



CMASL NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLEGE OF MEDICAL ADMINISTRATORS OF SRI LANKA

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Cover Story.....

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The College of Medical Administrators of Sri Lanka

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1. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Towards Resilience Beyond Boundaries

COVID-19 pandemic emphasized to the whole world the critical importance of building resilient health systems with capacity to withstand and respond to crises. Though it is strange to all health systems globally, Sri Lankan health system was able to face the pandemic successfully while maintaining its routine health care services both in preventive and curative. Health service of the country was able to withstand and manage the services smoothly and successfully not only in COVID-19 pandemic, but also during other recent crisis situation such as civil war, Tsunami etc. proving the resilient nature of our health system with contribution of all health systems prevailing in the country mostly by western allopathic system. COVID-19 pandemic has directed all countries globally to make their health systems better prepared for resilience against all forms of threats and also demonstrating the need for better collaboration and coordination across borders and sectors beyond boundaries. This is much focused for securing health for all, assuring Universal Health Coverage and achieving the health-related Sustainable Development Goals.

Due to the frequent challenges like economic uncertainty, changing geopolitics, global warming and pandemics, national leaders and policy-makers had to make their system resilient to face them as the number one priority and responsibility. Hence, recognizing the importance, the CMASL had chosen its themes as 'Navigating through troubled waters' last year and '**Rising through Challenges: Leading Towards Health System Resilience**' this year.

Strategies for preparing Health System Resilience which help to develop preparedness of a system enhancing capacity to respond to a shock (any known or unknown, sudden and extreme changes in environment of organization which impacts on a health system) through absorbing, adopting and even transforming based on lessons learnt from the experience (past or present). Most importantly, maintaining provision of critical functions and essential services even within a crisis as well as focusing to deliver high quality care services across varying conditions.

Considering the above, strategies have been developed based on WHO identified Health System Building Blocks. improved service delivery (Safe, Quality, Productive, Customer Focused), improved access to essential medical products, vaccines and technologies, strengthened health workforce, health information systems (improved surveillance systems), sustainable health system financing, empowered leadership and improved governance on which our Annual Scientific Sessions in this year, is also based on.

While contributing health service to develop as a more resilient system as healthcare managers, we, the new Council work tirelessly to protect our members rights, complete their professional and official expectations to enter into a permanent cadre, attending their grievances as well as enhancing their capacity with new knowledge and skills, motivating and guiding to improve their performance, promoting and facilitating their innovations and best practices towards betterment of health service and also, to improve their unity in order to elevate as one team even into international level. With all these, we are committed to make our College-CMASL also resilient to challenges.

With all these dreams, we, the new Council is attending their best to achieve the objectives and targets including building our own office premises, but we need your assistance, dedication and active contribution. Hence, I request you to perform as role models enhancing your own image as well as one professional team with our achievements beyond boundaries.

I wish you all the courage to rise through challenges as one team.

Dr. Lal Panapitiya
President, CMASL

2. OFFICE BEARERS OF THE CMASL – 2023

Patron of the College

Dr. George Fernando

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Dr. Lal Panapitiya

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Dr. Rukshan Bellana

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Dr. Pradeep Ratnasekera

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Dr. Priyantha Athapattu

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Dr. Alan Ludowyke (Immediate Past Secretary)

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Dr. S. Sridharan

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Dr. Sagari Kiriwadeniya

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Dr. Chandana Wijesinghe

Dr. Upuli Wijemanne

Dr. Ayanthi Karunarathne

Dr. Avanthi Rupasinghe

Dr. Anushika Abeynayake

Dr. Muditha Perera

Dr. Kasupathy Jeyassuthan

Dr. N. Mayuran

Provincial Representatives in the Council

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Southern Province

Dr. K.H.P. Jeewarathna

Eastern Province

Dr. S. Mayuran

Northern Province

Dr. Dilip Liyanage

Uva Province

Dr. Sudath K. Dharmarathne

Sabaragamuwa Province

Dr. Asela Perera

North-Central Province

Dr. S. Sridharan

North-Western Province

Dr. Sumith Anton Perera

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Dr. Chandana Wijesinghe

Dr. Upuli Wijemanne

Dr. Ayanthi Karunarathne

Dr. Avanthi Rupasinghe

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Dr. Lasitha Malalasekera

Dr. Ruvini Ranagala

Dr. Sameera Thantragee

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Dr. Pradeep Rathnasekera

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Dr. Tamara Kalubowila

Dr. Anton Fernando

Dr. K Jeyassuthan

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Dr. Arjuna Thilakarathna

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Dr. K Rahulan

Dr. Esanda Wellala

Dr. Kapila Mallawarachchi

Dr. Manuri Perera

Dr. Arosha Wijewickrama

Dr. Kaushalya Malavige

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Dr. Dinesh Koggalage – Convener

Co-opted members

Dr. Arosha Wijewickrama

Dr. Kanchitha Samarathna

Dr. Prasanna Fernando

Dr. Reginthen Jayawardena

3. PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE CMASL

1993	Dr. George Fernando
1994	Dr. Reggie Perera
1995	Dr. Lalith Mendis
1996	Dr. H. M. S. S. D. Herath
1997	Dr. Lucian Jayasuriya
1998	Dr. V. Jeganathan
1999	Dr. Maya Atapattu
2000	Dr. Manil Fernando
2001	Dr. S. A. P. Gnanissara
2002	Dr. Ajith Mendis
2003	Dr. H. R. U. Indrasiri
2004	Dr. Hector Weerasinghe
2005	Dr. Athula Kahandaliyanage
2006-2007	Dr. R. Wimal Jayantha
2008	Dr. Rani Fernando
2009	Dr. P. G. Mahipala
2010	Dr. Anil Jasinghe
2011	Dr. S.M. Samarage
2012	Dr. Nicholas Jayasekara
2013	Dr. Sunil De Alwis
2014	Dr. Amal Harsha De Silva
2015	Dr. Jayasundara Bandara
2016	Dr. Shanti Dalpatadu
2017	Dr. Neelamani S. Rajapaksa Hewageegana
2018-2019	Dr. Sujatha Senarathne
2019-2020	Dr. Hemantha Beneragama
2021	Dr. R.M.S.K. Rathnayake
2022	Dr. Asela Gunawardena

4. MEMBERS' CORNER

Regional Review Meeting – Eastern Chapter by College of Medical Administrators of Sri Lanka

Dr. Mayuran Nagalingam, Dr. Thayahlini Sasikumar, Dr. Sudath Dharmarathna & Dr. Lal Panapitiya

“A leader is the one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way” John C. Maxwell

According to the annual action plan of College of Medical Administrators of Sri Lanka (CMASL) and under the guidance and supervision of the President of CMASL Dr. Lal Panapitiya, Regional Review Meeting – Eastern Chapter was arranged in Batticaloa.

Two programs were arranged simultaneously in different venues.

1. Management training for Middle Level Managers
2. Review of “Best Practices” in the region.

All the heads of institution of Divisional Hospitals and Primary Medical Care Units in Eastern Province have been invited for the first training programme. Five important lectures on topics of Health System in Sri Lanka, Motivation, Leadership, Health System Resilience and Human Resource Management and Clinical Audit which were delivered by reputed administrators; Dr. Dilip Liyanage, Dr. Maithily Bartholet, Dr. TSRTR Rajab, Dr. AB Mashooth and Dr. (Mrs) SR Isherdeen respectively.

For the second programme – “Best Practices in Eastern Province”, the Provincial Director of Health Services, all 4 Regional Directors of Health Services (RDHS), all the Directors, Deputy RDHSs, Deputy Directors and Medical Superintendents in Eastern Province attended. This session was chaired by Dr. Lal Panapitiya (President of CMASL) and Dr. Sudath Dharmarathna (Chairman of Academic Committee, CMASL)

Following “Best Practices” were presented at this session.

1. Towards zero Leprosy in Batticaloa by Dr G Sukunan (RDHS, Batticaloa)
2. Medication safety in chemotherapy by Dr K Ganeshalingam (Director, TH, Batticaloa)
3. Resource mapping by Dr. ILM Rifaz (RDHS, Kalmunai)
4. Patients’ safety and Health Information desk by Dr. R. Muraleeswaran (Director, BH, Kalmunai North)

Valuable discussions were held after each presentation. The president stated that ‘Best Practices’ could be adopted island wide. As quote by Mr. John C. Maxwell, our leaders of CMASL have known the way, gone the way, and shown the way to Junior Administrators. This program was coordinated by Eastern Province coordinator of CMASL Dr. N. Mayuran.





Biomedical Engineering Division transforms healthcare with cost-saving solutions

By Dr. R. M. Ranagala and Eng. T.V.A. Ruwansiri

The Biomedical Engineering Services Division (BES) of the Ministry of Health-Sri Lanka, has revolutionized healthcare services through ground-breaking cost-saving measures. The BES optimizes resources and maximizes efficiency by implementing innovative solutions for managing diagnostic and therapeutic medical equipment.

Established in 1953 and expanded with JICA support in 1993, the BES combines engineering and medical-biological sciences to advance healthcare treatment. It provides state of the art medical equipment technologies to government hospitals, ensuring safety, quality, reliability, and accuracy. Recently, the BES showcased its vital role during challenging times. The Elpitiya Base Hospital urgently needed a new X-ray machine but lacked the necessary funds. Undeterred, the BES discovered two condemned X-ray machines in other hospitals and expertly renovated and merged them into a fully functional machine for Elpitiya Base Hospital. This innovative solution saved approximately Rs. 30 million.

In an era of limited budgets, biomedical engineering expertise becomes crucial. The BES's focus on preventive and corrective maintenance and equipment renovation allows for sustainable healthcare services. Strengthening biomedical engineering brings immense benefits to diagnostic, imaging and therapeutic services, particularly in resource-constrained settings like Sri Lanka. To further enhance efficiency, hospitals need to maintain detailed databases of vital equipment, including its operational status. Such databases enable effective decision making, cost-efficient repairs, and optimal resource utilization. By leveraging accurate information, the BES and hospital authorities can make informed choices about repairs, replacements, and new equipment procurement. Additionally, the databases facilitate equipment re-distribution between hospitals, curbing unnecessary expenses and benefiting those in need. The BES's commitment to cost-saving solutions and high-quality healthcare services is evident. Through ongoing efforts to strengthen biomedical engineering and establish comprehensive equipment databases, a sustainable and efficient healthcare system could become a reality for Sri Lanka.



Health System Resilience

By Dr. Lal Panapitiya, President, CMASL

System Resilience is defined as “The ability to effectively prepare for, withstand and manage the stress (absorb, adapt and transform) and respond to the health consequences of shock and learn from shocks focusing on a system of more prepared and better performing” (Kutzin & Sparkes, 2016). It is also defined as “the proactive ability /capacity that organizations, units, teams and individuals enact to quickly adapt to any known or unknown sudden shocks or crises in environment, in every day practices through holistic implementation of risk management, contingency, and continuity planning, rather than to resist them” Most importantly maintaining provision of critical functions and essential services even within a crisis as well as focusing to deliver high quality care services across varying conditions.

Shock means any known or unknown sudden and extreme changes in environment of organization which impacts on a health system. Among the routine challenges, some new challenges occur in this new volatile era such as economic uncertainty, changing geopolitics, global warming as well as new epidemics / pandemics etc. It is different, a shock from a predictable and enduring health system stresses, such as population ageing, increasing incidence of multimorbidity.

Shocks affect predominantly on balance between demand and supply of services and resources of health systems. Because of these issues, organizational performance in a shock, from the onset of a crisis / shock, is regressed. But with proper absorption and adaptation, it will be again rising not to previous status even transforming into better status depending on dedication and ability of management.

Shock management cycle

Stage 1 - Preparedness; Preparedness of health systems to future shocks

Stage 2 - Shock onset and alert; Timely identification of onset and type of shock

Stage 3 - Shock and impact management (on System & Society); Absorbs the shock, adapts and transforms ensuring achievement of health system goals. Challenge is when to shift from one to another.

Stage 4 - Recovery and learning; Return to some kind of normality but changes being continued as a legacy of the shock

Strategies to overcome current issues towards Health System Resilience

Considering the above, strategies have been developed based on WHO identified Health System Building Blocks.

- Improved service delivery (Safe, Quality, Productive, Customer Focused)
- Improved access to essential medical products, vaccines and technologies
- Strengthened health workforce
- Health information systems (improved surveillance systems)
- Sustainable health system financing
- Empowered leadership and improved governance

SPECIAL COVID-19 BURIAL GROUND: A STORY OF UNSUNG HEROES

By Dr. K. Dharshini, Provincial Health Training Centre, Batticaloa &
Dr. N. Mayuran, Registrar in Medical Administration

Sri Lankan government granted permission to bury the bodies of those who succumbed to death due to COVID-19 at any cemetery or burial ground with effect from 5th of March 2022. Since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, there were many controversies, issues and discussions regarding burial of dead bodies. Initially the government of Sri Lanka made it compulsory to cremate the bodies of deceased due to COVID-19. However, there was continuous pressure from many communities including some religious groups as their beliefs prohibit cremation.

In February 2021, Government of Sri Lanka announced that burial can be taken place at remote areas. On 5th March 2021, Majeema Nagar in Batticaloa district was accepted as a burial ground without the public and political involvement. Majeema Nagar is located in MOH Oddamavady and it lies 280km away from the capital Colombo.

Recommendations were given after inspection of the site by the RDHS, Batticaloa team and representatives from Central Environment Authority, Water Board, Army, Police and Chairman of Pradeshiyasabha and it was forwarded to DGHS and Head of National Operation Centre of Prevention of COVID-19 outbreak for their approval. On the same day (05.03.2021) the proposal was granted permission and land leveling was done by the team of local government, Oddamavady and burial of 3 bodies took place under the supervision of MOH team with all the standard precautions.

During one year, total of 3723 bodies from all over the country were buried. This total comprised of 2985 Islamic, 261 Buddhists, 258 Hindus, 90 Catholics and 37 bodies of unidentified religious status. 92 unidentified bodies which were not infected with COVID were also buried at this place by the order of Court.

This mammoth task was achieved by our unsung heroes, MOH-Oddamavady, SPHI, PHII and few laborers from Pradeshiya Sabha-Oddamavady. Let's hail them and appreciate their tireless effort to fulfil the task during pandemic. Batticaloa district should be highlighted for this service to the whole nation during COVID-19 pandemic.



Fig 1: Laborers digging the grave



Fig 2: Dug graves in Majeema Nagar



Fig 3: PHII & Laborers burying the bodies



Fig 4: Tombs up to 2022 March

5. COVER STORY

Ceremonial Induction of the President - 2023

By Dr. Avanthi Rupasinghe & Dr. Dinesh Koggalage



Marking a significant milestone, the College of Medical Administrators of Sri Lanka, ceremonially inducted Dr. Lal Panapitiya as its 30th President on 21st of April 2023 at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Galadari, Colombo. The ceremony had been organized highlighting the theme of the year '**Rising Through Challenges: Leading Towards Health System Resilience, Beyond Boundaries**'. The newly inducted President in his presidential address emphasized the importance of a resilient health system to face current and future challenges and how system resilience could be achieved. Further, the President elaborated on his plans along with his Council for the year 2023, to develop the field of Medical Administration and the membership.

His Lordship Justice Yasantha Kodgoda, President's Counsel as the Chief Guest and Prof. P.M.C. Thilakarathne, Vice-Chancellor of the Open University of Sri Lanka as the Guest of Honour graced the event. The dancing troupe of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo made this event glamorous.



6. EVENT CALENDAR

Events Completed

1. Training on Effective Meeting Conduction - 19th May 2023
2. 'Lead the Way' Leadership Training Programme – 31st March – 4th August 2023 (on selected days)



3. Lecture on Economic Crisis: Way Forward for Health Systems Resilience by Dr. Amal Harsha De Silva – 02nd June 2023
4. Regional Meeting – Central Province - from 3rd to 5th June 2023
5. Regional Meeting – Eastern Province - from 10th to 12th June 2023
6. SLMA Expert Talk - Health sector sustainability through SCP based equipment maintenance - 15th June 2023
7. Regional Meeting – Southern Province - 1st and 2nd July 2023
8. Regional Meeting – North-Central Province – 22nd July 2023
9. Training on Qualitative Research by Dr. Sujewa Hettiarachchi, University of Sri Jayawardenapura - 21st July 2023
10. Session on Modern Trends in Hospital Design & Development conducted by IIHS - 27th July 2023
11. Breakfast Meeting on Health Economics : Arranged by B Braun - 3rd August 2023

Upcoming Events

1. Regional Meeting – North-Western Province along with the Council Outing - 5th and 6th August 2023
2. Workshop on Leadership and Management Skills for Clinical Consultants – 27th August 2023
3. Orientation Course in Medical Administration 2023 – 19th August – 17th September (five consecutive weekends)
4. Annual Scientific Sessions 2023
 - Inauguration and Dr. Malinga Fernando Memorial Oration – 6th October 2023
 - Plenary Sessions 1 and 2 – 7th October 2023
 - Plenary Session 3 – 8th October 2023
 - Annual College Dinner – 8th October 2023

Please send your suggestions to,

Dr. Priyantha Athapattu

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