

August 2025 Was a Good Month

Text by Dr Ng Chee Kwan

August 2025 marked a month of celebrations for Singapore's 60th birthday. There were a couple of memorable events that made it a good month for me, on a professional as well as a personal level.

On the morning of 2 August, the Joint Committee on Specialist Training held the clinical viva section of the urology exit examinations and I was there as one of the examiners. I have been involved as an examiner for the past couple of years; this year, I thought that the examinations went particularly well and were conducted in a very systematic and fair manner. I also thought that the examiners' discussion of the candidates' performance at the end of the examinations was very meaningful – the aim being to support the candidates who did not meet expectations by identifying the areas which they could improve on and sharing this feedback with the candidates' residency directors.

That late afternoon, my family and I attended the National Day Parade preview at the Padang. Having applied for tickets for many years, my wife finally struck the lottery this year and was able to obtain tickets for the preview. We made our way to Raffles Place MRT, expecting to have to navigate to the Padang on our own from there. However,

there were many ushers stationed at the MRT station and along the path to direct the crowds. There were also signages put up to indicate the way. Before entering the Padang, our belongings were subject to X-ray screening, and the process was quite quick with many screening stations. After which, we were promptly issued our goodie bags and approached the seating area. Although there were no assigned seat numbers, we were instructed to go up an appropriate flight of stairs and easily found ourselves seats. We thoroughly enjoyed the preview, which was essentially a rehearsal for the main event on National Day. It seemed that no expense and effort was spared even for the preview; it was a full-dress rehearsal, with the usual fighter plane and helicopter displays, light shows and fireworks. What struck me throughout the preview was how well organised it was, and I appreciated the hard work of the performers and organising staff very much.

On 17 August, I had the opportunity to meet with delegates from the Hong Kong Medical Association (HKMA), comprising senior doctors from the HKMA council and a group of young medical students from the two medical schools in Hong Kong. The HKMA is well

supported by the doctors in Hong Kong and conducts many activities including community outreach – they even have their own choir. After meeting briefly at the SMA office, we had a very pleasant dinner at a local seafood restaurant. Due to our cultural similarities and shared background of UK-based medical training, I believe that it is worthwhile to continue engaging with the HKMA in the future.

Finally, on 30 August, SMA conducted a retreat for Council members and Secretariat staff at Civil Service Club @ Changi. The last Council retreat was held before the COVID-19 pandemic, and so it was long overdue; Council members deliberated on issues such as SMA's role and relevance to its Members, SMA's financial health and optimisation of the Secretariat's operational efficiency. Post-lunch, we had a corporate bonding session with Secretariat staff where we learnt more about our own personalities and how to work better together by understanding the personalities of other team members through the TetraMap Instrument.

These were the highlights of August 2025 for me. Amid the routine of my own clinical practice and regular commitments, these events made it a good month for me. ♦



SMA representatives with the Hong Kong Medical Association delegates after enjoying a scrumptious meal



SMA Council and Secretariat gathered for a day of bonding

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.

