



TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE

Text by Jennifer Lee, Former Deputy Manager, SMA Charity Fund

Ask any medical student why he/she chose medicine as a career and you may get this common response: a passion to advance healthcare for the benefit of the local and global community, especially in areas where healthcare access is limited.

These students, with their diverse economic backgrounds and education interests, are eager to put into practice what they are learning and contribute to healthcare for the benefit of all. The rigorous curriculum in the local medical schools prepares them to be exceptional medical practitioners to face future healthcare challenges, and shapes them into potential leaders in their fields of study.

One of the first challenges that a medical student might face today, however, is not a healthcare issue, but a huge financial burden; especially if they come from a more challenging socio-economic background. SMA Charity Fund (SMACF) hopes to bring such students a glimmer of hope and light. By alleviating their financial burden, these students can focus on what is important – training to be good medical doctors for the betterment of the future of healthcare.

Testimonial by Ong Jia Wen, MBBS Year 4, NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, bursary recipient AY 2016/17.

I have always worked part-time while studying and it is really getting tougher as I progress in my medical training. Financial aid is something that medical students like me, who come from underprivileged families, need the most. I feel that as a student, financial issues are really difficult to overcome. I am truly appreciative to be selected as a bursary recipient for the SMA Medical Students' Assistance Fund (SMA-MSAF). This will allow me to focus on my studies during this last lap of medical school. I have always been interested in women's health and will strive towards entering residency in obstetrics and gynaecology.

I want to provide a high standard of care for my future patients and help improve the health of women, regardless of their age. And yes, I definitely want to do more community service work, both in Singapore and around the world, to bring healthcare to those in need. Someone once told me: "compassion is outward looking, indifference is inward looking; compassion is reaching out, indifference is holding back." For sure I want to be outward looking! I want to be a medical doctor with a soft heart and hard feet – to walk to the harshest and furthest of places and to impact those in need of care!

Please join SMACF in supporting students like Jia Wen by making a gift today, for the future of healthcare! Donate now at <https://www.giving.sg/smacf>. ▶

Bursary application for AY 2017/18 is open for all current and new medical students of Duke-NUS Medical School. Please submit your application online at <https://www.sma.org/smacares>. The SMA-MSAF is open to Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents who have a per capita income not exceeding S\$1,900. Application closes on 7 July 2017.