

# HIGHLIGHTS

## FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Report by Dr Lim Kheng Choon

Dr Lim is the Honorary Secretary of the 58th SMA Council. He is currently an associate consultant at Singapore General Hospital.



### **SMA's response to queries on fee benchmarks**

SMA received several media queries regarding the Ministry of Health's (MOH) plans to set up a fee benchmark committee as part of their approach to ensure a sustainable healthcare system in the long run.

In our reply, SMA President Dr Wong Tien Hua said that SMA's position has always been that "a fee guideline is useful for both doctors and the public". However, he also shared his concern on the need for stronger measures. Other than fee benchmarks, other equally important initiatives, such as public education and insurance product redesigning, should also be considered.

You can read more about this matter in the President's Forum (see page 8) as well as on our website (<https://www.sma.org.sg/ourvoice>).

### **MOH seeking feedback on the draft HCS Bill**

MOH recently announced their intention to replace the current Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act (PHMCA) with the new Healthcare Services Bill (HCS Bill), targeted for enactment in 2019. The HCS Bill will regulate mainstream healthcare services providers (similar to the PHMCA) and will also expand to cover non-premises-based providers, such as the ambulance and telemedicine service providers. Under the new law, all licensees will also be required to contribute to the National Electronic Health Record (NEHR) system.

We encourage our members to be familiar with the changes and to provide any feedback or concerns on these changes via the MOH channels available, as this can significantly impact our practice of medicine.

More information about the changes proposed in the HCS Bill can be found on MOH's dedicated webpage: [www.hcsa.sg](http://www.hcsa.sg).

Separately, SMA responded to a media query on this matter and we reiterated our position that while there are advantages to a national medical records system, the NEHR's ability to enable better continuity of care must be balanced with the privacy and autonomy rights of each patient.

### **SMA representatives in MOH committees**

SMA has nominated the following doctors as SMA's representatives in the listed committees:

Dr Chong Yeh Woei for the newly set up MOH Joint Committee on the Provision of Outpatient Intravenous and Central Line Therapies by Licenced Clinics; Dr Yeo Sow Nam for the newly set up MOH Joint Committee for Opioids Control in Healthcare Institutions; and Dr Lee Yik Voon as a member in the Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore.

We would like to thank Dr Chong, Dr Yeo and Dr Lee for volunteering their time to be in these committees. Their participation in Government committees are important in ensuring that changes to laws and regulations are effective and practical for the healthcare system and doctors to better care for their patients.

### **World Pneumonia Day public education**

We are glad to be a supporting organisation at the World Pneumonia Day event organised by The Good Life Co-operative and the Bukit Batok Grassroots Organisations on 26 November 2017. Dr Tan Tze Lee, 1st Vice President, represented SMA in the signing of the pledge in our fight against pneumonia together with other supporting organisations. This event sought to increase awareness of pneumonia prevention through good personal hygiene habits, diet and vaccination. ♦