

PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



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My dear colleagues in the medical profession, allow me to report on the various undertakings and thrusts pursued by the Philippine Medical Association.

The PMA is the umbrella organization of physicians in the country with a current membership of 70,000 of which 34,000 are in good standing. It is the only Accredited Professional Organization in the field of medicine recognized by the Philippine Professional Regulation Commission.

It consists of 17 regions, each headed by an elected regional governor, organized under them are 118 component societies scattered all over the nation. At present, there are 8 specialty divisions, 74 specialty and subspecialty societies and 38 affiliate societies.

However, not all of the doctors in the Philippines are members of the Association. PMA's membership at present consists of about 65–70% of the total number of physicians registered with the Professional Regulation Commission, which still include those who have died, retired or migrated in other countries.

Of the members who are in good standing, 50% of our membership has not been actively involved in the activities of the Association.

As physicians, our main priority is our patients whom we have sworn to serve; but as leaders of our associations, our main priority is to take care of our members and safeguard their interests.

In order to be relevant in the eyes of our members, the PMA Board of Governors developed programs that focused on making each physician feel the importance of being a member of the PMA. At the same time, make them proud again as Filipino physicians who are regarded by his patients with the highest level of respect and dignity.

- Membership Benefits and Professional Development

- Continuing Medical Education
- Legislative and Political Agendas
- Socio-Civic Activities and Advocacies

Membership Benefits and Professional Development

We want the members to have a sense of belonging to the Association **taking care of their needs, and protecting their interests.**

The **Mutual Aid Benefit Program (Death, Disability, and Legal Aids)** has been increased for the members and their beneficiaries.

The PMA is doing all it can to remind our members to take care of their health and that of their families. *"We can never keep the Nation healthy unless we are healthy ourselves."*

The PMA and all its specialty divisions have also worked hard to negotiate with our National Medical Insurance System or Philhealth to increase the benefits it gives to our physicians for professional services rendered to their members.

The Association has made improvements to our Doctor's Inn. It provides a decent and affordable place for our physicians to stay while in Metro Manila. Our auditorium and meeting rooms are also made available to our members and their friends for social gatherings and business meetings at very affordable costs.

The PMA Code of Ethics was amended to strengthen further the ethical conducts of physicians and put a stop to the commercialization of the practice of medicine, a controversy that has tainted the good image of the Filipino physician here and abroad.

The code prohibits a physician from commercially endorsing any health products to maintain his independence and integrity.

The Code also protects fellowship among physicians by prohibiting Filipino doctors to charge

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professional fees to fellow physicians and the immediate members of their family who are financially dependent on them.

Continuing Medical Education (CME)

It is one of the backbones of activities of the PMA. As a main provider of CME units, the PMA sees to it that it provides various avenues in updating the skills, knowledge and competencies of our members.

The various specialty divisions and all the specialty societies under them also hold their own regular scientific activities to update their members relative to their specialties.

All of these are being done to ensure the global competitiveness of the Filipino Physician.

Legislative and Political Agenda

Our LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL AGENDA is focused on ensuring that good legislative bills beneficial to the health of our people as well as the practice of medicine are passed in Congress.

1. Together with the allied health professionals, civil and religious societies, we have successfully worked for the approval of the Sin Tax Bill, a tax that is levied on activities or goods considered physically or morally harmful, such as cigarettes, gambling and liquor.

Many believed it was impossible to pass the

sin tax bill as those blocking its passage were strong, noisy, and organized.

But it was ultimately hard work and unity that prevailed and made the day for the sin tax measure. The bill will significantly increase the prices of cigarettes and liquor in the country.

2. The PMA together with various medical associations called for a total ban on the manufacture and sale of electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes, which allegedly deliver unwanted chemicals into the body and could cause cancer and other deadly diseases. E-cigarettes, are now flooding the market and even sold by sidewalk vendors such that the government should take drastic action to protect non-smokers, particularly children.
3. Passage of Physicians Act 2013 to amend the Medical Act of 1959, making it more relevant to the demands and needs of the present time. It also contains the Integration of the PMA, which will make it mandatory for physicians to become members of the PMA before they can practice medicine in the country.

Socio-Civic Activities and Advocacies

Our country was recently devastated by a series of typhoons. The PMA took the lead in organizing relief operations and medical missions in different parts of the country alongside with other government agencies.