

The Cost of Providing Mandatory Medical Ethics Education

Text by Dr Ng Chee Kwan

In order to renew one's practising certificate, doctors are required to acquire mandatory medical ethics (MME) continuing medical education (CME) points. SMA has been providing MME CME activities since January 2024, and our MME programme in 2025 includes 17 modules, comprising five webinars, seven online distance-learning programmes and five articles. These activities are open to both SMA Members and non-Members, but are complimentary for Members.

These programmes have been put together by the SMA Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism (SMA CMEP). Personally, I have found the MME programmes to be of extremely high quality, and I am quite frankly amazed at the SMA CMEP teaching faculty's depth of knowledge. In 2024, I acquired sufficient MME points to renew my practising certificate. However, I am still attending the MME webinars organised by SMA in 2025. I find it beneficial to have my knowledge refreshed, and there are always new things to learn.

For example, I found the webinar held in July 2025 on using the four-box method for ethical analysis to be well worth attending. The lecture was clear and concise, and served as a great introduction to one of the most common approaches to ethical analysis.

A great amount of effort has been put in by the SMA CMEP faculty into producing MME content. The SMA Secretariat also puts in additional hours to host the webinars, each of which is typically attended by more than 1,000 doctors. After the webinars are over, the Secretariat spends more time and effort in order to submit doctors' particulars to the Singapore Medical Council (SMC), so that MME points can be appropriately awarded.

In addition to webinars, the online distance-learning programmes allow doctors to fulfil MME CME requirements at their convenience. In order to host these programmes, SMA subscribes to a learning management system at considerable cost.

As you can see, there is a financial and time cost in providing MME CME activities. We believe that it is worth the while, and it resonates with our objective of supporting a high standard of medical ethics and conduct. It is a service that SMA intends to continue to provide for as long as we are able.

As this issue of *SMA News* is focused on doctors in training (DITs), it would be remiss of me not to mention that our MME CME programmes are as relevant to DITs as they are to the rest of the medical profession. SMC has also expanded the

2026 MME CME curriculum to include many issues not touched upon previously. Moving forward, I hope that all Members, including those who are DITs, will continue to avail themselves of our programmes for their MME CME education. ♦

Dr Ng is a urologist in private practice and current President of the SMA. He has two teenage sons whom he hopes will grow much taller than him. He has probably collected too many watches for his own good.



Scan the QR code to learn more about SMA's MME CME activities.

