



JUNE 2025

TheSLMA Monthly

Official Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Medical Association

Registered at the Department of
Posts under no.
DOP/NEWS/62/2024

Scan here to
read online



JUNE 2025 | VOLUME 18
ISSUE 06
ISSN: 1800-4016 (PRINTED)
2550 - 2778 (ONLINE)

Special Issue on

SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL

Centenary Celebrations



Patient Safety and Quality Healthcare for All
A Century of Dedication
1925 - 2025



Cover story

Celebrating a Century of Medical
Excellence: The Centenary of the
Sri Lanka Medical Council

Page 3



President's
Message

Dr. Surantha Perera

Page 4



From Science to Spectacle?
A need to reclaim the
purpose of conferences

**Prof. Veranja
Liyanapathirana**

Opinion | Page 6



SLMC Centenary
Celebrations:
A Milestone In Sri
Lanka's Medical History

Prof. Vajira Dissanayake

Special Article | Page 8



Future Directions and
Challenges of the
Sri Lanka Medical Council
in the 21st Century

Dr. Hemantha Herath

Feature Article | Page 10



Editor's Notes

**Dr. Lahiru Kodithuwakku &
Dr. Kumara Mendis**

Page 2

▶ Seeing Beyond:
Radiology for the
modern Clinician -
Pre Congress
Session
SLMA NEWS
Page 16



◀ Learning from
the Legends
SLMA NEWS
Page 18

CONTENTS

From the Editors

Page 2

Cover Story

Vidya Jyothi Prof. Vajira H. W. Dissanayake

Page 3

President's Message

Dr. Surantha Perera

Page 4

Opinion

Prof. Veranja Liyanapathirana

Page 6

Special Article

Vidya Jyothi Prof. Vajira H. W. Dissanayake

Page 8

Feature Article

Dr. Hemantha Herath

Page 10

Feature Article

Dr. Kumara Mendis

Page 12

Voices from the Peripheries

Dr. M.P.D.M. Rajakaruna

Page 14

Novice

Dr. Akhila Imantha Nilaweera

Page 15

SLMA in June

Page 16

SLMA Annual Medical Congress Programme

Page 20

Global Focus

Page 22

CONTACT DETAILS



Address: Sri Lanka Medical Association,
Wijerama House, No. 6, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 07
Telephone: +94 112 693 324
Website: <https://slma.lk/>
E-mail: officeslma.lk

From the Editors



Dr. Lahiru Kodithuwakku

Co-Editor



Dr. Kumara Mendis

Co-Editor

In this month's issue, we celebrate the legacy of the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC), regulatory institution for the medical profession in Sri Lanka. As we look back on its pathfinding journey through 100 years of excellence, defining factors for its existence are unmistakably notable, Integrity and Professionalism. SLMC has been able to sustain these principles at the core of its operations throughout, regulating the profession with utmost dedication and commitment.

Nevertheless, given the enormous challenges burdening the health sector now, would it be possible for SLMC to safeguard core values and principles of the medical profession? Would it be possible to regulate a profession, according to some, is increasingly tilting towards 'commercialization and politicization'? Would it be possible to maintain the delicate balance between patients' rights and doctors' rights amidst mass migration of healthcare workers?

Would it be possible for SLMC to regulate tech savvy Gen Z doctors, relying heavily on technology, rather than clinical senses, to treat and cure? Would it be possible for SLMC to maintain its independent role amidst public calls to open up the medical education beyond state grip? Would it be possible for SLMC to respond to increasingly loud public concerns on professional misconduct and breach of doctor-patient trust?

As SLMC steps towards the future, maintaining its unbiased and independent stature amidst numerous challenges within the profession and outside, will be its biggest challenge! With independence and ethics at its heart and professionalism and integrity as its soul, we hope that the SLMC will continue to be a guiding light for the profession and a beacon of hope for the public, protecting the rights of the profession and the public for years to come!

The **SLMA** Monthly
Official Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Medical Association

Sponsored by:



Editorial Board

Co –Editors

- Dr. Lahiru Kodithuwakku
- Dr. Kumara Mendis

Editorial Board

- Dr. Sarath Gamini de Silva
- Prof. A. Pathmeswaran
- Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne
- Dr. Surantha Perera
- Prof. Sachith Mettananda

External Board Members

- Prof. Indralal De Silva
- Prof. Buddhi Marambe

Bulletin Design

- Chameera Randil via Ceylon Traverze Pvt. Ltd

Disclaimer Statement

SLMA Monthly is published by the Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA). The views expressed in it are not necessarily those of the SLMA. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the Editor.

Permission may be sought directly from the SLMA, Wijerama House, No. 6, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 07, via telephone +94 112 693 324 or E-mail: officeslma.lk

COVER STORY

Vidya Jyothi Prof. Vajira H. W. Dissanayake

MBBS (Colombo), PhD (Nottingham), FNASSL, FIAHSI, FCMA, FRCP

President, Sri Lanka Medical Council

Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Chair and Senior Professor of Anatomy, Genetics and Biomedical Informatics,

Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka



CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF MEDICAL EXCELLENCE: THE CENTENARY OF THE SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL

As the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) commemorates its centenary, we reflect upon a legacy that has profoundly shaped the nation's healthcare landscape. Established under the Medical Ordinance, the SLMC has been the cornerstone in ensuring the competence, ethics, and professionalism of medical practitioners in Sri Lanka.

Foundations of Medical Regulation

The roots of medical regulation in Sri Lanka trace back to the establishment of the Colombo Medical School in 1870, which evolved into the Ceylon Medical College by 1880. This institution laid the groundwork for formal medical education in the country. Recognizing the need for a regulatory body to oversee medical practice, the Medical Ordinance led to the formation of the Ceylon Medical Council, with its first meeting held on June 25, 1925, the precursor to the SLMC. This council was tasked with maintaining the standards of medical education and practice, ensuring that only qualified individuals served the health needs of the populace.

Evolution and Expansion

Over the decades, the SLMC has adapted to the changing dynamics of healthcare. Initially focusing on the registration of medical practitioners, the council's mandate expanded to include dentists, midwives, pharmacists, and other allied health professionals. This inclusivity

ensured a comprehensive approach to healthcare regulation, reflecting the multifaceted nature of modern medical services.

The SLMC's commitment to upholding ethical standards has been unwavering. Through its disciplinary procedures and guidelines, the council has fostered a culture of accountability and integrity within the medical community. By addressing professional misconduct and promoting continuous professional development, the SLMC has reinforced public trust in the healthcare system.

Pioneering Accreditation and Global Recognition

In its pursuit of excellence, the SLMC established the Accreditation Unit to oversee the quality of medical education. This unit ensures that medical institutions adhere to rigorous standards, producing competent and ethical healthcare professionals. The council's accreditation program received recognition from the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) in 2023, underscoring its commitment to global best practices.

Embracing Digital Transformation

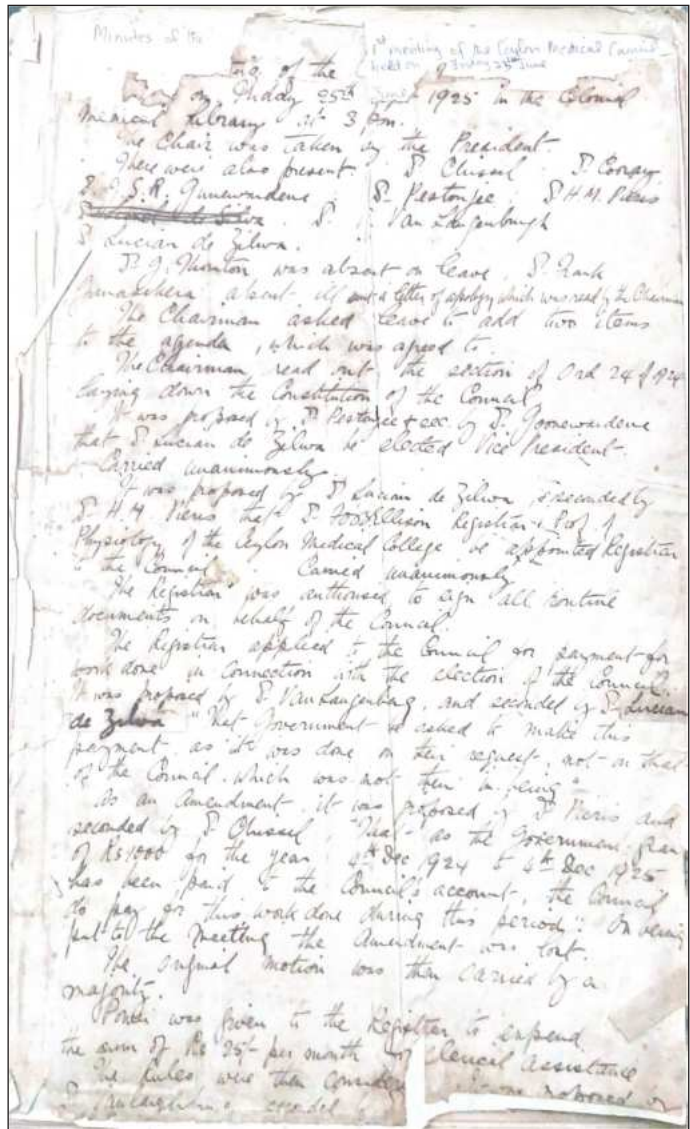
Recognizing the potential of technology to enhance efficiency, the SLMC has embarked on a digital transformation journey. The implementation of electronic registration systems, digital document archiving, and

online renewal processes has streamlined operations, making services more accessible to practitioners and the public alike. This modernization reflects the council's proactive approach to meeting contemporary challenges.

Looking Ahead

As the SLMC marks 100 years of dedicated service, it stands as a testament to the enduring values of professionalism,

integrity, and public service. The centenary is not only a celebration of past achievements but also a reaffirmation of the council's commitment to safeguarding the health and well-being of Sri Lankans. With a vision for continuous improvement and adaptation, the SLMC is poised to navigate the future of healthcare with the same dedication that has defined its first century.



1st Council Minute of SLMC



An Image of the previous SLMC Office

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Surantha Perera

131st President of Sri Lanka Medical Association



STEWARDSHIP, STANDARDS, AND SERVICE: STRENGTHENING ETHICS AND PATIENT CARE FOR THE NEXT CENTURY – THE COLLABORATIVE ROLE OF THE SLMC AND SLMA

As the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) celebrates a century of service to the nation, it is a moment of profound reflection and forward-thinking. This milestone is not only a tribute to a hundred years of regulatory excellence but also an opportunity to shape the path for the next century, one where professionalism, ethics, and patient-centred care are redefined in the face of changing health landscapes. In this national effort, the synergistic roles of the SLMC and the Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA) will be pivotal.

Guardians of Medical Ethics and Standards

The SLMC has long served as the statutory guardian of medical ethics and professional conduct in Sri Lanka. Its mandate to ensure the registration and regulation of medical professionals has been foundational to maintaining the integrity of the health sector. In the coming decade, the SLMC must evolve into a more dynamic regulator, responsive to ethical complexities arising from new technologies, artificial intelligence, commercial influences, and globalised healthcare.

Parallel to this, the SLMA, as the apex professional body of doctors, brings the voice of the profession into this regulatory space. The SLMA's advocacy for ethical leadership, transparent systems, and continuing education is a vital counterbalance to ensure that regulatory frameworks remain grounded in real-world clinical practice.

Together, the SLMC and SLMA must lead a national dialogue on modernising the ethical compass of the medical profession, anchoring it in patient dignity, accountability, and social justice.



Professional Development in a Transforming Health System

One of the most pressing priorities for the next decade is fostering a culture of lifelong professional development. The SLMC must move beyond its traditional role of registration to become a champion of competency-based regulation. This includes promoting revalidation mechanisms, practice audits, and clearly defined professional milestones.

The SLMA has already

of non-communicable diseases. Such a framework will not only protect patients but also empower doctors to grow confidently within a modern and evolving profession.

Elevating Patient Care through Collaborative Governance

The core purpose of regulation and professional development is to improve patient outcomes. Over the next decade, Sri Lanka is expected to face significant demographic, environmental, and epidemiological shifts. An ageing population, growing health inequalities, and rising

to establish national guidelines on ethical end-of-life care, standardise patient safety protocols, or develop a national curriculum on communication skills in clinical practice. They can also jointly advocate for health system reforms that ensure patient-centredness, cultural sensitivity, and equitable access.

Navigating the Ethical Challenges of Tomorrow

The future of healthcare will bring ethical dilemmas that were unimaginable a century ago. Genetic engineering, organ allocation, data privacy, and AI-driven diagnostics will challenge the boundaries of consent, equity, and autonomy. As stewards of medical ethics, the SLMC and SLMA must be proactive in preparing the profession for these challenges.

This requires investing in bioethics education, strengthening institutional review boards, and updating codes of professional conduct to ensure adequate oversight. It also demands deeper engagement with civil society, legal institutions, and patient advocacy groups.

A Shared Vision for the Next Century

As we mark 100 years of the SLMC, we must look to the future with shared resolve. The Council's regulatory authority and the Association's professional leadership must work in tandem, mutually reinforcing each other and never conflicting.

Together, the SLMC and SLMA can usher in a new era for Sri Lankan healthcare, grounded in trust, guided by ethical integrity, and motivated by the pursuit of excellence in patient care.

Let the centenary be a celebration not only of the past but also of a renewed commitment to the values that define our profession: compassion, accountability, and service to humanity.

As we mark 100 years of the SLMC, we must look to the future with shared resolve.

The Council's regulatory authority and the Association's professional leadership must work in tandem, mutually reinforcing each other and never conflicting.

Together, the SLMC and SLMA can usher in a new era for Sri Lankan healthcare, grounded in trust, guided by ethical integrity, and motivated by the pursuit of excellence in patient care.

demonstrated leadership in developing high-quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs across disciplines. Its annual congresses, clinical symposia, and training partnerships with academic and professional bodies provide rich platforms for knowledge exchange.

Moving forward, the SLMC and SLMA should jointly develop a national CPD framework with mandatory credits, digital tracking, and alignment with emerging health priorities, including climate-sensitive care, digital health, and the prevention

chronic disease burdens will stretch our health system.

The SLMC must play an expanded role in quality assurance, setting standards not only for individuals but also for institutions, training programs, and inter-professional collaboration. Meanwhile, the SLMA can act as a bridge between policy and practice, bringing together specialists, general practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to co-create context-specific solutions.

For example, the two organisations can collaborate



Switch to *Glucerna*[®] For Healthy Blood Glucose Control



72% of patients with diabetes do not adhere to diet modification¹



Regular Meal
800 Kcal.



Modified Meal Plan
550 Kcal.

Problems multiply for overweight/obese patients with diabetes due to

- Increased risk of complications (2.7 - 3.7 times higher)²
- Lesser treatment options available to manage weight



OPINION

Prof. Veranja Liyanapathirana

Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka



FROM SCIENCE TO SPECTACLE? A NEED TO RECLAIM THE PURPOSE OF CONFERENCES

In this opinion piece, the commercialization and increasing social side of scientific conferences are raised as a concern with an emphasis on the necessity of bringing more attention to the scientific arm and content.

Scientific conferences have traditionally served as platforms for academic discussions, providing opportunities for constructive feedback and networking. However, are they still fulfilling these purposes effectively? Recent observations have led me to question this repeatedly. This piece is not written targeting any single conference or event. Rather, it seeks to highlight concerns that need addressing, seen across multiple events over the last decade or so.

Consider the typical medical conference in Sri Lanka. Many are now held in hotels rather than in government institutes or conference venues, leading to high registration fees. The high registration fee alone can deter some potential attendees. Further, to cover the high costs, organizers often rely on industry sponsorships. In return, sponsors are given stalls to showcase their products. These stalls often offer sample medications, branded items, and other small gifts. While seasoned professionals may view these offerings critically, younger trainees and researchers — sometimes including medical students — if not adequately informed about the ethical implications, might be unduly influenced by these commercial interests. While industry involvement has become a necessity, and partnerships are now needed to move forward, this too needs to be approached with a healthy sense of skepticism.

Another troubling trend is the increasing focus on social activities rather than scientific engagement. The inauguration sessions tend to have a very formal structure, with cultural and entertainment events taking up the same stage as the scientific speaker. While some conferences may have international delegates who would be enthusiastic to see our culture on display, should this be part of scientific conferences?

overshadowed the academic purpose of the conference. Socializing is essential at scientific conferences; it fosters networking that can lead to new collaborations. However, this is probably better done over discussions on research topics or clinical interests of mutual benefit. These tend to occur during research presentations, be it oral presentations or posters, and the ensuing discussions.

researchers present their work — often do not. These sessions are crucial for young researchers, offering them a platform to showcase their work and receive valuable feedback. However, they are often scheduled during less favorable times — such as early mornings, lunch breaks, or parallel to major symposia — resulting in low attendance. This is a missed opportunity to support and mentor the next generation of researchers.

On the other hand, researchers too tend to treat making presentations as a tick-box event rather than as an opportunity to improve and professionally network. Many abstracts submitted require substantial improvement. However, the review processes are not designed to provide the feedback needed. Instead, what is received is simply an accept or reject notification — with only a handful of places sending constructive feedback. Furthermore, as pointed out earlier, this is coupled with poor attendance and lack of critical discussion during the presentations. One of the principal aims of scientific sessions should be to encourage younger researchers by providing feedback for improvement during the sessions. Offering many prizes is not a substitute for healthy deliberation during presentations.

Given these challenges, how can we refocus on the true purpose of scientific conferences? It's time to revisit the core objectives of these events, step back slightly from the glamour, and recommit to putting science at the center of our scientific conferences. There is an urgent need for this to be closely looked at by scientific societies and professional organizations. As to how this is done, even the writer is at a loss.



“

Scientific conferences have traditionally served as platforms for academic discussions, providing opportunities for constructive feedback and networking. However, are they still fulfilling these purposes effectively? Recent observations have led me to question this repeatedly.

If so, what is the best way to incorporate these? When? Where, and for how long?

On a similar note, many attendees seem more interested in taking photos or selfies in front of designated boards — often industry-sponsored and branded — dressing up, and catching up with colleagues than in participating in meaningful scientific discussions. The emphasis on selfies and social media posts has, for some,

Furthermore, many conferences now brand themselves as “international,” but a closer look often reveals that the “international” faculty consists of just one or two individuals — usually Sri Lankan natives living abroad. In some cases, these speakers are given undue prominence over more technically proficient local experts.

While plenary lectures and symposia generally attract good attendance, free paper and poster sessions — where emerging



WE'VE EXPANDED OUR REACH!

OUR NEW COLLECTION CENTERS ARE NOW PART OF OUR LABORATORY NETWORK BRINGING OUR SERVICES CLOSER TO YOU

Durdans Beliatta Collection Centre

☎ 077 1 225 883

☎ 076 6 510 781

Durdans Galewela Collection Centre

☎ 077 2 674 246

☎ 077 5 994 322

Durdans Kalutara Collection Centre

☎ 076 9 364 247

☎ 076 5 477 484

Durdans Morawaka Collection Centre

☎ 077 2 674 235

☎ 077 2 674 243

Durdans Homagama Collection Centre

☎ 076 9 364 247

☎ 076 5 477 484

*Conditions apply.

Over 25 years of trusted diagnostics and accurate laboratory services

SPECIAL ARTICLE

Vidya Jyothi Prof. Vajira H. W. Dissanayake

President, Sri Lanka Medical Council



SLMC CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS: A MILESTONE IN SRI LANKA’S MEDICAL HISTORY

The Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) will be celebrating this year a momentous occasion in the nation’s healthcare journey — the centenary of the Council. Established in 1925 as the Ceylon Medical Council under the landmark Medical Ordinance, the SLMC has played a pivotal role in regulating medical practice, ensuring professional standards, and safeguarding public trust in healthcare for a full century.

To celebrate this historic milestone, a series of commemorative events will be held on Saturday, 5th July 2025, honouring the SLMC’s legacy and looking ahead to its future contribution.

Centenary Commemorative Stamp Launch

The day’s celebrations will include the official release of a special commemorative postage stamp, issued by the Department of Posts. This stamp symbolizes a century of medical regulation and service to the nation and pays tribute to the thousands of healthcare professionals whose work has been guided by the regulatory framework laid down by the SLMC.

SLMC Centenary Academic Session

An academic session will follow, featuring presentations and reflections on the evolution of medical regulation in Sri Lanka, the role of the SLMC in advancing healthcare standards, and the future of medical governance in a rapidly transforming healthcare landscape. Senior members of the profession, policymakers, academics, and students are expected to attend this session.

Date: Saturday, 5th July 2025
Time: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Venue: Lotus Hall, BMICH

Programme

9.00 AM – 9.05 AM

Welcome Address

Prof. Ranil Fernando

Chairman, Centenary Celebrations Committee

Programme

9:05 AM – 10:00 AM

Plenary Session 1 - “A Century of Excellence: Reflecting on SLMC’s Legacy and Achievements” – (Each speaker 15 min)

Chair

Prof. Surangi G.Yasawardene

Former Vice President, SLMC

- 100 Years of Regulating Healthcare in Sri Lanka: Key Milestones, Challenges and Success Stories
Prof. Vajira H.W. Dissanayake
President, SLMC

- The Role of Regulation in Sri Lankan Healthcare System: A Medical Administrator’s Perspective
Dr. Anil Jasinghe
Secretary, Ministry of Health
- Global Perspectives on Medical Governance in the Last Century
Ms. Joan Simeon
Chair of International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA)

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Plenary Session 2 - “Ensuring Quality and Safety in Healthcare Delivery” – (Each speaker 15 min)

Chair

Dr. Ananda Wijewickrama

Council Member, SLMC

- Patient Safety and Quality Assurance: Towards a Culture of Zero Harm
Prof. Priyadharshani Galappaththy
Senior Professor and Chair Professor of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo
- Maintaining Global Standards: Harmonizing Medical Education and Accreditation
Dr. Palitha Abeykoon
Former Head of Accreditation, SLMC
- Strategies for Addressing Malpractices in Healthcare Systems
Hon. Yasantha Kodagoda
Judge Supreme Court, Sri Lanka

Programme

11:00 AM – 12 noon

Panel Discussion - “Medical Ethics, Professionalism, and Regulatory Challenges” – (Each Panelist 15 min)

Moderator

Dr. Suresh Shanmuganathan

Council Member, SLMC

- Navigating Ethical Complexities in Modern Medicine
Prof. Anoja Fernando
Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology, University of Ruhuna
- Building Trust Between Regulators, Clinicians, and the Public
Prof. Dame Carrie MacEwen
Chair of Council, General Medical Council, UK
- Regulating Technology in Healthcare
Dr. Sunil Abeyrathna
Senior Attorney at law, Sri Lanka

12 noon – 1:00 PM

Lunch Break

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Plenary Session 3 - “The Future of Medical Education: Aligning with Global Standards” – (Each speaker 15 min)

Chair

Dr. Chandika Epitakaduwa

Vice President, SLMC

- Integrating Technology into Medical Curricula
Prof. Dujeepa D. Samarasekara
Head of the Centre for Medical Education (CenMED), Yong LOO Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore (NUS)
- Addressing Gaps in Healthcare Workforce Training
Prof. Madawa Chandratilake
Council Member, SLMC
- Should We Revisit Entry Criteria for Medical Education?
Prof. Gominda Ponnampertuma
Head of Accreditation, SLMC

Programme

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Plenary Session 4 (30 min) - “Integrating Innovative Technologies and Research” – (Each speaker 15min)

Chair

Dr. Duminda Samarasinghe

Council Member, SLMC

- Digital Health, Telemedicine, and Data Privacy: Transforming Patient Care in a Connected World
Prof. Pandula Siribaddana
Professor in Medical Education at the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM), University of Colombo and a specialist in Digital Health
- Translational Research and Innovation: From Bench to Bedside in Sri Lankan Medicine
Prof. Anuji Upekshika Gamage
Chairman, National Research Council

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Keynote Lecture (30 min) “Vision for the Next Century – Future Direction of SLMC”

Prof. Janaka De Silva

Council Member, SLMC

3:00 PM – 3:20 PM

Chair & Moderated Audience Discussion on SLMC’s Future

Dr. Sunil Wijayasinghe

Council Member, SLMC

3:20 PM – 4:00 PM

Closing Remarks and Vote of Thanks

- Summary of the Proceedings – Prof. Ranil Fernando
Chairman, Centenary Celebrations Committee
- Distribution of award for the logo and stamp competition winners
- Vote of Thanks
Dr. H.D.B. Herath
Registrar, SLMC
- National Anthem

Participation in this session will be by invitation, and the Council has shared a Google Sheet with the SLMA to enable members to express their interest in attending. Alternatively, members may also visit www.slmc.gov.lk for further details and to indicate their interest.

SPECIAL ARTICLE

Continued...



SLMC new premises

Commemorative Meeting

The highlight of the day will be a commemorative meeting graced by the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, reaffirming the government’s recognition of the SLMC’s critical role in national health development. The meeting will include an address by the Prime Minister, felicitation of past leaders of the SLMC, and the unveiling of a centenary publication chronicling the Council’s evolution from 1925 to 2025. The meeting would be attended by the Chair of the General Medical Council of the UK and the Chair of the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities.

The programme is as follows:

Date: Saturday, 5th July 2025
Time: 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM
(Followed by Dinner)
Venue: Lotus Hall, BMICH

Programme

5:45 PM

Guests to take their seats

6:00 PM

Arrival of the Chief Guest

Dr. Harini Amarasuriya

Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

6:05 PM

Introduction of the Council Members to the Chief Guest

6:15 PM

Ceremonial Procession

Programme

6:20 PM

National Anthem

6:25 PM

Lighting of the Oil Lamp

6:30 PM

Welcome Speech

Prof. Ranil Fernando,

Chairperson, Centenary Celebrations Committee

6:40 PM

Address by

Prof. Vajira H.W. Dissanayake

President, Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC)

Programme

6:50 PM

Address by

Hon. Dr. Nalinda Jayatissa,

Minister of Health and Mass Media

7:00 PM

Address by the Chief Guest

7:15 PM

Release of the Commemorative Stamp & Centenary Souvenir

7:30 PM

Keynote Address

Ms. Joan Simeon

Chair of International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA)

Programme

7:50 PM

Address by

Prof. Dame Carrie MacEwen

Chair of Council, General Medical Council (GMC), UK

8:00 PM

Cultural Performances

8:15 PM

Vote of Thanks

Dr. H. D. B. Herath

Registrar, Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC)

8:25 PM

Leaving of the Ceremonial Procession

8:30 PM

Reception & Dinner

As we celebrate 100 years of the SLMC, we not only honour its storied past but also renew our commitment to strengthening the regulation of the medical profession in the years to come. The SLMA extends its warmest congratulations to the SLMC on this landmark occasion and invites all members of the medical community to take part in the centenary celebrations.

Contact info@slmc.gov.lk or www.slmc.gov.lk for further information.



Centenary Commemorative Stamp Cover Page

FEATURE ARTICLE

Dr. Hemantha Herath

Registrar, Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC)



FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL IN THE 21st CENTURY

The Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC), the national regulatory authority for medical, dental, and allied health professions in Sri Lanka, has undergone significant transformation from its colonial origins to its present role in the 21st century. Initially established as the Ceylon Medical Council (CMC) in 1925 under British rule, it was modeled on the UK's General Medical Council, with a primary focus on registering qualified practitioners and upholding professional standards. In its early years, the Council registered medical practitioners, dentists, pharmacists, and midwives.

Following independence in 1948 and the transition to a republic in 1972, the Council was renamed the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC). While maintaining much of its inherited structure, it gradually expanded its regulatory mandate to include a broader range of health professions, such as paramedical assistants and professions supplementary to medicine. Although a separate legal framework for the regulation of nurses was introduced in 1987, nurses remained under the SLMC's regulatory scope until 2011.

Since the turn of the new millennium, the SLMC has sought to modernize its operations, enhance transparency, and reinforce its independence. Key initiatives have included strengthening standards for undergraduate and postgraduate education, promoting continuing professional development (CPD), and addressing emerging areas such as telemedicine and digital health. Nevertheless, the Council continues to face challenges, particularly in governance, responsiveness, and legal reform. Ongoing efforts are focused on aligning its functions with international best practices to meet the evolving regulatory requirements of the healthcare sector.

The role of the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) is becoming increasingly dynamic, moving beyond traditional functions of registration and discipline toward a more proactive, responsive, and digitally enabled approach. As healthcare systems worldwide evolve rapidly in the 21st century, it is extremely important for the SLMC, like any other national regulatory authority for health professionals, also to adapt in a strategic and timely manner to ensure the continued safety,

competence, and accountability of the workforce.

In this regard, the SLMC reflects on its past experiences and decides future directions by analyzing available information to identify potential transformations in the regulatory landscape for health professionals.

The future regulation of health professionals is set to evolve significantly in response to emerging global trends and challenges. It is very clear that the national regulatory authorities for health professionals are increasingly embracing digital transformation through platforms for registration, licensing, CPD tracking, and complaints management, with data analytics and AI playing a growing role in evidence-based decision-making. As cross-border mobility and practice of health professionals expand, aligning regulatory standards with international benchmarks will be essential to facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications. Future regulatory approaches will emphasize competency-based assessments throughout a practitioner's career, moving beyond initial qualifications alone. Greater public engagement and transparency will be crucial to

maintaining trust and ensuring fairness.

As healthcare delivery becomes more team-based, regulation must support interprofessional education and collaboration. In this context, authorities in many countries are considering the establishment of a unified regulatory system for all health professionals, with the primary objective of enhancing patient safety, the fundamental goal of health professional regulation. Additionally, the recent pandemics and other natural and manmade disasters have highlighted the importance of flexible, responsive regulatory systems capable of adapting swiftly to crises while upholding professional standards.

The regulation of health professionals faces several complex challenges in the coming years. Rapid technological advancements such as AI, robotics, and telehealth raise new questions about scope of practice, accountability, and ethics. Addressing workforce shortages and ensuring equitable distribution, especially in underserved regions, will require innovative regulatory strategies and strong policy coordination. As roles of non-physician health workers expand, regulators

“

As healthcare delivery becomes more team-based, regulation must support interprofessional education and collaboration. In this context, authorities in many countries are considering the establishment of a unified regulatory system for all health professionals, with the primary objective of enhancing patient safety, the fundamental goal of health professional regulation.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Continued...

must clearly define scopes of practice and uphold consistent standards to maintain quality. Balancing innovation with patient safety, particularly in digital and personalized health, remains a critical concern. Resistance to regulatory reform poses additional barriers, making stakeholder engagement and change management essential. There is also a growing demand for regulators to address ethical, social, and equity issues within the workforce. Moreover, many emerging or “borderline” professions such as, tattooing, body modification, and certain cosmetic procedures, operate without formal regulation despite involving health-related risks, presenting a significant regulatory gap in many countries. In light of these considerations, the Sri Lanka Medical Council has initiated the development of its Strategic Plan for the next five years to address the identified concerns and emerging challenges. Following a comprehensive analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), and other factors, the Council has formulated a carefully structured strategic plan aimed at achieving the following key goals:

1. Achieving maximum regulatory control over the widest range of health professionals to ensure the safety of health care seekers.

2. Maintaining educational standards of all health professional training at optimal levels at all times.
3. Maintaining the standards of professional and ethical conduct of all health professionals at all times.
4. Becoming a trend setting regulatory authority for health professionals in the region.
5. Achieving all above goals in a cost-effective manner through transparent, efficient and effective management of the organization.

The strategic plan has outlined the following key strategies as the primary means of achieving the aforementioned goals:

1. Strengthening and expanding the regulatory capacity of the Council
2. Strengthening the operational capacity of the Council
3. Strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the functions of the Council
4. Introduction of innovative processes to address the current and emerging issues coming under the mandate of the Council
5. Strengthening stakeholder confidence and engagement through effective exchange of information

6. Streamlining the activities into an annual and a five-year calendar

By the end of 2029, the Strategic Plan envisions several key outcomes that will significantly enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC). These include the enactment of a new Medical Act, the construction of a new building for the Council, and the establishment of new functional units to support the Council's evolving mandate.

A modern, user-friendly official website and a comprehensive Electronic Information Management System (EIMS) will be developed to streamline internal processes and improve public access to information. In addition, a formal grievance handling system will be introduced, and all existing processes related to the Council's operations will be reviewed, revised, and updated.

With the implementation of the new Medical Act, the composition of the Council will be restructured to better reflect international standards and national needs. New regulations will be introduced to promote more efficient and transparent governance. Furthermore, new frameworks for monitoring and evaluation, and quality assurance will be established, alongside the introduction of a robust human resource strategy. Core processes

such as election of members to the Council, the screening of foreign medical schools, and other administrative and operational procedures will be updated. New mechanisms, including those for the revalidation of registration and other emerging regulatory needs, will also be introduced.

The construction of a new building will resolve the current space constraints faced by the SLMC. In addition to the existing units, several new units will be established, including a Planning Unit, Internal Audit Unit, Front Office, Call Center, and a dedicated unit for managing Right to Information (RTI) requests. The Planning Unit will encompass sub-units such as a Research and Development Unit and a Quality Assurance Unit, supporting the Council's long-term strategic and operational goals.

The SLMC's journey from a colonial-era registration body to a modern health professional regulator reflects Sri Lanka's broader evolution as a nation. As it enters its second century, the SLMC stands at a critical juncture—balancing tradition with innovation, national priorities with global standards, and professional autonomy with public accountability.

Strategic Outcomes of the SLMC by 2030



(Source: SLMC Strategic Plan - 2025 -2029)

FEATURE ARTICLE

Dr. Kumara Mendis

MBBS (C'bo), DFM (C'bo), MD Family Medicine (C'bo),
MSc Medical Informatics (Netherlands), FCGP (SL), FACHI (Australia)
Consultant Family Physician
Visiting Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine University of Moratuwa



LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS – ChatGPT – IN MEDICINE

In November 2022, OpenAI released ChatGPT, which rewrote the history of computing. Within two months of its release, ChatGPT became the fastest-growing consumer application software in history, with more than 100 million users. According to an estimate by the CEO of OpenAI, Sam Altman, in April 2025 it may have reached 1 billion users.

In the UK it is reported that one in five GPs use generative AI tools in clinical practice. A 2025 American Medical Association survey indicates that physicians are largely enthusiastic about AI's potential in health, with 68% seeing at least some advantage in their practice. Physicians using some type of AI tool in practice increased from 38% in 2023 to 66% in 2024. Nearly half of physicians (47%) ranked increased oversight as the number one regulatory action needed to increase trust in adopting AI tools. [1]

A study done among PGIM trainees in 2023 emphasised the need for training to use AI tools effectively with 56.06% indicating some level of expertise required and 24.24% supporting extensive training. [2]

What is an LLM?

Large Language Models are sophisticated AI systems trained on extensive datasets to understand and generate human language. They are integral to generative AI which focuses on creating new content by learning patterns from existing data. [3]

Imagine an enormous collection of filing cabinets that can store every text-based document type we have, from books, journals, web pages, and computer code etc. These filing cabinets have a mechanism that can search for any information they contain. In addition, it has an inherent capability of continuously learning from these documents, answering questions, and summarising information, translating languages and even chatting like a person.

LLM uses computer programs called 'Machine Learning' that use deep neural networks to do the tasks. LLMs calculate the probability of a word following a given input in a sentence, for example,

'The sky is...' blue
'I hope you have a great...' day,
"Please let me know if you have any..." questions
'The sun rises in the...' morning

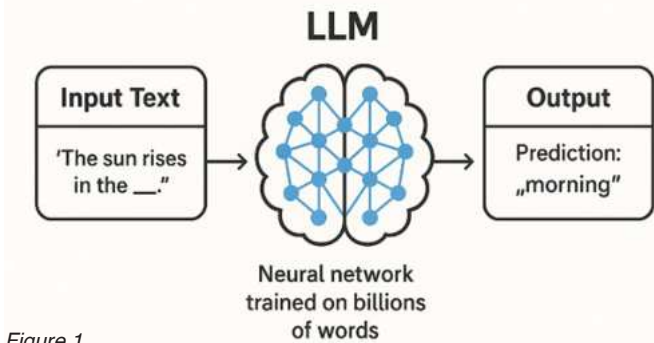


Figure 1

We can also think of a LLM as a highly advanced autocomplete system, similar to when your phone suggests the next word while typing a message. LLMs don't "think" or "understand" the way humans do. They recognise patterns in language and use that to respond in a meaningful way.

Although LLMs have primarily been trained on simple tasks, like predicting the next word in a sentence, it's amazing to see how much of the structure and meaning of language they've been able to capture, plus the huge number of facts they have been able to pick up using the gigantic number of documents they have access to. LLMs can be used to write, edit, summarise, and fine-tune almost any type of document.

Popular LLM examples are: GPT, Gemini, Copilot, DeepSeek, Llama

ChatGPT version 3.5 is free of charge and has all the above-mentioned facilities. It is user-friendly and easy to use and is conversation-enabled. However, the basic, free version is trained only up to the years 2023-24. In

addition browsing is not enabled so it is limited to the training years. ChatGPT Pro Version 4, is browsing enabled and is up-to-date, but is a paid application.

Google Gemini has strong web integration features, including search and reasoning. Gemini provides real-time results and has a number of added features like working with Gmail and Google AI studio which is provided in the

free version.

MS Copilot is mainly built to work with Microsoft Office 365 apps - Word, Excel, PowerPoint Point etc, and the web browser MS Edge.

DeepSeek is a Chinese, partly open-source LLM best for coding and technical issues. It uses Chinese multi-lingual data sources. It has reached high benchmark levels in testing in comparison to other LLMs.

When using LLMs, whatever different version we may use, it's important that we precisely inform what we want. There are four important pieces of information that we need to provide. The mnemonic is **CSIP** - Context, Specific Information, Intent, Response format

For example:

Context - I am an academic, physician/doctor
Specific Information - I am preparing a lecture for undergraduate medical students on heart failure
Intent - Can you give me an easy method to explain 'Starling's Forces'

Response format - in a stepwise manner using bullet point limiting to 500 words

In addition, some LLM have a special focus on healthcare, examples are MedPalm, ADA, Gator Tron, RadOnc GPT.

One of the most promising uses of LLMs in medicine is in clinical decision support. They can assist healthcare providers by synthesising medical information, generating differential diagnoses, suggesting investigations, and even recommending treatments based on current best practices.

LLMs also show considerable promise in research assistance. They can help automate literature reviews, generate research questions, and even assist in drafting parts of scientific papers. Furthermore, in the administrative realm, LLMs can reduce the burden of clinical documentation by drafting discharge summaries, referral letters, and consultation notes, thus potentially alleviating some of the causes of physician burnout.

We describe five LLM out of the increasing medicine specific LLMs.

MedPalm

<https://sites.research.google/med-palm/>

Google's **Med-PaLM** (Medical Pathways Language Model) is a version of its large language model fine-tuned for healthcare. Introduced in December 2022 and updated with Med-PaLM 2 in March 2023, it excels in medical Q&A benchmarks—scoring over 60% on USMLE-style questions initially and reaching ~85% with v2—comparable to expert clinicians. It supports multimodal input (text, images, genomics) and is evaluated across criteria such as accuracy, clinical consensus, reasoning, and safety. While promising for clinical decision support and automation, it still shows occasional errors and hallucinations, so human oversight remains essential.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Continued...

ADA

<https://ada.com/>

The **Ada Symptom Checker** is an AI-powered health assessment tool developed by Ada Health. It allows users to enter symptoms and receive a possible explanation of their health condition based on medical knowledge and probabilistic reasoning. Ada asks a series of adaptive questions and compares the answers against a large medical database to suggest possible causes. For the most part, Ada uses commercially available LLMs from OpenAI and Anthropic — there's no personal data or Ada proprietary included in their training.

It is not a diagnostic tool but aims to help users understand their symptoms and decide whether to seek medical care. The app is widely used globally and has been clinically validated in some studies for its accuracy and safety.

GatorTron

<https://www.nvidia.com/en-us/on-demand/session/gtcspring21-s32030/>

GatorTron is a powerful AI language model developed by the University of Florida and NVIDIA to understand and analyze clinical text. It was trained using over 90 billion words, mostly from de-identified electronic health records (EHRs). This allows it to "read" and make sense of large volumes of patient notes, lab reports, and clinical summaries. GatorTron performs tasks like identifying diagnoses, matching symptoms, and answering medical questions with high accuracy. It's designed to support clinicians and researchers by improving information extraction from EHRs, reducing manual work, and potentially aiding in decision-making. Think of it as an AI trained to understand doctor-speak.

RadOnc GPT

<https://ai.meta.com/blog/radonc-gpt-meta-llama-2-mayo-clinic/>

RadOnc-GPT is a specialized AI language model, using radiation-oncology notes from Mayo Clinic in Arizona. It excels at three key tasks: generating radiotherapy regimens (including modality choices like proton vs. photon), assigning diagnostic descriptions/ICD codes, and crafting treatment summaries.

Compared to general LLMs, it achieved notably higher ROUGE scores, reflecting better clinical specificity and clarity. Designed to streamline workflows—such as treatment planning and in-basket message drafting—it shows promise for saving clinician time and enhancing decision support. Pending further validation, it represents a powerful tool tailored to radiation oncology practice.

BioMedLM

<https://crfm.stanford.edu/2022/12/15/biomedlm.html>

PubMedGPT/BioMedLM is a LLM developed by Stanford University. Trained exclusively on biomedical text from PubMed abstracts and full articles, it achieves state-of-the-art performance on medical QA tasks—including 50.3% accuracy on MedQA and ~57% on MedMCQA—despite its relatively small size. It uses a custom tokenizer optimized for medical terminology and generates draft responses suitable for research purposes (not clinical advice). By proving smaller, domain-specific LLMs can rival larger general models, PubMedGPT offers a more efficient, privacy-preserving foundation for biomedical NLP and question answering.

Concerns / Limitations

The main concerns of using AI is discussed in the Ceylon Medical Journal (CMJ) article, 'Artificial Intelligence in Medicine: Is it a panacea for all ills?'. [4]

Hallucinations, inherent biases in the datasets used, the lack of explainability of how AI works (the black box phenomenon) and a lack of authority that regulates AI applications, especially in healthcare.

Beyond technical issues, there are ethical questions surrounding the use of LLMs in medicine. Accountability remains a critical issue: if a medical error occurs with AI involvement, it is unclear who should bear responsibility — the developer, the institution, or the clinician.

Transparency is vital; patients should be informed when AI tools are involved in their care, allowing them to make fully informed decisions.

A recent MIT study explores the neural and behavioural consequences of LLM-assisted essay writing. The study participants were divided into

three groups: Those using LLM, Search Engines, and Brain-only (no assistance). Over four months, LLM users consistently underperformed at neural, linguistic, and behavioural levels. These results raise concerns about the long-term educational implications of LLM reliance and underscore the need for deeper inquiry into AI's role in learning.[5]

Geoof Hinton is known as the godfather of AI, and the 2024 Nobel Prize for physics was awarded to Hinton. I would like to quote from Geoffrey Hinton's speech at the Nobel Prize banquet, 10 December 2024. [6]

'There is also a longer-term existential threat that will arise when we create digital beings that are more intelligent than ourselves. We have no idea whether we can stay in control. But we now have evidence that if they are created by companies motivated by short-term profits, our safety will not be the top priority. We urgently need research on how to prevent these new beings from wanting to take control. They are no longer science fiction'.

Looking ahead, the future use of LLMs in medicine should prioritize human-AI collaboration. The goal should not be to replace healthcare providers but to augment their capabilities, allowing them to focus more on patient-centred care. Rigorous validation processes, similar to clinical trials for new medications, are necessary to ensure the safety and effectiveness of LLM applications in clinical settings. Furthermore, transparency in model development, including open access to datasets and evaluation metrics, will help build trust among clinicians and patients. Finally, ongoing monitoring and auditing are essential to identify and correct biases, inaccuracies, and ethical concerns as they arise.

In conclusion, Large Language Models have immense potential to transform healthcare by supporting clinical decision-making, enhancing education, and accelerating research. However, their integration into medical practice must be approached cautiously, with careful attention to safety, ethics, equity, and transparency. LLMs should be seen not as replacements for healthcare professionals but as powerful tools that, when used

responsibly, can enhance the human aspects of medical care.

Acknowledgement

In writing the article, I have obtained the help of AI resources. The Fig 1 was the result of an AI drawing tool.

References

1. American Medical Association. AMA Augmented Intelligence Research: Physician sentiments around the use of AI in health care: motivations, opportunities, risks, and use cases. *AMA Augmented Intelligence Research* [Internet]. 2025 Feb [cited 2025 Jun 29]. Available from: <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/physician-ai-sentiment-report.pdf>
2. Wadasinghe C. Understanding medical professionals' views on integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in medical information retrieval and healthcare information systems. *Sri Lanka Library Rev.* 2024 Jun;38(2):50–71. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.4038/sllr.v38i2.72>
3. IBM. What are large language models (LLMs)? *IBM Think* [Internet]. 2023 Nov 2 [cited 2025 Jun 29]. Available from: <https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/large-language-models>
4. Mendis K. Artificial Intelligence in Medicine: is it a panacea for all ills? *Ceylon Med J.* 2023 Dec 31;68(4):159–62. Available from: <https://cmj.sjoi.info/articles/10.4038/cmj.v68i4.10772/>
5. Kosmyrna N, Hauptmann E, Yuan YT, Situ J, Liao X-H, Vivian Beresnitzky A, Braunstein I, Maes P. Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt when Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing Task. *MIT Media Lab* [Internet]. 2025 Jun 10 [cited 2025 Jun 29]. Available from: <https://www.media.mit.edu/publications/your-brain-on-chatgpt/>
6. Nobel Foundation. Geoffrey Hinton – Banquet speech at the Nobel Prize banquet [Internet]. Nobel Prize in Physics 2024; 10 Dec 2024 [cited 2025 Jun 29]. Available from: <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/physics/2024/hinton/speech/>

VOICES FROM THE PERIPHERIES

Dr. M.P.D.M. Rajakaruna

MBBS (Sri Lanka)

Medical Officer – Emergency Treatment Unit, Maternal and Children’s Hospital, Kalutara



A NEW DAWN IN HEALTHCARE: THE MATERNAL AND CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL, KALUTARA

“Healing little lives, Empowering futures”

Kalutara proudly marks a major milestone in healthcare with the opening of the Maternal and Children’s Hospital, a much-anticipated project set to transform pediatric and maternal care in the district. This new hospital is not just a building - it is a promise of a healthier, brighter future to our mothers and children.

Located in Gallassahena with close proximity to the Kalutara Teaching Hospital premises, this specialized hospital plays a crucial role in delivering comprehensive maternal and pediatric care to the people of Kalutara District. Families from Beruwala, Balapitiya, Horana, Matugama, Agalawatta, Baduraliya, Ingiriya, Bulathsinhala, and Pimbura now have easy access to expert healthcare without traveling long distances to Colombo or Karapitiya.

A new era in pediatric care

Previously, pediatric units were housed within the Teaching Hospital, where only two pediatric wards operated under limited and challenging conditions. These old wards struggled with overcrowding and poor ventilation.

In contrast, this new hospital marks a significant improvement with four fully equipped pediatric wards, offering not just increased capacity but also a more thoughtful and welcoming environment for children. The hospital's modern design features

bright, child-friendly interiors and a dedicated play area that allows children to engage, recover and thrive in a calm and nurturing setting.

As this hospital specializes in maternal and pediatric care, patients in these categories are given top priority at all times – unlike in a general hospital where attention is divided among a broader range of medical needs.

Development and Facilities

The development of the hospital was made possible through the efforts of the Sri Lankan government with generous financial assistance from the Netherlands government. The hospital offers a wide range of essential services:

- Emergency Treatment Unit (ETU): Fully functional, with resuscitation beds, a labor room, and emergency care facilities.
- Maternal and Pediatric Wards: 100 beds with comfortable, child-friendly settings, including isolation areas.
- Postnatal and Gynecology Wards
- Intensive Care Unit (ICU): 9-bed unit for maternal and pediatric critical care.
- Premature Baby Unit (PBU)
- OPD and Clinics: Daily OPD and specialty clinics including vaccination and family planning services. We are now giving rehabilitation support for syndromic babies and children with neurological impairment



with the guidance of community paediatrician.

- Surgical Theater and Labor Room: Modern and fully equipped.
- Blood Bank, Laboratories, and Radiology Services: Ensuring accurate and timely care.

Early Challenges

The hospital officially opened on October 15, 2023. Initially, staffing was limited - just two medical officers and three Released House Officers in the ETU, trained at Lady Ridgeway Hospital.

Despite early struggles with limited investigations, imaging, and blood bank services, the dedicated team worked tirelessly to provide uninterrupted, quality emergency care under the guidance of four consultant pediatricians.

Progress and Growth

Thanks to the leadership of the Hospital Director and the hard work of the medical team, the hospital has rapidly developed.

Today, the ETU is fully functioning with nine medical officers, four pediatric wards are actively running, and essential services like 24-hour x-ray imaging and laboratory tests are available on-site.

Future Plans

The hospital looks forward to further growth, with plans to establish fully operational maternity units, a dedicated anesthesia/ICU unit, neonatal intensive care (PBU/NICU), and an expanded blood bank.

A Place of Healing and Hope

Today, patients and their families express immense relief and happiness. Children are treated in a nurturing, cheerful environment, and guardians feel confident in the care they receive.

The Maternal and Children’s Hospital, Kalutara stands not just as a hospital but as a symbol of hope, a beacon of progress, and a promise to future generations.



NOVICE

Dr. Akhila Imantha Nilaweera

MBBS (Colombo)

Medical Officer, Emergency Treatment Unit, DGH Matara

Director and the Past President of Young Professionals’ Alliance for Health (YouPAH)



THE GLOBAL TOBACCO END GAME: LEADERS WANTED!

Even from my school days, I had always been inquisitive and enthusiastic about how broad life is. As a final year undergraduate, I was privileged to be the Founder Vice President of Young Professionals’ Alliance for Health (YouPAH), a collective of like-minded young professionals or wannabes who pursue a vision of a healthier Sri Lanka. A process in which I learnt that determinants of health and wellbeing go beyond individual capacities and lifestyles and change need more than changing oneself for better.

When considering the determinants of ill health, the role played by tobacco is huge. It is not only killing and making people ill, but also negatively impacting social and economic well-being of individuals, households, communities and countries. Tobacco industry, the vector behind the tobacco epidemic, is causing more deaths and diseases in the world annually than all other viruses and bacteria taken together and making profits out of it too!

With my interactions and engagements at YouPAH I realised that just educating people about the harm done by tobacco is not adequate to counteract this commercial determinant of health. Addressing it very much requires people to understand and become resistant to tobacco

industry tactics that sustain the habit of tobacco use. Hence, I am now the Sub-Editor of the Centre for Combating Tobacco (CCT), the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO-FCTC), Article 5.3 mandated tobacco observatory in Sri Lanka. CCT conducts investigative research on tobacco industry and its allies, exposing their tactics and covert conflicts of interest and counteracting resulting interference and influence on public health policies and actions.

At CCT, I was exposed to many opportunities to develop myself as an advocate for tobacco control, to prepare me to contribute to the tobacco endgame; the current set of strategies global tobacco control advocates are focusing on. The aim is to eliminate tobacco use and save future generations from related harm. Last year, I had the opportunity to participate in the Tobacco Industry Monitoring Research and Accountability (TIMRA) course, conducted by the Tobacco Control Research Group (TCRG) of University of Bath, United Kingdom. I learnt about new investigative research techniques and tools that can be used to identify and monitor the modus operandi of the tobacco industry which strengthened my contribution to the CCT immensely.

This year, I was one of the 50 young tobacco control advocates selected from low- and middle-income countries for the Ascend: Leadership Development for the Future of Tobacco Control programme. ASCEND is a capacity building programme conducted by the Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, USA. Spanning through a period of 11 months of online engagement, training and mentoring, the programme also includes an intensive in-person workshop of one week duration. This year it was held in Dublin, Ireland so that the trainees could participate in the World Conference on Tobacco Control 2025, held in the following week. As part of the ASCEND experience, participants were awarded a scholarship to attend the World Conference on Tobacco Control 2025, which followed the workshop, further enhancing their exposure to global perspectives in tobacco control.

ASCEND programme enhanced my understanding of the history of tobacco control, strategies and challenges; enhanced my leadership capacity and systems thinking skills to envision effective tobacco control policies and actions; provided opportunity to build connections with global and international peers, experts and

patrons in tobacco control and fostered a community amongst the peer trainees; made me feel accepted into the global tobacco control community and involve in tobacco control-related global efforts. ASCEND also enabled me to win an internship opportunity with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, a leading global agency of tobacco control. Through this internship opportunity, I look forward to enhance my skills and capacities related to tobacco control further and contribute to the global tobacco control efforts and actions.

Tobacco epidemic and the related deaths and diseases are the result of tobacco industry which manufactures and markets a lethal product to people, especially to youth and children. Thus, it is the responsibility of our generation to act against this vector so that future generations will be freed from this menace. As a young professional interested in promoting the well-being of others, I truly believe that “Tobacco Endgame” is a possibility and that our collective actions will lead us to a “Tobacco Free Future” in which nicotine addiction and its related harm will be eliminated.



SLMA IN JUNE

Highlights



Regional Clinical Meeting - Rathnapura

Second Regional Clinical Meeting of the Sri Lanka Medical Association in collaboration with the General Practitioners Association, Rathnapura and Provincial Directorate of Health Services, Sabaragamuwa was successfully concluded on 12th June at the Auditorium of the PDHS Sabaragamuwa. Topics relevant to day today medical practice and important updates for general practice were discussed with enthusiastic participation of doctors across the province. SLMA wishes to thank Dr. Kapila Dahanayake, PDHS Sabaragamuwa, Dr. Chaminda Jayawardena and Prof. Ruwanthi Gunasekara of the SLMA for their untiring efforts to make this event a success.



Pre-Congress Session: 'Seeing Beyond; Radiology for the Modern Clinician'

'Seeing Beyond; Radiology for the Modern Clinician', a Pre-Congress Session of the 138th Anniversary International Medical Congress, SLMA was held recently in collaboration with the Sri Lanka College of Radiologists. Participants had a hands-on experience on interpreting X-rays to performing Point of Care Ultrasounds (POCUS). Dr. Marius Suranjan, Senior Registrar in Radiology, NHSL Colombo and a council member took the lead in organizing the session.



REGIONAL MEETING
RATHNAPURA

12th JUNE 2025 FROM 9.30 AM TO 1.30 PM PDHS OFFICE SABARAGAMUWA CPD POINTS & CERTIFICATES WILL BE AWARDED TO PHYSICAL PARTICIPANTS

- 9:30 AM - Registration
- 10 AM - Inauguration/Welcome Speech
Dr Kapila Kannangara - Provincial Director of Health Services, Sabaragamuwa
Dr Surantha Perera - President, Sri Lanka Medical Association
Dr Janaka Prasad - President, General Practitioners' Association, Rathnapura
- 10.15 AM - Diagnostic Pitfalls in Dermatology
Dr V G Abeywickrama
Consultant Dermatologist, Teaching Hospital, Rathnapura
- 10.45 AM - Can Diabetes be Reversed : Myth or Reality
Dr Manika Sumanatilleke
Consultant Endocrinologist, National Hospital of Sri Lanka
- 11.15 PM - Common Psychological Problems in Primary Care and Management
Dr Suvi Kulathilaka
Consultant Psychiatrist, Teaching Hospital, Rathnapura
- 11.45 PM - Video
- 12 NOON - Recognizing a Sick Newborn
Dr Surantha Perera
Consultant Paediatrician, President, Sri Lanka Medical Association
- 12.30 PM - Updates in Hypertension
Dr Mahinda Kumarasinghe
Senior Lecturer in Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sabaragamuwa
- 1 PM - Sexually Transmitted Infections in General Practice
Dr T M Y T Nayanapriya
Registrar in Venerology, STD Clinic, Rathnapura
- 1.30 PM - Medico-Legal Issues in General Practice
Dr Uthpala Attiyagalle
Consultant JMO, Teaching Hospital, Rathnapura
- 2 PM - Vote of thanks
Dr Roshan Bandara
Secretary, General Practitioners' Association, Rathnapura

Live on Zoom US Meeting ID : 852 0831 5108 Passcode : 877636

VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.slma.lk

Sri Lanka Medical Association in Collaboration With Sri Lanka College of Radiologists

138th Anniversary International Medical Congress 2025

Seeing Beyond: Radiology for the Modern Clinician

6th June 2025 8.00 am to 2.00 pm @SLMA Auditorium CPD Points Awarded

Highlights of the day

- 08:00 AM Registration
- 08:30 AM Welcome Address
Dr Surantha Perera, President SLMA
Dr Sheehan Wadda, President Sri Lanka College of Radiologists
- 09:00 AM Approach to Chest X-ray Interpretation
Dr Mihir Wettasinghe
Consultant Radiologist, Base Hospital, Veldieniya
- 09:30 AM Basics of Abdominal X-ray
Dr Sashika Alahakoon
Consultant Radiologist, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
- 10:00 AM Essentials of Neuroradiology in Emergency Setting
Dr Anura S. Pallawatte
Consultant Radiologist, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo
- 10:30 AM Beyond the Film: A Radiology Case Quiz (Part 1 - Quiz)
Dr Marius Suranjan
Senior Registrar in Radiology, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo
- 11:00 AM Tea Break
- 11:30 AM Point-of-Care Ultrasound (POCUS)
Dr Withanage D. Duminda
Consultant Radiologist, Base Hospital, Thambuththigama
- 12:15 PM Basics of Ultrasound - DEMONSTRATION
Dr Withanage D. Duminda
Consultant Radiologist, Base Hospital, Thambuththigama
- 01:00 PM Beyond the Film: A Radiology Case Quiz (Part 2 - Discussion)
Dr Marius Suranjan
Senior Registrar in Radiology, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo
- 01:45 PM Distribution of certificates and prizes
- 02:00 PM Lunch

Payment Instructions:
Bank Name: Hutton National Bank PLC
Branch: Cinnamon Gardens
Account Name: Sri Lanka Medical Association
Account Number: 0760000339

Registration fee:
Non members - Rs 4000/-
members - Rs 3000/-

Send Details using google form link:
Google form link: <https://forms.gle/6s4rUAWeKYHvHik8>

© 2025 Sri Lanka Medical Association. All rights reserved. Unauthorized use or reproduction is prohibited.

+94(0) 444 2244 secretary@slma.lk
No. 66, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.

SLMA IN JUNE

Highlights

SLMA Saturday Talks

- Three Saturday Talks were held during the month of June,
- A Stepwise Approach to a Bleeding Patient- Dr. Manu Wimalachandra, Consultant Haematologist and Senior Lecturer, Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Colombo
 - Chest Pain of Acute Onset- Dr. Amila Walawwatta, Consultant Interventional Cardiologist, Colombo South Teaching Hospital
 - Bright Red or Black; Managing GI Bleeds in Children -Dr. Wathsala Hathagoda, Consultant Paediatrician, Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children and Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine, Colombo

SATURDAY TALK SESSION
"A STEPWISE APPROACH TO A BLEEDING PATIENT"

07th JUNE 2025 FROM 6 PM TO 6.45 PM

SPEAKER
Dr. Manu Wimalachandra
MBBS, FCPS (S), MRCP (UK), MRCPCH (UK)
Senior Lecturer, Consultant Haematologist,
Department of Pathology,
Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

MODERATOR
Dr Marius Suranjan
MBBS, MRCP (UK), MRCPCH (UK)
Senior Registrar in Radiology, NHSL

QR CODE: 00000-140-0000-0000 PASSCODE: 344545

www.slma.lk

SATURDAY TALK SESSION
"CHEST PAIN OF ACUTE ONSET"

14th JUNE 2025 FROM 6 PM TO 6.45 PM

SPEAKER
Dr. Amila Walawwatta
MBBS, MD, MRCP (UK), MRCP (London)
Consultant Interventional Cardiologist
Colombo South Teaching Hospital

MODERATOR
Dr Tharindi Suriapperuma
MBBS, DCH, MD (Paed), MRCPCH (UK)
Consultant Paediatrician and Senior Lecturer
Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine
University of Kelaniya

QR CODE

Monthly Clinical Meeting for June

SLMA together with the College of Anaesthesiologists and Intensivists, Sri Lanka conducted the Monthly Clinical Meeting for June on 'Bridging the Gap, From Ward to ICU; Early Management of the Acutely Deteriorating Patient'.



SATURDAY TALK SESSION
BRIGHT RED OR BLACK :
MANAGING GI BLEEDS IN CHILDREN

28th JUNE 2025 FROM 6 PM TO 6.45 PM

SPEAKER
Dr Wathsala Hathagoda
ADVANCED CONSULTANT PAEDIATRICIAN
LADY RIDGEWAY HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN
SENIOR LECTURER, FACULTY OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

MODERATOR
Professor Sumudu Seneviratne
PROFESSOR IN PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS, FACULTY OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO
HONORARY SECRETARY GENERAL
SRI LANKA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

QR CODE

LIVE ON ZOOM US
MEETING ID : 850 1440 1897
PASSCODE : 846565

+9411 269 3324 Office@slma.lk www.slma.lk

MONTHLY CLINICAL MEETING
BRIDGING THE GAP FROM WARD TO ICU

EARLY MANAGEMENT OF THE ACUTELY DETERIORATING PATIENT

DR PIYUSHA JAYAWARDENE
MBBS, MD, FRCA, EDIC
Consultant Anaesthetist, Lady Ridgeway Hospital, Colombo
Head, Faculty of Critical Care Medicine, COASL

DR IRANGA GEBALANAGE
MBBS, MD (Anaesthesiology), FRCA
Acting Consultant Anaesthetist, Teaching Hospital Anuradhapura

02nd JUNE 2025 FROM 12.30 PM TO 2 PM SLMA AUDITORIUM CPD POINTS WILL BE AWARDED TO PHYSICAL PARTICIPANTS

LINK FOR JOIN ZOOM MEETING: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82023535361?pwd=jk40ZmF5ZmZlPjBhVklKZWpRd0Qz.1>
MEETING ID: 820 2353 5361
PASSCODE: 542678

QR CODE

SLMA IN JUNE

Highlights

Pre-Congress Workshop: Learning from the Legends

'Learning from the Legends; Inspiring Journey in Medicine and Beyond', a special Pre Congress Session was held with the participation of legends and medical luminaries in the field of paediatrics in Sri Lanka. Audience got the rare chance of listening to the most renowned paediatricians, combining their technical prowess and rich experience. SLMA respectfully, appreciate the efforts of these legends in paediatrics for their dedication and commitment.



Appointment of new Co- Editor for the Ceylon Medical Journal (CMJ)

Prof. Madunil Niriella MBBS, MD, MRCP (Lon), MRCP (UK), Professor in Gastroenterology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya was appointed as a Co-Editor of the CMJ. Prof. Niriella was appointed in place of outgoing Co-Editor Prof. Senaka Rajapaksha. SLMA wishes to thank the outgoing Co-Editor Prof. Senaka Rajapaksha, for his untiring efforts and commitment towards the Ceylon Medical Journal. ▼





Learning from the Legends

"Inspiring Journeys in Medicine and Beyond"

30th May 2025
9.00 am to 1.30 pm

@SLMA Auditorium CPD Points Awarded

Highlights of the day

9 AM	Welcome Address Dr Surantha Perera, President SLMA	
9.05 AM	Opening Remark Dr Asela Gunawardena Director General of Health Services	
9.15 AM	Vaccines that Protect, Generations that Thrive Professor Sanath P Lamabadusuriya Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics	
9.45 AM	Guardians of Childhood: Upholding Safety, Dignity, and Rights Vidyalakshmi Professor Harendra De Silva Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics	
10.15 AM	Foundations for Life: Nourishing the Child, Shaping the Future Professor Narada Warnasuriya Senior Professor of Paediatrics	
10.45 AM	Tea Break	
11 AM	From Fragility to Strength: Caring for the Critically Ill Newborn Professor Dulanie Gunasekera Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics	
11.30 AM	Inhaled Drugs for Childhood Asthma: A Game Changer Dr B J C Perera Specialist Consultant Paediatrician	
12 NOON	Silent Beginnings, Lifelong Impact: Early Detection of Congenital Hypothyroidism Professor Sujewa Amarasekera Senior Professor in Paediatrics	
12.30 PM	Battling Bugs: Timeless Wisdom in Managing Childhood Infections Dr Pushpa Punchihewa Retired Consultant Paediatrician	
1 PM	Q&A Session	
1.20 PM	Distribution of the Certificates	
1.25 PM	Vote of Thanks	



FREE PARTICIPATION

© 2025 Sri Lanka Medical Association. All rights reserved.
Unauthorized use or reproduction is prohibited.
+94(11) 269 3324 accounts@slma.lk
No.06, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SLMA COUNCIL MEMBERS

Family Health Bureau (FHB), Ministry of Health together with the Family Planning Association (FPA) Sri Lanka launched 'Country Contextualized Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health Services, Sri Lanka' recently. MISP is an internationally accredited training module for first responders during emergencies. Dr. Lahiru Kodituwakku, council member SLMA was the Lead Editor of the Country Contextualized MISP package for Sri Lanka.

SLMA's distinguished council member Dr. Anula Wijesundera along with her family members donated the first ever Hydrogen Methane Breathalyzer to the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo. The project was spearheaded by SLMA Social Secretary and Lecturer at the Department of Physiology, UCFM Dr. Nilanka Wickramasinghe.



SAVE THE DATES!

138th ANNIVERSARY INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS

REGISTRATION FEE

- Consultant Full Registration Rs: **15000** /=
Early Bird Rs: **12500** /=
- Non Consultant Rs: **12000** /=
Early Bird Rs: **10000** /=
- Undergraduate Rs: **9000** /=
Early Bird Rs: **8000** /=
- Day Registration Rs: **7000** /=
Symposia Registration Rs: **3000** /=
- Foreign Delegate Full Registration USD **300**
Early Bird USD **250**



23 24 25 26

JULY 2025
Cinnamon Grand Hotel - Colombo

For registration visit - www.slma.lk

For More Details Contact SLMA Office

 **011 269 3324**



Sri Lanka Medical Association



Sri Lanka Medical Association

138th Anniversary International Medical Congress

Health Equity Across the
Life Course: Resilient Pathways,
Empowered Lives



Cinnamon Grand Hotel, Colombo

23

24

25

26

JULY 2025

PROGRAMME

DAY 1 - 23rd July 2025

6.00 - 7.30 PM	INAUGURATION CEREMONY (ON INVITATION)
7.30 - 8.30 PM	SLMA Oration (On Invitation) Attempts to reverse adverse hepatic outcomes of severely iron-loaded patients through intensive iron chelation: Can established fibrosis be reversed? Dr Padmapani Padeniya Medical Geneticist and Senior Lecturer – Department of Anatomy, University of Kelaniya
8.30 PM Onwards	FELLOWSHIP AND DINNER (ON INVITATION)

DAY 2 - 24th July 2025

Time	Hall A	Hall B	Hall C
8.00 - 8.15 AM	REGISTRATION		
8.15 - 8.45 AM	Plenary 1 - The child is father of the man: Tracing the origins of lifelong health Prof Steve Turner President – Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, UK		
8.45 - 9.30 AM	Professor NDW Lionel Memorial Oration COVID-19: Looking for a cure Dr Ananda Wijewickrama Consultant Physician and Senior Lecturer – Department of Medicine, University of Moratuwa		
9.30 - 10.00 AM	Tea and Poster Viewing (PP1 to PP35)	Collaborator Session 1 Joint Session with World Health Organisation and Ministry of Health 'Unspoken burden of adolescent mental health'	
10.00 - 11.15 AM	Symposium 1 – Neurology Approach to first ever seizure Prof Jithangi Wanigasinghe Professor in Paediatric Neurology – University of Colombo, Sri Lanka The art and science of epilepsy medication Dr Sanjaya Fernando Consultant Paediatric Neurologist – Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children and National Epilepsy Centre, Sri Lanka Headache unmasked: Navigating the spectrum of benign to sinister Dr Kumarangie Vithanage Consultant Neurologist & Senior Lecturer - University of Colombo, Sri Lanka	Symposium 2 – Haematology Unravelling the mystery of unexplained anaemia: the role of red cell membranopathies and enzymopathies Dr Prabhakar S Kedar Head of Department - Department of Haematogenetics ICMR - National Institute of Immunohematology, India Changing landscape of thalassaemia care in Sri Lanka Prof Anuja Premawardhena Professor of Medicine - University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Thrombophilia: New developments in diagnosis and management Prof Lalindra Gunaratna Professor in Haematology - University of Colombo, Sri Lanka	The silent pandemic: Teen loneliness in a hyperconnected world: A glimpse into the adolescent mental health epidemiology of the region Dr Dutsadee Juengsiragulwit Department of Mental Health, Thailand Digital detox: Can unplugging improve teen depression and anxiety and prevent suicides? Dr Darshani Hettiarachchi Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist-Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, Sri Lanka Autism in the teenage years: Navigating the storm of adolescence Prof Miyuru Chandradasa Professor in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Overview of child and adolescent mental health services in Sri Lanka Prof Shreenika Welinage Professor in Community Medicine - University of Colombo, Sri Lanka



Scan Here for Registration

<https://slma.lk/Registration/conference-registration/>

Registration Fees

Consultant Full Registration 15,000/- LKR
Early bird 12,500/- LKR
Non Consultant Full Registration 12,000/- LKR
Early bird 10,000/- LKR
Undergraduate 8,000/- LKR
Day Registration 7500/- LKR
Symposia Registration 3500/- LKR
Foreign Delegate Full Registration 350/- USD
Early bird 250/- USD

Contact Details

Address: Sri Lanka Medical Association,
Wijerama House, No. 6, Wijerama Mawatha,
Colombo 07
Telephone: +94 11 269 3324
Website: <https://slma.lk/>
E-mail: officeslma.lk

DAY 2 - 24th July 2025

Continued...

Time	Hall A	Hall B	Hall C
11.15 AM - 12.30 PM	Panel Discussion 1 Food allergies: Labelling and de-labelling Panellists: Prof Neelika Malavige Professor in Immunology - University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka Dr Rajiva de Silva Consultant Immunologist - Medical Research Institute, Sri Lanka Dr Dhanushka Dasanayake Consultant Immunologist - Medical Research Institute, Sri Lanka Dr Nadisha Badanasinghe Senior Lecturer – University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Moderator: Dr Tharindi Suriapperuma Senior Lecturer – University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka	Symposium 3 – Interventional research Why conduct interventional research? Prof H Asitha de Silva Professor of Pharmacology - University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Importance of interventional research in the global south Dr Luiza Silva Coordinator - Brazilian Clinical Trials Registry, Brazil Barriers to conducting interventional research Prof Priyanga Ranasinghe Professor in Pharmacology - University of Colombo, Sri Lanka Clinical trial registration Dr Ashwini de Abrew Administrator - Sri Lanka Clinical Trials Registry, Sri Lanka Moderator: Dr Susie Perera World Health Organisation, Sri Lanka Country Office, Sri Lanka	Collaborator Session 2 Joint Session with World Health Organisation and Ministry of Health Wellbeing across the life course: Driving demand through equity, empowerment and evidence Panellists: Associate Prof Phuditi Tejavatoddhana Director - Preventive Medicine Association of Thailand Prof Sumudu Seneviratne Professor in Paediatrics - University of Colombo, Sri Lanka Dr Manuja Perera Senior Lecturer in Public Health - University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Moderator: Dr Susie Perera World Health Organisation, Sri Lanka Country Office, Sri Lanka
12.30 - 1.15 PM	Lunch, Video Promotions and Poster Viewing (PP36 to PP90)		
1.15 - 2.15 PM	Free Paper Session 1 (OP1-5)	Free Paper Session 2 (OP 6-10)	Free Paper Session 3 (OP 11-15)
2.15 - 2.45 PM	Guest Lecture 1 When defences fail: Unravelling recurrent infections and immune vulnerabilities in childhood Dr Bakul Parekh Past President – Indian Academy of Paediatrics, India	Guest Lecture 2 CVD in CKD: Is it mechanical or chemical Prof Magdi Yaqoob Professor of Nephrology - Royal London Hospital, UK	Policy Forum 1 Joint Forum with World Health Organisation and Ministry of Health, United Nations Population Fund Climate stress to health risks: Building resilient health systems AND Launch of the policy document on 'Climate Smart Green Hospitals'
2.45 - 4.00 PM	Symposium 4 – Pulmonology The wheezing patient in your clinic Dr Deepak Talwar & Dr Kanishka Kumar Senior Consultants in Respiratory Medicine Metro Centre for Respiratory Diseases, Noida, India When sleep becomes a silent killer Dr Ruwanthi Jayasekera Consultant Respiratory Physician and Senior Lecturer - University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka From smog to symptoms Dr Chandana Kulathunga Consultant Respiratory Physician - Teaching Hospital, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka	Symposium 5 – Management of snakebites Snakebite envenomation in Sri Lanka: A focus on medically significant snakes Prof Namal Rathnayaka Professor – Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka Challenges in the management of adult snakebites and the role of small molecule therapeutics Prof Anjana Silva Professor in Parasitology – Rajarata University of Sri Lanka Challenges in the management of paediatric snakebites Dr Udaya de Silva Consultant Paediatrician – Teaching Hospital Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka	Collaborator Session 3 Joint Session with World Food Programme Modelling and mapping of micronutrient inadequacies and food security trends in Sri Lanka: Leveraging local and global evidence for operational and technical insights
4.00 - 5.00 PM	Quiz 1 – Radiology Quiz Dr Chinthaka Appuhamy Consultant Radiologist and Senior Lecturer – University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka Dr Marius Suranjan Senior Registrar in Radiology – National Hospital Colombo, Sri Lanka	Quiz 2 – Dermatology Quiz Prof Jayamini Seneviratne Consultant Dermatologist, Sri Lanka Dr Janaka Akarawita Consultant Dermatologist – National Hospital Colombo, Sri Lanka	
5.00 - 5.30 PM	Tea and Poster Viewing (PP91 to PP125)		

DAY 3 - 25th July 2025

Time	Hall A	Hall B	Hall C
8.00 - 8.15 AM	REGISTRATION		
8.15 - 8.45 AM	Plenary 2 – Child and adolescent mental health policy and strategy Dr Dutsadee Juengsiragulwit Consultant Psychiatrist – Department of Mental Health, Thailand		
8.45 - 9.30 AM	Dr S Ramachandran Memorial Oration In a quest towards the provision of optimal paediatric nephrology services in Sri Lanka Prof Randula Ranawaka Professor in Paediatric Nephrology – Department of Paediatrics, University of Colombo		
9.30 - 10.00 AM	Tea and Poster Viewing (PP126 to PP160) 		
10.00 - 11.15 AM	Symposium 6 – Nephrology Epidemic of CKD in the developing world: can we learn from the developed countries? Prof Magdi Yaqoob Professor of Nephrology - Royal London Hospital, UK Is peritoneal dialysis fit for purpose in a resource poor setting Prof Rajitha Abeyssekara Professor & Consultant Nephrologist - University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka Pushing deceased donation in Sri Lanka: Lessons from last decade Dr Ruwan Dissanayake Consultant Transplant Surgeon – National Hospital Colombo, Sri Lanka	Symposium 7 – Birth Defects, Rare Diseases and Genetics Diagnosis and Care of Rare Diseases and Birth Defects Role of a clinical geneticist and the experience from tertiary care centre in Sri Lanka Dr Vindya Subasinghe Consultant Clinical Geneticist - Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, Sri Lanka Advancing diagnosis in rare diseases: The role of whole exome sequencing and its global vs. Sri Lankan impact Dr Dineshani Hettiarachchi Senior Lecturer in Anatomy, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka Skeletal dysplasia: From suspicion to diagnosis and beyond Dr Yasas D. Kolambage Lecturer in Anatomy, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka	Collaborator Session 4 Joint Session with United Nations Development Programme Medicinal drugs: Best practices in technical evaluation, quality assurance and accountability
	Symposium 8 – Endocrinology Endocrine perspective of sarcopenia Dr Sanjay Kalra Past President Endocrine Association of India, India Managing thyroid diseases: A case-based discussion Prof Prasad Katulanda Consultant Endocrinologist & Professor in Medicine – University of Colombo, Sri Lanka President – Ceylon College of Physicians, Sri Lanka Diabetes: new frontiers in management Dr Dulani Kottahachchi Consultant Endocrinologist & Senior Lecturer – University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka	Panel Discussion 2 Bridging gaps in immunisation: Regional strategies to ensure vaccine equity Panellists: Dr Ananada Wijewickrama Chairman – National Medicinal Regulatory Authority, Sri Lanka Dr Dilip Banushali President – Indian Medical Association, India Dr LakKumar Fernando Senior Consultant Paediatrician, Sri Lanka Prof Neelika Malawige Professor in Immunology – University of Sri Jayawardenapura, Sri Lanka Moderators: Dr Surantha Perera President – Sri Lanka Medical Association, Sri Lanka	Collaborator Session 5 Joint Session with Federation of Asia and Oceania Perinatal Societies (FAOPS), Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (SLOGG) and Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka (PSSL) Reducing preventable perinatal mortality in South Asia: A roadmap for regional collaboration and accountability
12.30 - 1.15 PM	Lunch, Video Promotions and Poster Viewing (PP161 to 215) 		
1.15 - 2.15 PM	Free Paper Session 4 (OP 16-20)	Free Paper Session 5 (OP 21-25)	Free Paper Session 6 (OP 26-30)
2.15 - 2.45 PM	Guest Lecture 3 Invisible threats: The health consequences of air pollution across South Asia Dr Dilip Banushali President – Indian Medical Association, India	Guest Lecture 4 Graceful ageing: A life course approach to women's health in midlife and menopause Dr Milind Shah Secretary General - Federation of Asia and Oceania Perinatal Societies (FAOPS)	Policy Forum 2 Joint Forum with Ministry of Health Financing renal services and transplant in Sri Lanka
2.45 - 4.00 PM	Symposium 9 – Paediatrics Breaking the cycle: Paediatric obesity and endocrine health across the life course Prof Aman Pulungan Executive Director – International Paediatric Association Personalized medicine for paediatric asthma: Are we there yet? Prof Steve Turner President – Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, UK	Symposium 10 – Surgery Minimizing the knife: Advances in reducing surgical interventions for cancer Less is more: Evolving landscape in breast cancer surgery Dr Kanchana Wijesinghe Senior Lecturer in Surgery – University of Sri Jayawardenapura, Sri Lanka Colorectal cancer - Evolving clinical pathways and emerging horizons Dr Lakmal Munasinghe Consultant General Surgeon with special interest in Lower GI surgery – DGH, Nuwaraeliya, Sri Lanka	

DAY 3 - 25th July 2025

Continued...

2.45 - 4.00 PM	Transition in paediatric kidney diseases: Building lifelong care pathways Prof Asiri Abeyagunawardena Professor of Paediatrics – University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka	Precision diagnosis, selective intervention: Reducing unnecessary procedures in thyroid cancer Prof Sanjeeva Seneviratne Professor in Surgery - University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
4.00 - 4.45 PM	Dr S C Paul Memorial Oration Challenges in major trauma care delivery in Sri Lanka; An uncharted terrain explored Dr Bingumal Jayasundara Consultant Surgeon – Base Hospital, Balapitiya	
4.45 - 5.15 PM	Tea and Poster Viewing (PP216 to PP248)	

DAY 4 - 26th July 2025

Time	Hall A	Hall B	Hall C
08.00 - 08.15 AM	REGISTRATION		
08.15 - 8.45 AM	Guest Lecture 5 The healing profession: Reintegrating ethics and compassion into clinical practice Prof J.A. Jayalal President – Commonwealth Medical Association, UK	Guest Lecture 6 Challenges of nutritional environmental assessment of schools Dr Buddhika Sudusinghe National Program Manager - School Health, Family Health Bureau, Sri Lanka Dr Amila Chandrasiri Consultant Community Physician - RDHS Galle, Sri Lanka	
08.45 - 10.00 AM	Symposium 11 – Cardiology Updates on STEMI guidelines Prof Rishi Sethi Professor - King George's Medical University, India Updates on lipid management Dr Tanya Pereira Consultant Cardiologist - National Hospital, Colombo, Sri Lanka Updates on hypertension Dr Dinsa Amaratunga Consultant Cardiologist - National Hospital, Colombo, Sri Lanka	Symposium 12 – Gastroenterology Epidemiology of IBD in South Asia: Sri Lankan perspectives Dr Karthiha Balendran Honorary Consultant Gastroenterologist, University Medical Unit, Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, Sri Lanka Challenges in diagnosing & assessing disease severity of IBD Dr Kuleesha Kodisinghe Consultant Gastroenterologist, Teaching Hospital, Matara, Sri Lanka Management of IBD in the era of newer therapies: choosing the right drug for the right patient Dr Amarendra Singh Puri Institute of Digestive & Hepatobiliary Science, Medanta Gurugram, India	Policy Forum 3 Joint Forum with World Health Organisation, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Transport 'Safe roads-Safe communities': Advancing evidence-based action for road traffic injury prevention AND Launch of the 'SLMA declaration on prevention of RTA'
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Tea		
10.30 - 11.45 AM	Symposium 13 – Geratology A roadmap for enhancing geriatric care in Sri Lanka: Practical realities, integration, and regional insight Building tomorrow's geriatric services: Regional insights and transformative strategies Prof Shahul Bahyah Kamaruzzaman Deputy Dean and Senior Geriatrician, University Malaya Essentials of geriatric care in the 21 st Century: Clinical principles and delivery models Prof Sarath Lekamwasam Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka System reform for an ageing nation: Integrating geriatrics into mainstream healthcare Dr Chamila Dalpatadu Consultant Physician, Director Ageing Research and Ambulatory care, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka	Symposium 14 – Nutrition Overview of Paediatric Nutrition Dr Pearl Mallawaarachchi Consultant Nutrition Physician – Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, Colombo, Sri Lanka Updates on Elderly Nutrition Dr Shalika Kurukularachchi Consultant Nutrition Physician – National Hospital Colombo, Sri Lanka Medical Nutrition therapy in chronic diseases Dr Nalintha Herath Consultant Nutrition Physician – National Hospital Colombo, Sri Lanka	Collaborator Session 6 Joint Session with United Nations Population Fund Advancing comprehensive sexuality education in Sri Lanka: A strategic public health response by the Sri Lanka Medical Association
11.45 AM - 12.45 PM	DEBATE Healthcare needs of the people should take precedence over the right of doctors to emigrate		
12.45 - 1.00 PM	CLOSING CEREMONY		
1.00 - 2.00 PM	LUNCH		

GLOBAL FOCUS

JUNE 2025

Global vaccine uptake stalls, putting millions of children at risk of deadly diseases

A new study published in Lancet, reveals an alarming trend of decreasing vaccine uptake across the world. Progress in vaccinating children against a plethora of life-threatening diseases has stalled in the past two decades - and even gone backwards in some countries, as the study suggests. This has been compounded by the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and recent funding restrictions and cuts in international aid budgets. According to the researchers this situation has left millions of children unprotected from diseases such as measles, tuberculosis and polio.

Statistics are startling! Measles vaccinations have declined in nearly 100 countries and by 2023, there were nearly 16 million children who had not had any childhood vaccinations, majority in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia. The trend is not confined to developing countries, vaccination rates have fallen in Europe, USA and other developed countries too.

The researchers recommend that all countries try to strengthen primary healthcare systems, counter misinformation around vaccines and enable equitable access to vaccines.

The ‘Trojan Horse Therapy’ in Multiple Myeloma treatment to start in UK

A new therapy that sneaks toxic drugs inside cancer cells is being made available for patients at NHS, England in a world first. It can halt the myeloma spread for nearly three times longer than current therapies. Belantamab mafodotin, a lethal chemotherapy drug that bound to an antibody, is the primary drug used in the therapy to kill the cancer cells. After the drug-antibody pair enters into a cancerous cell, the drug is released inside for the kill. The decision to use the drug at NHS comes after a review by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) concluded the drug was cost-effective for NHS use.



Picture and news Courtesy: BBC Health/ The Guardian



Photo Courtesy: WHO, Sri Lanka
News: BBC Health

Twins 2025

"Twins in Science and Society : Bridging Multiple Frontiers"

The joint 8th World Congress on Twin Pregnancy: A Global Perspective & The 20th Congress of the International Society for Twin Studies [ISTS]

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SRI LANKAN TWIN RESEARCH

10th-12th AUGUST 2025
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA
CINNAMON GRAND HOTEL

REGISTRATION FEES

INTERNATIONAL RATES
(Early Bird / Regular)

- High Income Countries - USD 450.00 / USD 525.00
- LMICs - USD 350.00 / USD 400.00

EXCLUSIVE SUBSIDIZED RATES FOR LOCAL PARTICIPANTS

- Morning or Afternoon - Rs. 5,000 Session (No Meals)
- Full-Day Session - Rs. 9000 (With Meals)

CONFERENCE TRACKS

1. Maternal and Fetal track
2. Paediatrics
3. Twins in the Context of Neonatology and Pediatrics
4. Twin Research
5. Ethics and CEI (Community Engagement and Involvement)
6. ICOMBO (International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations) sessions
7. Miscellaneous themes

For more details please visit | Contact us
www.twinscongress2025.com | info@twinscongress2025.com

REAL ESTATE ASIA AWARDS 2025
PRIME LANDS RESIDENCES P.L.C.
DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR - SRI LANKA
THE DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR SRI LANKA

LKR 69M
AMAZING PRE - LAUNCH PRICES

COLOMBO 05

THALAKOTUWA GARDENS

FIRST TIME EVER

FLOATING RESTAURANT

IN THE SKIES

0702 777 777

PRIME RESIDENCES

Stamp

To:

If undelivered, please return to:

Sri Lanka Medical Association,
Wijerama House, No. 6, Wijerama Mawatha,
Colombo 07

TheSLMAMonthly

Official Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Medical Association

Registered at the Department of Posts under no. DOP/NEWS/62/2024

JUNE 2025 | VOLUME 18 | ISSUE 06
ISSN: 1800-4016 (PRINTED) 2550 - 2778 (ONLINE)
ISBN: 978-624-5972-13-5



Scan here to
read online

