

President's Message

The launching of the PMPS website will, I hope, represent an important step forward in encouraging our society to be more IT savvy, connecting doctors in a fast and efficient manner. The purpose of this website is mainly for the convenience and benefit of all our members. Those of you who have submitted your e-mail address to us will be updated regularly. I hope this PMPS website will also help to keep our PMPS running cost lower as well as being more environmentally friendly.

The 12th Malaysian Election is just over and the winds of change blew loud and clear, sending the message that the people wanted changes. Penang has a new government. There may be cause for celebration but the 'honeymoon' period will soon be over. For the politicians, the election is won but the job has just started and there is much to be done. The most important thing is for the people to live in peace and harmony. We also hope and pray that the new government will deliver what it has promised in making Penang a better, safer and healthier place to stay and visit, which would in turn augur well for medical tourism.

Medical tourism has been identified as an important catalyst for further national economic growth and a major contributor to the economy of Penang. According to the government, over 250,000 people visited Malaysia last year for medical treatment and wellness therapies. In the process, health tourists generated an estimated RM200 million in revenue for the country. In Visit Malaysia 2007, private hospitals in Penang recorded high occupancy rates. Let's hope that 2008 will be an even better year for Penang in medical tourism. Perhaps it should be clarified that medical tourism includes medical travelers, who come to seek treatment of their medical illnesses only, and medical tourists, who come for holiday and medical check-ups, and possibly treatment. At present, we are seeing mainly medical travelers, but we should also attempt to increase the real medical tourists, and we hope that the new Penang State government will take the lead in Malaysia to bring the 'tour organizers' and 'medical services providers' together to give the economy a real boost.

As my term as the President of PMPS comes to an end in the end of March 2008, I would like to thank all the Committee Members for the great support I have received over the past year. Their valued contributions have made our society relevant and dynamic. As I reflect back I am glad to say it has been a fulfilling term as I have deepened ties with some members, watching the camaraderie between fellow members in the medical field through our functions, the setting up of the website as a dynamic source of information/ exchange, the strengthening of ties with the national body in addressing pressing issues/ threats faced in our national medical body, etc. I would also like to wish the incoming President and Committee a big welcome as they put their hands to the plough to serve the society and members; that they will have a fulfilling and successful year ahead, as I have had. As the saying goes, it is better to serve than be served!

May God bless each of you and your families.

Dr. Simon Lo
President, PMPS