

President's Message



Dr Ravindran R Naidu
President
flynaidumma@gmail.com

Several long overdue issues faced by General Practitioners (GPs) with Third Party Administrators (TPAs) have finally been addressed in a meeting held by Minister of Health, YB Datuk Seri Dr S Subramaniam on 24 July 2017. The meeting was attended by Datuk Seri Dr Chen, Secretary General Ministry of Health (MOH), Datuk Dr Noor Hisham, Director General of Health, Datuk Dr Jeyaindran, Deputy Director General of Health, and various representatives from MOH, MPCAM, FPMPAM, PERDIM and TPAs like AIA, PM Care, Asia Assistance, Health Connect, Micares and FOMEMA. MMA was represented by President, Dr Ravindran Naidu, PPSMMA Chairman Dr Thirunavukarasu and PPSMMA Honorary Assistant Secretary, Dr Hanafiah Hamidon.

MOH has tentatively agreed to the amended 7th Fee Schedule in which the Regulations shall state the consultation fees based on the diagnosis of simple, intermediate and complex a medical practitioner should charge. It was agreed that a circular will be issued by MOH to notify all Registered Medical Practitioners (RMPs) not to engage in any contracts that can be construed as Fee Splitting. If the RMPs continue to sign these contracts it will be viewed as breaching the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act 1998 and Medical Act and Code of Professional Conduct by MMC. This requires that all registered medical practitioners are required to comply with the stipulated Fee Schedule. If there shall be any act of taking a percentage from the invoice or charging any kind of fee from the registered medical practitioner, this shall be considered as Fee Splitting and this includes in any contractual agreement between the RMPs and the Third Party Administrators.

During the meeting, MOH warned all associations not to engage with any TPAs who are not registered with MOH. It was recommended that all medical associations who wish to continue engaging with TPAs should come out with a generic standard agreement. To facilitate the preparation of this agreement a representative from MOH will be present during negotiations while preparing the agreement.

The Ministry has stressed that TPAs' contracts between the employer and the TPA should be sent to the Medical Practice Division of the Ministry of Health for vetting purposes. Transparency of the contract should be prioritised and MOH should play their part in protecting the interest of the patients. The act of limiting the drugs and investigations by those TPAs to reduce the payments to panel clinics or medical practitioner(s) will only lead to compromising the quality of healthcare and medical

treatment of patients. The treatment of the patient should not be compromised by both TPAs and MOH.

With regards to blood investigation results and any other related investigations, TPAs are not allowed to have access to it. This is to strictly maintain confidentiality of patients. Blanket consent forms signed by patients will not be allowed and is considered illegal.

The MMA hopes that the Minister of Health and MOH will fulfil their promise to resolve all the mentioned issues by the end of 2017 as promised by the Minister during the meeting.



The announcement of Medical Regulations 2017 and Medical (Amendment) 2012 on 1 July 2017 and the corporatisation of MMC has caused the medical profession to be frantic especially in terms of the application for Annual Practising Certificates (APC) which require registered medical practitioners to collect at least 20 CPD points per year effective year 2020. Those working in the public sector have to go through the MyCPD offered by MOH while MMA has been given the task to be the administrator to collate and present CPD points for all registered medical practitioners in the private sector for renewal of their annual practicing certificates effective 2020. This service will be provided free for all including non-members. Several members have questioned me, "why then do I become a member?" MMA is doing this as a Corporate Social Responsibility for the medical profession. Fear not and be rest assured my dear members, we shall give back our members in some other form.

Though this decision was viewed as drastic by some medical associations, the implementation of this CPD