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Editor's Note (Prof Dr Norlisah Mohd Ramli)

Assalamualaikum and a Good Day to my colleagues.

It is sad and alarming that several parts of Malaysia face challenging times with the floods and unrelenting Covid-19. This situation remains to be a testing period in our lives. Still, we shall continue to observe all SOPs in place and do our best in our ways besides staying mentally strong as a whole radiology fraternity to continue rendering our utmost expertise and as individuals to keep ourselves safe. We shall keep the faith and continue to hope and pray for days free of Covid-19.

We now come to our current Issue 6 - Dec 2021, of the **CoR Newsletter**.

This issue brings you updates on CoR's recent "Webinar in Hybrid Imaging: Clinical Application" that was held on 4 Dec 2021, "East Coast State Challenges During Covid Era," "Structure and Governance of Specialist Training to Attain and Maintain MMC Standards" and "Accreditation and Recognition Process for Specialty Training Programmes in Malaysia."

Our appreciation and thanks to the contributors of our past Issue 5 – Sep 2021, Assoc Prof Dr Hilwati Hashim, Dr Zaharudin Haron, Dr Noor Khairiah A. Karim, Assoc Prof Datin Dr Shahizon Azura Mohamed Mukari, Dr Mazin Noordin, and Dr Nor Hafizah Abu Hassan, for their articles and updates

Members are welcome to contribute articles suitable for **CoR Newsletter**. Please submit to secretariat@radiologymalaysia.org - for appropriateness, only articles vetted and approved by the editor will be published.

My wish to members who are celebrating Christmas is "May your Christmas be joyful, merry and bright" and to all members, "Happy New Year 2022! Have a great (social-distant) sparkling, fabulous blast, and may the new year bring you good health, good fortune and good times".

Enjoy the reading, happy holidays, and stay safe always!

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Even though hybrid imaging is a niche subspecialty, we were very pleased to obtain >100 registrations for this webinar.

SIG MOLECULAR IMAGING WEBINAR “WEBINAR IN HYBRID IMAGING: CLINICAL APPLICATION”

An update by
Dr Farhana Fadzli
Organising Chairperson
SIG Molecular Imaging Webinar

The Molecular Imaging Special Interest Group held its first webinar, “Webinar in Hybrid Imaging: Clinical Application” on 4 Dec 2021 with 115 registrations. Although hybrid imaging is a niche subspecialty, we were delighted to obtain >100 registrations for this webinar. Much gratitude goes to the strong support from the College of Radiology’s President, Prof Dr Norlisah Ramli, who was coincidentally one of the invited speakers as well. This webinar could not have been brought to fruition without the generous sponsorship by Philips Healthcare Systems, Malaysia.

The presentations covered a wide range of subjects within the realm of hybrid imaging, providing the listeners with the latest knowledge on theranostics in prostate cancer and neuroendocrine tumour; updates in thyroid cancer and parathyroid disease from the point of view of molecular imaging; important contributory roles of hybrid imaging in the diagnosis of epilepsy and neurodegenerative disease; as well as a refresher on nuclear cardiology. It is hoped that the attendees reaped the benefit of this assemblage of specialists in their field.

The lectures presented were as follows:

Imaging castrate-resistant prostate cancer with Ga68-PSMA PET/CT and the way forward in PSMA therapy - Associate Professor Dr Subapriya Suppiah, Universiti Putra Malaysia

Radionuclide Imaging in the Assessment of Differentiated Thyroid Cancer - Dr Siti Zarina Amir Hassan, Hospital Kuala Lumpur

Update on Parathyroid Scintigraphic Imaging – Dr Mahayuddin Abdul Manap, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Hybrid Imaging in Neurodegenerative Disease - Professor Dr Norlisah Mohd Ramli, Universiti Malaya

Clinical Role of Hybrid Radionuclide Imaging in Epilepsy Disorder - Professor Dr Kartini Rahmat, Universiti Malaya

Theranostics in Neuroendocrine Tumour – Dr Lingeswaran Kasilingam, Beacon Hospital, Petaling Jaya

Nuclear Cardiology in Clinical Practice using SPECT/CT – Dr Syed Ejaz Shamim, Universiti Putra Malaysia

Apart from the above, an industry speaker invited by Philips from Singapore, Dr Punitha Arasaratnam, gave an enlightening lecture entitled *Fundamentals of PET/CT in Coronary Artery Disease*, a unique imaging technique in Malaysia.

There was a lively Q&A session after each speaker, and the whole session ended at 6pm, within schedule. Thanks to Melvin, the webinar coordinator, it ran smoothly without any hitches.

On behalf of the Molecular Imaging SIG, appreciation goes to College of Radiology for the opportunity to hold this webinar and to all speakers for their time and effort in preparing and executing the lectures and the Q&A sessions.

RADIOPHARMACEUTICALS – SPECT BASED

Table 1 Radiopharmaceuticals for parathyroid imaging. Characteristics, recommended activity range, and effective doses

Radiopharmaceutical	Administration route	Administered activity in adults (MBq)	Photopeak energy (keV)	Physical half-life	Effective dose per activity unit (mSv/MBq)	Effective dose for the upper administered activity (mSv)
Na ^{99m} Tc]TcO ₄	i.v.	74–150	140	6.04 h	0.0159*	2.4
[^{99m} Tc]Tc-MIBI	i.v.	400–900	140	6.04 h	0.00703*	6.3
[^{99m} Tc]Tc-tetrofosmin	i.v.	400–900	140	6.04 h	0.00629*	5.7
Na ¹²³ I]	o.a. (or i.v.)	7.4–14.8	159	13.2 h	0.108* (thyroid uptake 15%)	1.6 (thyroid uptake 15%)

Imaging Prostate Cancer with Ga68-PSMA PET/CT and the Way Forward in 177Lu-PSMA Therapy for metastatic Castrate-Resistant Prostate Cancer

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR SUBAPRIYA SUPPIAH
CONSULTANT RADIOLOGIST AND NUCLEAR MEDICINE PHYSICIAN
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

EAST COAST STATE CHALLENGES DURING COVID ERA

An update by

Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Shafie, Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Ezane

Assoc Prof Dr Juhara, Dr Khairil Amir

Dr Wan Aireene, Dr Ahmad Hadif

Dr Chandran, Dr Nasibah

Dr Nur Asma, Dr Hartini

Dr Fattah, Dr Bazli

Department of Radiology, Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia

During the pandemic, we try to maintain our training and clinical services. Teaching and learning processes are continuous despite constraints. Virtual teaching and learning have become a trend for lecturers and students. Against all odds and despite obstacles, we are firmly standing and facing these challenges as a team.

Against all odds and despite obstacles, we are firmly standing and facing these challenges as a team.

Clinical services

During the initial phase of the Covid pandemic, we work in batches and create shifts accordingly to minimise contacts. Reporting was done remotely via an online platform.

Those working in hospitals adhered to strict standard operating procedures (SOP). We perform all functions required for covid cases, such as suite preparation, donning, doffing, and cleaning protocols.

One of our success stories was that we performed three endovascular aneurysm repair (EVAR) cases during the pandemic with online guidance from PPUM vascular surgeon Mr Ahmad Rafizi Hariz.



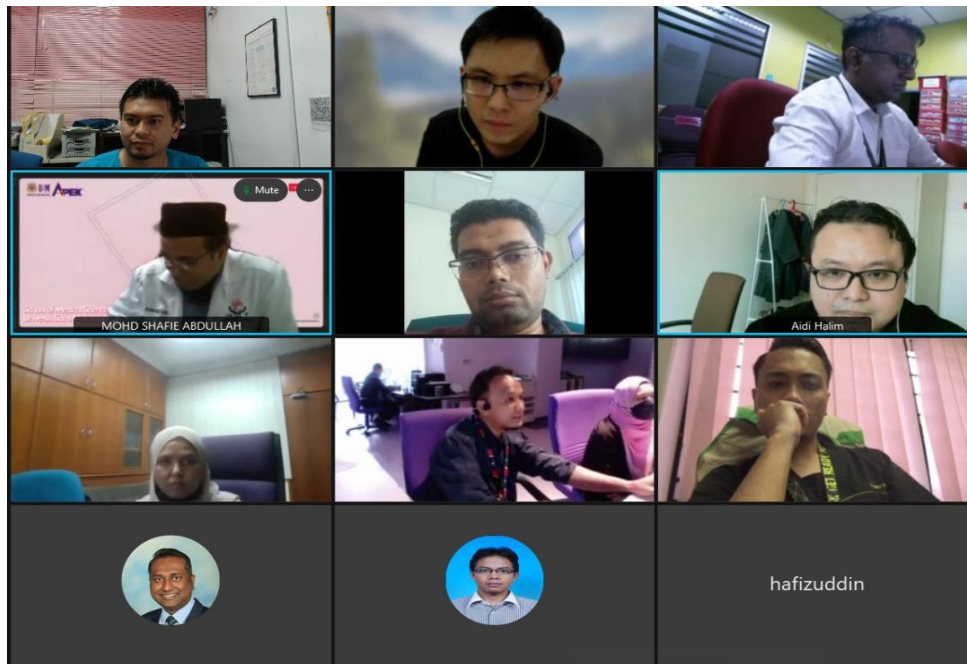
HUSM Radiology team performing interventional cases during the pandemic.

Teaching and training

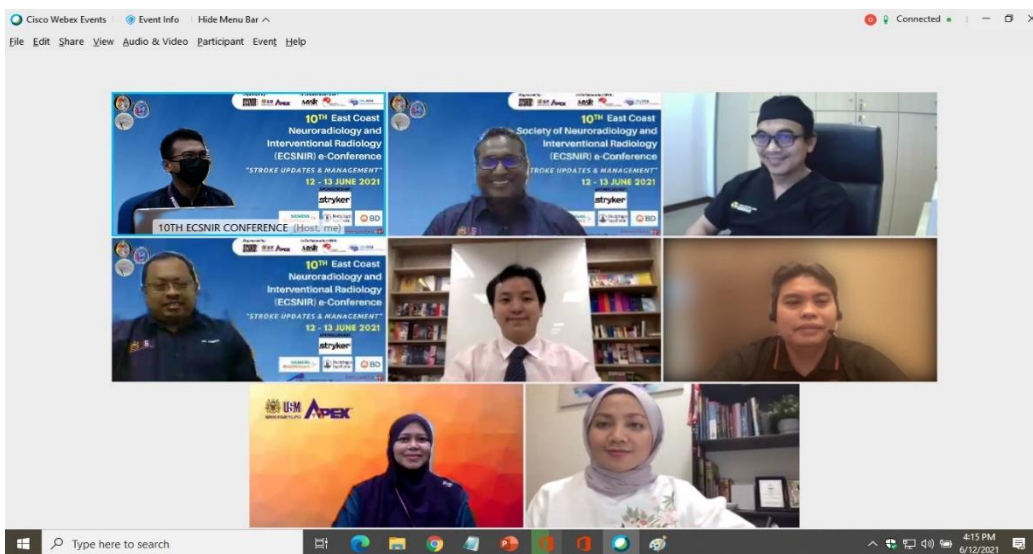
Face-to-face classes were shifted to online courses. This allows the continuation of teaching for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Despite the drawbacks, teaching and learning must be continued without jeopardising their quality.

East Coast Neuroradiology and Interventional Society (ECSNIR) successfully organised an online conference, ‘Stroke Updates and Management,’ in collaboration with Malaysia Stroke Council (MSC) and Malaysian Neurointerventional Society (MyNIS). Faculty members were from local and international. Surprisingly, the participants during this online conference surpass our previous physical conferences. Online seminars are a blessing in disguise as we can disseminate the knowledge wider.

Despite the drawbacks, teaching and learning must be continued without jeopardising their quality.



East Coast Young Interventional Radiologists meeting involving UNISZA, UIA, and USM



10th

Handling Conjoint Examination

The Radiology Specialty Board Committee consists of representatives from all universities within the speciality board. The professional examination was scheduled at Universiti Malaya in April 2020. Following the MCO announcement, the exam was postponed to November 2020. In November, the decision to decentralise the examination was made after considering that the MCO would not be lifted anytime soon.

One of the challenges was handling the examination itself. There is a lack of academic staff to run the examination since safety measures such as conducting checks before the examination and arranging lodging for students who had to be self-quarantined.

Nevertheless, we overcame the issue as the hospital administration received recruitment to assist the academic staff.



Examination situation during the pandemic, safety is our priority.

Conducting meetings and vetting

All the speciality board activities, vetting of questions, meetings, and interviews for new intake were converted from face-to-face to online platforms, mainly via Cisco Webex. We are lucky because our university has a good foundation for internet connection. We had equipped our meeting room with a microphone and camera, and the computer software was also updated. Since most lecturers are unfamiliar with the new platform, technicians and IT personnel will stand by for any technical difficulties.

Research

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our research activities. Postgraduate students in Master of Medicine (MMed), Master of Science (MSc), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) were equally affected. Lack of funds, time limitation, and subject recruitment were the challenges we faced. Research training was also affected when the application specialist unable to provide hands-on assistance due to strict standard operating procedures (SOP). However, we tried to overcome this by focusing more on clinical case reports, literature studies, and meta-analyses. Researches that used data using PACS were continued as usual.

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STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE OF SPECIALIST TRAINING TO ATTAIN AND MAINTAIN MMC STANDARDS

**An update by
Prof Dr Rosmawati Mohamed
Master
Academy of Medicine of Malaysia**

Structure and Governance of Specialist Training

At the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (AMM) Annual General Meeting last year, a resolution was adopted for AMM to facilitate the establishment of a ‘Joint Committee for Specialty and Subspecialty Training,’ bringing together the Ministry of Health, the Universities and the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia on a single platform to provide a national level integrated training structure. This structure will ensure that training is a collaborative effort of the MOH, the Universities, and the AMM (representing the private sector and the professional societies) and facilitate cooperation and collaboration between all education training providers. It, therefore, will allow the maximal utilisation of the expertise and facilities available in the MOH, the Universities and the private institutions.

Problem Statements

- The governance of non-university-based specialist training programme remains unclear
- There is a lack of uniformity and consistency in the provision of the non-university-based training programme

Postgraduate speciality and subspecialty training programmes, unlike undergraduate medical programmes, are offered by various providers (namely universities, MOH, professional societies, and private institutions). Training is conducted simultaneously at multiple training centres to provide an adequate case mix/caseload for a particular speciality.

Whilst standards and recognition by the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) provide the regulatory framework. There needs to be a mechanism for joint oversight by the Education Training Providers (ETP), addressing issues related to the delivery of training and aligning training to the achievement and maintenance of MMC standards. Providers of training from the speciality/profession itself will need to give essential inputs and oversight regarding the delivery of training.

Elaboration

In the university-based model, there are two levels of oversight of Masters training programmes:

1. Jawatankuasa Bersama Ijazah Lanjutan Perubatan (JBILP) - ‘National Conjoint Board’
2. Jawatankuasa Kepakaran (JKK) - ‘Specialty ‘Conjoint Boards’ (23 disciplines)

The National Conjoint Committee for Postgraduate Medical Degrees (JBILP), commonly referred to as the ‘National Conjoint Board’, has successfully provided oversight and coordination of the Specialty Conjoint Boards and Clinical Masters training programmes in each speciality. The National Conjoint Board reports to the Majlis Dekan Perubatan formed by MOHE.

As the name suggests, the Speciality Conjoint Boards are speciality-based and have representation from the universities, the Ministry of Health Malaysia, and the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia. They have provided uniformity of the Clinical Masters Training Programmes of different universities via Conjoint Examinations. Their primary role is to ensure effective delivery of training, and they are responsible for curriculum development, assessment, trainee selection, training and selection of trainers and training sites. The ‘Specialty Conjoint Boards’ report to the National Conjoint Committee for Postgraduate Medical Degrees (JBILP).

However, the ‘parallel’ speciality and subspecialty training programmes operate independently of university settings. As a result, there is a lack of coordination and harmonisation between existing training programmes and sharing approaches to common training areas. The need for alignment and harmonisation becomes imperative with common and speciality-specific standards for training as prescribed by the Malaysian Medical Council.

The Medical Act 1971 (Amendment) 2012 and Medical Regulations 2017

The Medical Act 1971 (Amendment) 2012 and Medical Regulations 2017, which came into force on 1st July 2017, mandates that all doctors must be fully registered on the Specialist Register to practice as a specialist. The Malaysian Medical Council has established the National Specialist Register to keep the country’s database of specialist medical practitioners.

The Regulatory requirements for entry in the Specialist Register are as follows:

Section 14A: Registered Medical Practitioner Practicing As Specialist

- (1) No person whose name has not been entered into the Register shall practice as a specialist in that speciality.
- (2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be subjected to the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Council.

Section 14B: Person entitled to registration as a specialist

A person is allowed to be registered as a specialist under this Act if –

- (a) he has been fully registered under section 14;
- (b) he has attended specialised training in that speciality in a recognised training institution;
- (c) he holds a recognised specialist qualification; and
- (d) he has proven to the satisfaction of the MMC that he is fit and is of good character.

The MMC has established the Evaluation Committee for Specialist Medical Qualifications (ECSMQ/JKP2) to consider all individual applications for specialist registration, assisted by members of Specialty (and Subspecialty) Subcommittees (SSC-Evaluation)

MMC has also established a Medical Education Committee (MEC), assisted by Specialty and Subspecialty (and Subspecialty) Education Committee (SEC) and Specialty (and Subspecialty) Subcommittees (SSC-Education). The Medical Regulations 2017 (R22) states that the function of the Medical Education Committee is to recognise the training institution and the qualification awarded by the recognised training institution for registration of medical practitioners. The Medical Education Committee shall recommend to the Council the **required standard and qualifications of the training institutions** and maintain **such standards**.

MMC has recognised several specialist qualifications by the various overseas Royal Colleges where specialist training is done in Malaysia. There is a need to provide local oversight and clarity on the governance of the training programmes coordinated by non-university-based speciality programmes, particularly to meet the criteria of Section 14B (b) of the amended medical act, including the conferment of certification for completion of specialist training.

Proposal on a National Conjoint Specialist Training Committee

On 25 SEPTEMBER 2020, MOH convened a meeting with MOH Head of Services, representatives from the Universities, MMC Medical Education Committee, and Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (AMM), chaired by Datuk Dr Rohaizat bin Yon, Deputy Director-General of Health. The **National Conjoint Subspecialty Training Committee** was formed and led by MOH as the leading training provider for subspecialty training.

The **National Conjoint Subspecialty Training Committee**, with representation from the Ministry of Health, the Universities and the Academy of Medicine (representing the professional societies and the private sector), facilitates collaboration and can help to optimise workforce and infrastructure resources between all ETPs for subspecialty training.

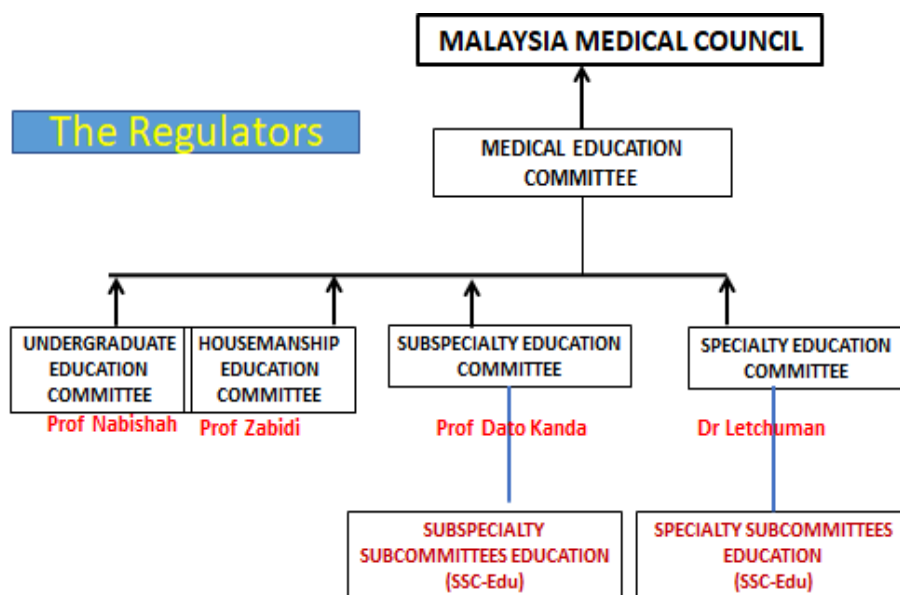
In line with the resolutions adopted at the workshop on Specialty and Subspecialty Training on 9th March 2002, and the resolution adopted at the AMM AGM, the Dean’s Council and Academy of Medicine of Malaysia would therefore like to propose to extend the functionality of the **National Conjoint Subspecialty Training Committee** to include **SPECIALTY**, and refer to this central specialist training committee in the country as The **National Conjoint Specialist Training Committee (NCSTC)**. The **NCSTC** can provide overall planning and policy of basic and advanced speciality training, considering the nation's healthcare needs.

Proposal for National Conjoint Committee for Postgraduate Medical Degrees (JBILP) to provide local oversight of the “parallel pathway.”

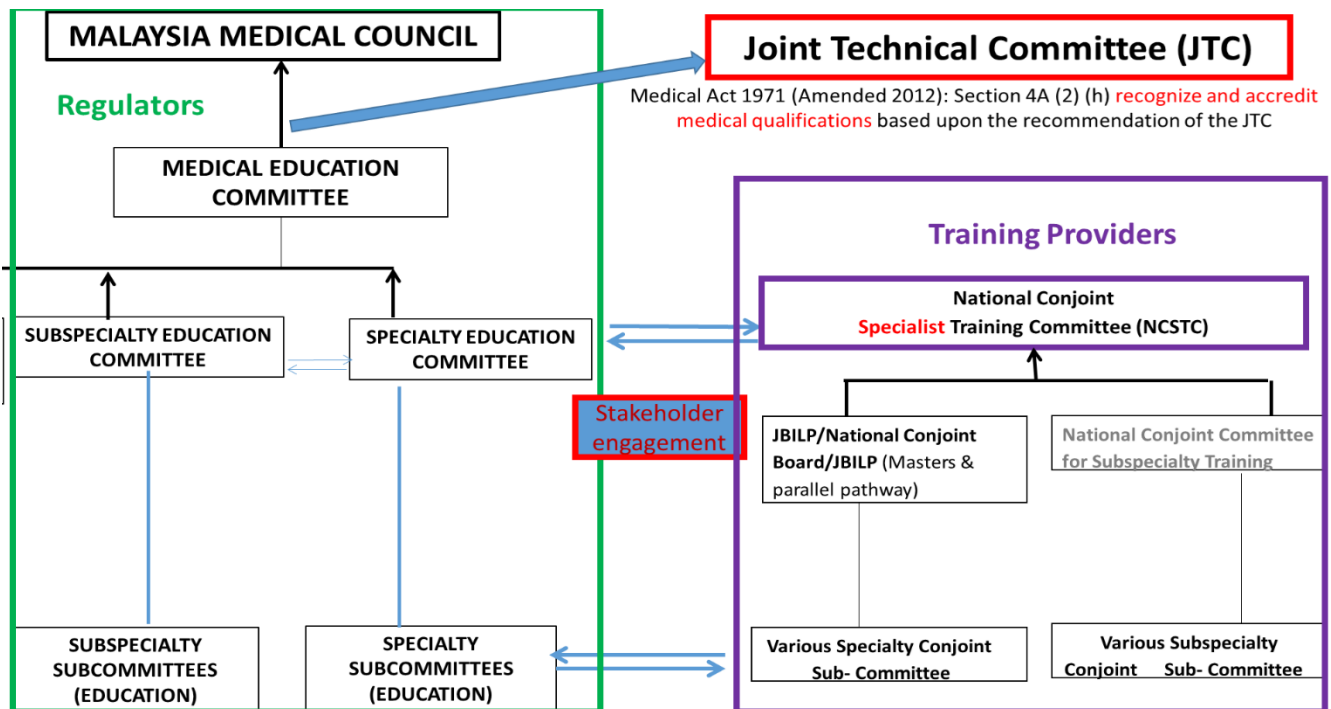
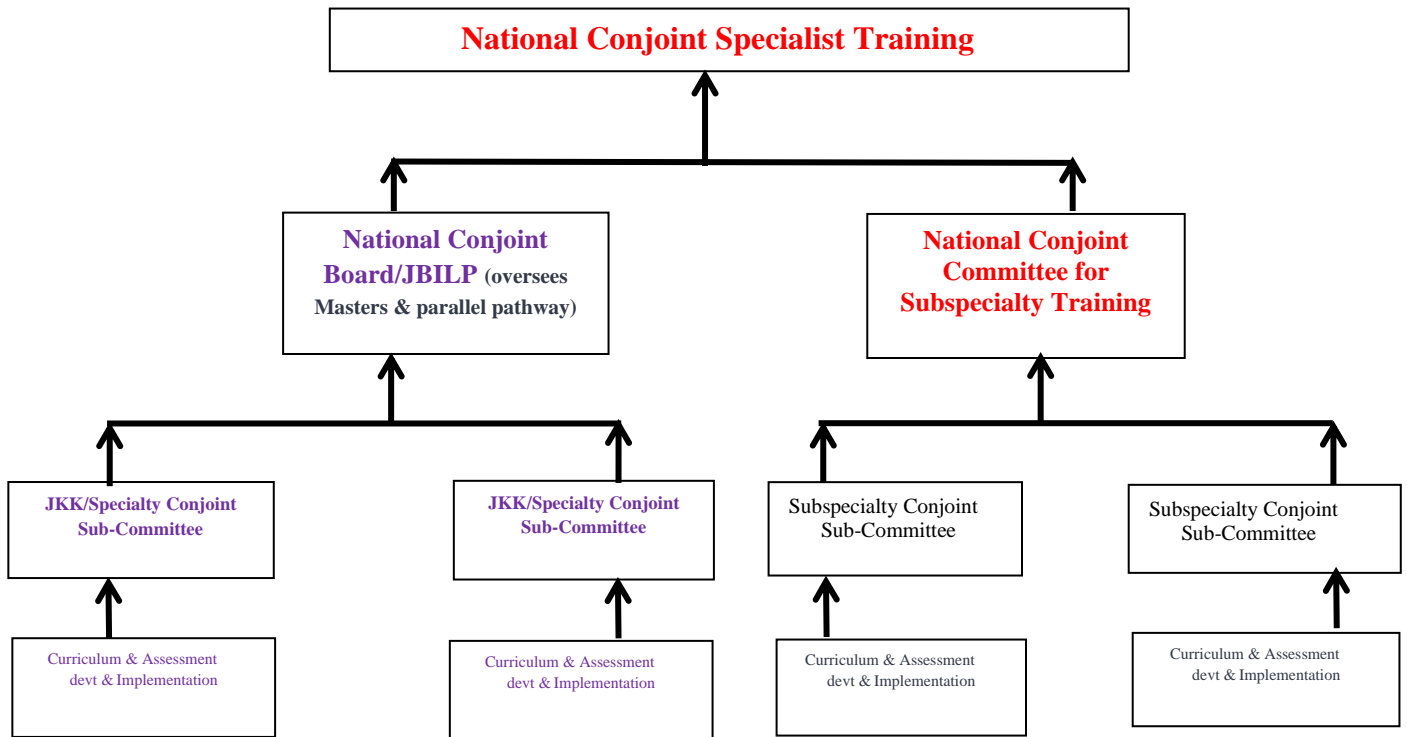
Over the years, AMM and its Colleges have signed several MOUs for the parallel pathways with overseas Royal Colleges. Most of the “parallel” programmes which MMC has recognised have been incorporated in the National Postgraduate Medical Curriculum. As JBILP has successfully provided uniformity of the Masters Training Programmes of different universities, it is proposed that JBILP provides local oversight of the “parallel pathway”. **Subspecialty Training** will be supported by its respective subspecialty “conjoint sub-committee” To provide uniformity in the nomenclature and connotation of a regulatory role for “board”, the term “Conjoint Committee or Sub-Committee is preferred.

The roles of Regulators and Educational Training Providers

The functions of the Malaysian Medical Council as Regulators should be kept separated whilst, at the same time, providing a platform for engagement and interaction with the Education Training Providers (ETP) with a common objective of alignment of training to attain and maintain MMC standards



Educational Training Providers



Accreditation and recognition of Specialists Training in Malaysia

During the 54th Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine in 2021, Tan Sri Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan, Former Director of Quality Assurance Ministry of Education and former CEO of the National Accreditation Board, stated that the broad Intentions of MQA Act (**Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act 2007 [Act 679]**) is to provide quality assurance, namely to inspire confidence in the quality of higher education in this country.

The MQA Act defines a higher education provider as a body corporate, organisation or other body of persons which conducts higher education or training programmes including skills training programme leading to the award of a higher education qualification or which awards a higher education qualification and includes public or private higher education providers, examination or certification bodies or their branch representatives. An **examination or certification body** means anybody within or outside Malaysia who is **certified by the Minister charged with the responsibility for higher education** by an order published in the Gazette, which affirms that a student has achieved the learning outcome.

According to the press release by the MMC president in June 2021, “all medical specialisation training offered in the country by institutions of higher learning, including partnership or twinning programmes with internationally certified bodies, are required to register with the higher education ministry and undergo an accreditation process”. A Joint Technical Committee (“JTC”), established in 1999, is responsible for the accreditation process in both private and public higher education providers. The Medical Act 1971 (Amendment) 2012 Section 4A (2) (h) state that MMC “recognise and accredit medical qualifications based upon the recommendation of the Joint Technical Committee established under Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act 2007 [Act 679] for registration. According to MQA Act 2007, MMC can approve or refuse the accreditation.

Once the speciality-specific standards have been finalised and approved by MMC, these will be used for the accreditation and recognition process.

•By Dato’ Dr Mohd Khairi Yakub, CEO MMC

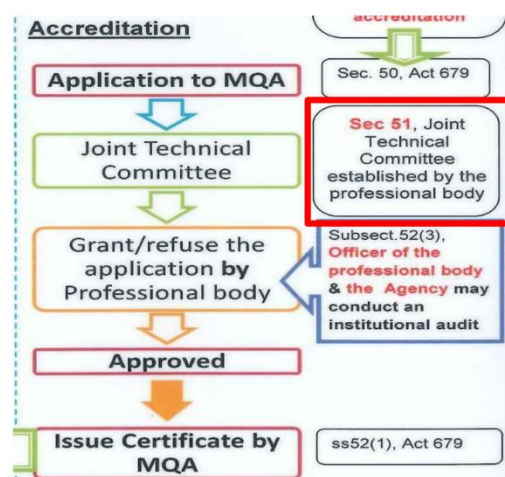
•AMM Zoom online Seminar: Attainment and Maintenance of MMC Standards for Specialists

•29th August 2021

Medical Act 1971 (Amended 2012)

• Powers of the Council

- Section 4A (2) (h) **recognize and accredit medical qualifications** based upon the recommendation of the Joint Technical Committee establish under **Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act 2007 [Act 679]** for the purpose of registration.
- According to MQA Act 2007, MMC are able to **approve or refuse** to grant the accreditation.
 - **Section 52 (1):** After having considered the recommendation of the **Joint Technical Committee** under section 51, the relevant professional body may—
 - (a) **approve the granting of accreditation; or**
 - (b) **refuse the granting of accreditation, stating the ground for refusal.**



Proposal to elevate current “Masters” to Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) Level 8 (Doctoral Degree / PhD)

Level 8 is the highest level of learning in the MQF, leading to the conferment of a doctoral degree. As stated in the revised Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF), a master’s degree is generally required to enter a doctoral programme. The duration of study is typically three years for full-time candidature.

AMM would like to propose that medical officers who have completed housemanship who are interested in pursuing speciality training register for basic medical training (BMT) and basic surgical training **for at least**

two years, which forms the first stage of work-based training in a range of medical or surgical-based specialities.

An **electronic-training Management Platform (EMP)**, like the AMM's College of Surgeons' Basic Surgical Training, will allow **trainers/mentors to electronically log and monitor trainees' performance according to the curriculum**, which is embedded into the online system

The BMT or BST curriculum is a sub-set of the medical or surgical-based speciality training curricula. Trainees who complete BMT/BST and passed the current Medical Specialist Pre-entrance *Examination, MedEx (may need to be renamed)* will obtain Masters in Basic Medical or Surgical Training at MQF Level 7 (name to be determined by Dean's Council) to enter speciality training

Before the speciality-specific standards are finalizedfinalised, MMC should initiate discussions about whether those with BMT/BST with evidence of 6 years of supervised training may not require at least one year of post-qualification working experience to be eligible for NSR registration.

AMM electronic-training Management Platform (EMP)

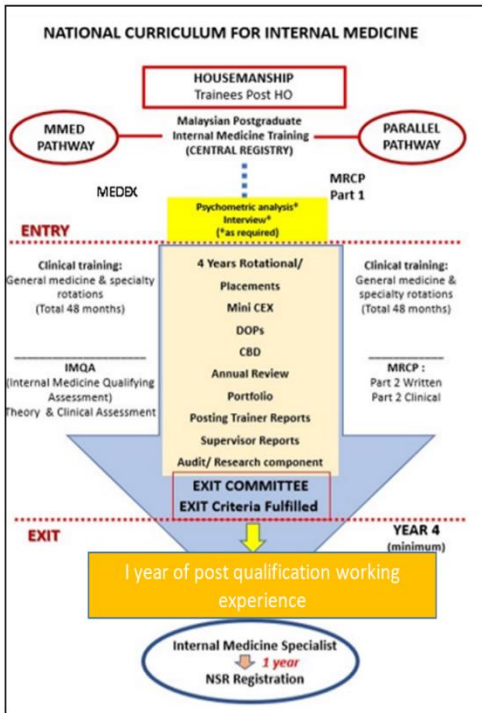
The Academy of Medicine of Malaysia (AMM) has developed an **E-training Management Platform (EMP)**, starting with the College of Surgeon's Basic Surgical Training, for centralised coordination and documentation of basic (pre-Masters or equivalent) surgical training (BST). Workplace-based assessments underpin the progress of trainees in BST. AMM's EMP provide options for "**train where you are**" to reduce life-work disruption. An e-training management system will ensure that the trainees are assessed continuously by NSR-registered trainers, hence enabling the trainees from smaller hospitals to be part of a training programme, i.e. **decentralisation of training**, thereby reducing the burden on specialist trainers in primary centres, and eventually **creating more specialist and training opportunities for medical officers**

AMM EMP will enable universities who would like to offer the basic Masters training to log on as administrators and keep track of all Mos in training under their MastersMaster's programme. Surgical training is just the first of many medical specialisations that we hope to see transition onto the AMM's EMP. A similar template can be used for basic training for other specialities.

1. MOH or universities under the Dean's Council do not need to pay for this **E-training Management Platform**.
2. AMM will allow trainees who register for AMM Candidate Membership for RM50/year to access AMM EMP for the relevant speciality once it's ready. The eligibility criteria include complete MMC Registration, completion of housemanship, interest in pursuing speciality training, has registered with the AMM as a candidate member in good standing. (**AMM Candidate Membership** shall be opened to registered medical practitioners who are undergoing a "recognised" training programme (e.g., Basic Surgical Training is a "recognised" training programme of the AMM's College of Surgeons's) or who have passed the first part of a "recognised" professional postgraduate examination (e.g., MRCP, MRCPH).
3. The **AMM's E-training Management Platform (EMP)** allows NSR registered trainers/mentors to electronically log and monitor trainees' performance according to the curriculum. The curriculum embedded into the online system will enable the training to be structured with ease of use for both trainees and trainers. Moreover, using technology would ensure better adherence to competency-based assessment frameworks and allow flexibility of movement for the specialist in training.

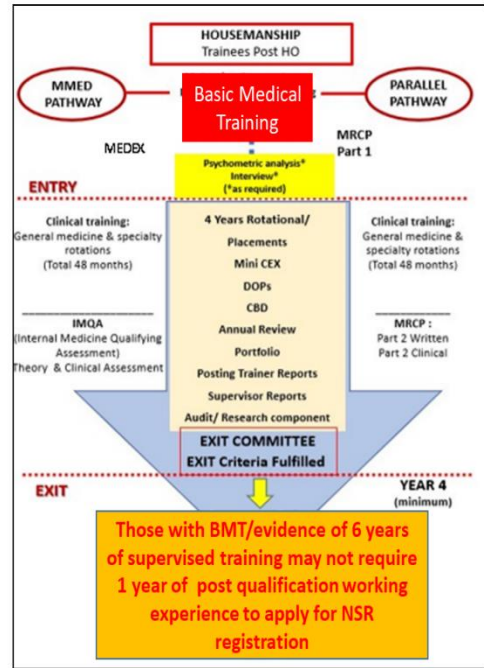
Proposal to elevate current "Masters" at MQF level 7 to Level 8

Current "Masters" at level 7



Trainees who complete Basic Medical Training and passed the exam similar to the current MedEx will obtain **Masters in Basic Medical Training (Level 7)** in order to enter medical-based specialty training

Proposed doctoral at level 8



54th Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine

President Round Table: 28th August 2021



Structure and Governance of Postgraduate Training: Role of the Academies and th

Specialist Training in Malaysia: Intentions of the MQA Act

- Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Seri Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin
Former Vice-Chancellor, The National University of Malaysia, Former Director of the Higher Education Department, Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia

Governance of Specialist Training: Role of the Academies and the Colleges

- Professor Dr Lim Shih-Hui, Academy of Medicine, Singapore Deanery
- Dr Yu-fat Chow, Vice-President, General Affairs of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine
- Professor Dr P. Ronan O'Connell, President, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland



ACCREDITATION AND RECOGNITION FOR SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN MALAYSIA

An update by

Prof Dato Dr Yang Faridah Abdul Aziz

Medical Education Committee
Malaysian Medical Council

Consultant Radiologist
Department of Biomedical Imaging
Universiti Malaya Medical Centre

On the 29th of August 2021, in conjunction with the 54th Malaysia-Singapore Congress of Medicine, a webinar was conducted by the Academy of Medicine Malaysia on the current status and challenges of the accreditation and recognition process for speciality training programmes in Malaysia.

Malaysian Standards for Medical Specialist Training

A Specialty Education Subcommittee under the Medical Education Committee was established on 20th March 2018, chaired by Professor Dr GR Letchuman Ramanathan (chair) and Professor. Dr Roslina Abd. Manap (co-chair). The first task of this committee was to establish standards for medical specialist training. Following the town hall engagement exercise and feedback from stakeholders, the Malaysian Standards for Medical Specialist Training was adopted by the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) on 18th June 2019 (MMC, 2018). This document detailed the **general speciality standards** that educational training providers (ETP) have to comply with, ensuring standardisation of expectations in the governance, delivery, assessment and outcome of programmes.

After this, **specific speciality standards** are drawn out for 29 recognised speciality fields. The Specialty Subcommittees for Education (SSC-Edu) were tasked to draw out these particular standards. These committees were nominated by the Academy of Medicine and Ministry of Health and were appointed in January/ February 2020.

Process of accreditation and recognition

Media statement by the President of MMC

In a media statement on the 24th of June 2020, the President of MMC had announced as below (MMC, 2021):

Mesyuarat bersama telah bersetuju untuk mengesyorkan supaya semua program latihan kepakaran perubatan yang **ditawarkan dalam negara oleh PPT** perlu berdaftar bersama KPT dan melalui proses akreditasi, ini termasuk **program berstatus kerjasama atau berkembar bersama badan penganugerah sijil antarabangsa**. Bagi kelayakan “*Parallel Pathways*”, mesyuarat bersetuju proses akreditasi MQA adalah **tidak perlu** memandangkan ianya **bukan** program latihan yang ditawarkan oleh PPT dalam negara dan KKM hanyalah menyediakan kemudahan bagi calon-calon dalam persediaan menduduki peperiksaan.

A question then arose: which ETP needs to undergo accreditation and recognition?

The current process of accreditation and recognition

All university-led speciality training programmes' accreditation and recognition processes entail submission to the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). Following this, MMC will recommend to MQA a panel of assessors to perform the accreditation exercise. Report from the board of assessors is presented to the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) (membership from MQA, MMC, MOH, MOHE etc.) for accreditation. Decisions from JTC will be brought to the MMC meeting for approval of recognition. This process will continue using the general and specific speciality standards.

This process is open to all programmes given by designated Education Training Providers.

The current process of recognition

Currently, the process of recognition of a specialist (individual) to be admitted into the National Specialist Register (NSR) entails submission of application to the MMC (link to access application portal: <https://www.nsr.org.my/Registration.html>).

There is no process for recognition of a speciality training programme without accreditation.

Challenges

There remain grey areas within the Acts that govern the speciality training programmes, namely the Medical Act 2012 and the MQA Act 2007. These Acts are open to interpretation and appear to either limit or expand the roles of MMC, especially in regulating the speciality training programmes in Malaysia. At the time of writing, numerous discussions and approaches are being explored. It is hoped that all speciality training programmes in Malaysia are subjected to similar processes and standards in time.

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