



# Recognition of System

Last year, it was brought to SMA's attention by some of our members that doctors who have successfully gone through the new local residency system, might not be considered as specialists with specialist qualifications recognised in Malaysia by their National Specialist Register (NSR).

Therefore, on 31 July 2012, SMA wrote to NSR in Malaysia to enquire whether these doctors' specialist qualifications would be recognised by them. We clarified in our letter that Singapore's residency programmes are run by various local sponsoring institutions (public healthcare institutions), and accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education International (ACGME-I). In our letter, we also noted that ACGME-I is modelled after the American ACGME system, although the two are not the same. Currently, the American Board of Medical Specialties does not recognise doctors trained under the ACGME-I system.

NSR's reply is as follows:

2 November 2012

Dr Lee Yik Voon  
Executive Director  
Singapore Medical Association

Dear Dr Lee,

We kindly refer to your letter dated 31 July 2012.

The Academy Council meeting at its meeting recently had discussed on your request to recognise the new Residency Programme system introduced in Singapore for registration in the Malaysian National Specialist Register. The Council had agreed that to facilitate them in the recognition of the new system, we would be most grateful if you could provide us the following information:

- (i) details on the training of the postgraduate programme of the respective specialties
- (ii) the syllabus and curriculum
- (iii) process of assessment and examination

The above details are essential in evaluating the programme, as it shall be benchmarked against the Masters programme of the local universities in terms of duration of training, standard of training and examination system.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Chang Keng Wee**

Master

Academy of Medicine of Malaysia

# Singapore's Residency in Malaysia

On 21 December 2012, SMA then wrote to Singapore's Ministry of Health (MOH) about NSR's non-recognition of Singapore's ACGME-I residency programmes. We encouraged MOH to provide NSR with the necessary information so that the programmes can be considered for recognition in Malaysia, as we felt that NSR's recognition would help attract more Malaysian doctors to work in Singapore. In our letter, we also noted that given the medical manpower shortage in Singapore and the relative cultural similarities between Singapore and Malaysia, we believe Malaysia remains an important source of medical manpower to address Singapore's needs.

MOH's reply is as follows:

18 January 2013

A/Prof Chin Jing Jih  
President  
Singapore Medical Association

Dear Jing Jih,

## **Re: Recognition of Residency Programme**

I refer to your letter of 21 December 2012 on the recognition of residency programmes in Singapore for registration in the Malaysian National Specialist Register (NSR) administered by the Ministry of Health, Malaysia and the Academy of Medicine, Malaysia.

With regard to the Malaysian NSR's request for information on our residency programmes, this information can be accessed freely at the Specialists Accreditation Board (SAB) and ACGME International websites as indicated below:

- i. [http://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/content/hprof/sab/en/topnav/specialist\\_training.html](http://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/content/hprof/sab/en/topnav/specialist_training.html)
- ii. <http://www.acgme-i.org/web/index.html>

Residency programmes are for training specialists for our Singapore healthcare institutions and the care of patients in Singapore. ASEAN countries, including Malaysia, are free to recognise our programmes as they see fit. We have submitted the information as contained in the above websites to the ASEAN Professional Medical Regulatory Authorities (PMRAs) through the ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Medical Practitioners (AJCCM) on 14 January 2013. The information was noted in the AJCCM's meeting in Brunei Darussalam (in which Ministry of Health, Malaysia had representatives present) on 15 January 2013.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,  
**Dr Lau Hong Choon**  
Director  
Manpower Standards and Development Division  
Ministry of Health Singapore

**We wish to highlight the current status of this situation to doctors who are planning to join (or are already in) the residency system, especially those who are considering the possibility of practising in Malaysia. SMA**