note the policy changes. In July 2021, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) announced enhancements to the six-monthly medical examination for migrant domestic workers (MDW) to better pick up any signs of abuse. Home-based services would also be discontinued.

## JOINT LETTER ON INACCURATE STATEMENTS ABOUT GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

SMA was one of the joint signatories to a letter to The Straits Times Forum to clarify misinformation in social media posts containing inaccurate statements about general practitioners (GPs). The focus was on correcting the perceptions of the general public, and highlighting that GPs and hospital-based specialists play differing roles, bringing different essential skills to the healthcare landscape.

# Supporting and Engaging Members

MEMBERSHIP  
ENGAGEMENT

6  
STUDENT  
ENGAGEMENT  
ACTIVITIES

>25  
MEMBERSHIP  
BENEFITS



## REFRESHING OUR WEBSITE'S LOOK AND ACCESIBILITY

SMA launched our revamped website in July 2021, in the hopes that members will be better able to access the relevant information they seek.

# Supporting and Engaging Members

## SPEAKING UP FOR JUNIOR DOCTORS

- The physical and mental well-being of junior doctors has been in the spotlight especially in the past year. As SMA President, Dr Tan Yia Swam, shared in her interview with CNA938: “The SMA should be a voice for doctors and patients. The Doctors-in-Training (DIT) Committee serves as a platform to advocate matters of importance to doctors in training which constantly evolve and change over the years.”
- SMA served as one of the points of contact for overseas students stranded in Singapore due to COVID-19, who asked for help in the form of teaching and mentoring. Local junior doctor members also wrote in with their feedback on working hours, remuneration and other issues encountered at work.
- The DIT Committee, worked tirelessly as they engaged with MOH Holdings (MOHH) to advocate for junior doctors’ welfare. SMA also wrote in to the Ministry of Health, MOHH and other bodies to provide formal feedback and sought advice and aid for the affected doctors in training.

**“The stresses faced by junior doctors today are symptomatic of a wider need for transformation in the current care delivery arrangements. Whether it is 24-hour or 30-hour shifts, what is clear is that we should not stretch our junior doctors beyond what is physiologically possible and what would risk compromising patient safety.”**

*- Dr Koh Poh Koon, Senior Minister of State for Health (Channel News Asia, 9 March 2022)*



# Supporting and Engaging Members

## CARING FOR MEMBERS

- SMA launched several initiatives in a bid to support and care for our members amid the challenging climate. These include lifestyle privileges from our partners showing appreciation for the work and sacrifices of the healthcare professionals, Facebook events to engage members to come together as a community, and initiatives encouraging volunteerism among members.
- Online feedback sessions and workshops, to provide members with the platform to share their views on matters of concern, including the review of the Singapore Medical Council Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines and the Handbook on Medical Ethics, and the Forum on Singapore's COVID-19 strategy and direction.
- HO Support Programme Expansion (HOSP+) Helpline, a telegram chatbot which has consolidated the various resources HOs may require as they navigate their work life.
- The SMA annual Members' Appreciation Nite

# Enabling Lifelong Learning

PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



**25**  
WEBINARS &  
COURSES



**55**  
CME ACTIVITIES



**11,238**  
PARTICIPANTS

## SINGAPORE'S COVID-19 STRATEGY AND THE DIRECTION AHEAD

SMA, AMS, College of Family Physicians Singapore and the Ministry of Health (MOH) jointly organised an online forum on 9 October 2021. The forum served as a platform to share Singapore's COVID-19 strategy and the direction ahead. MOH provided an update on the changes announced by the Multi-Ministry Taskforce on the same day.

# Enabling Lifelong Learning

## EVENTS HELD IN 2021

NAME OF EVENT	No. of Runs	SMA Members	Non-SMA Members	Total No.
Medical Ethics, Professionalism and Healthcare Course	5	85	369	454
Medicine, Doctors and the Law Series	15	293	154	447
Care of Persons of Diminished Capacity and Vulnerable Adults: Understanding the Law and its Application in Clinical Practice	1	107	42	149
Care of Persons of Diminished Capacity and Vulnerable Adults: Mental Capacity Assessment Made Easy	1	147	52	199
Tax Obligations on Medical Practice	1	68	31	99
Taking the Plunge – Going into Private Practice	1	122	32	154
Singapore's COVID-19 Strategy and the Direction Ahead	1			2,773

# Enabling Lifelong Learning

## SINGAPORE MEDICAL JOURNAL

- The 2020 Journal Impact Factor (IF) for the SMJ increased from 1.359 in 2019 to 1.858 in 2020, with the latest five-year IF at 2.053. The Journal's IF has progressively increased over recent years, and this is the highest it has been since the SMJ was first published in 1960.
- Two themed issues were published – the May issue cast the spotlight on mental health in the community, especially amidst the prolonged stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, while the July issue, a collaboration with the Singapore Resuscitation and First Aid Council, covers all the key resuscitation and first aid guidelines for Singapore
- To meet the needs of trainees and generalists in the hospital setting, we have launched a new CME quiz series, Problem-Solving for Acute and Critical Care (PACC).



**521**  
SUBMISSIONS



**473**  
REVIEWERS



**1.858**  
IMPACT  
FACTOR



**25**  
ONLINE CME  
QUIZZES



**136**  
PUBLISHED  
ARTICLES

**Thank you!**