On 2 July 2010, the Ministry of Health under the directive of the Director General, Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Dr Hj Mohd Ismail bin Merican, called for a meeting on a proposal for a new Fee Schedule.

46 different medical organisations were called for the meeting ranging from the Association of Specialists in Private Medical Practice Malaysia, Malaysian Society of Nephrology, Malaysian Academy of Aesthetic Dentistry, Parenteral & Enteral Nutrition Society of Malaysia to the various Colleges of the Academy of Medicine and including MEMS. The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) was invited to give its view on the Proposal for a New Comprehensive Fee Schedule.

The objective of the meeting was to give an overview of the different fee schedule structures that can be adapted into our current fee schedule and to obtain a consensus from the professional bodies regarding the best way to revise the fee schedule.

During the welcome address, the DG hoped that the MMA could come up with a Fee Schedule within 6 months, the deadline being December 2010. It was reiterated by the President of the MMA, Dr David Quek, that the revision of the fee schedule was absolutely necessary as the original fee schedule was designed 8 years ago. The Chairman to the Fee Schedule Committee MMA, Dr Namazie noted that the 4th schedule 2002, was incorporated into the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Regulations (2006), as the 13th schedule. He emphasised that the designing of a Fee schedule was no easy exercise (the 1st Fee Schedule was implemented in 1987). The pitfalls of fees schedules are: they cannot ever be fully comprehensive, the procedures change over time, and as new technologies are constantly introduced, it is difficult to set a permanent fee. There is a lag time in updating schedules and the description of the procedures can be interpreted differently. There is also always a potential for abuse.

Dr Namazie had proposed a new system based on the American schedule of Fee. There will be 3 dimensions to the system: Medical Procedures and Services Nomenclature (MPSN), Activity & Resource Based Relative Value System and Conversion Factor.

Saturday, the 21st of August 2010 saw the second meeting held at the MMA House in Jalan Pahang. At this meeting, the societies and professional bodies were given a period of 3 months to come up with suggestions and recommendations for upgrading the chargeable fees within their respective purviews. MMA have set a deadline for January 2011 to publish the new Fees Schedule.

MEMS realises that the present fee schedule is inadequate. All members are urged to take an active interest in this matter by providing an update of the list of procedures that are not in the fee schedule and also suggest a value for such procedures, as well as the value of other procedures you think need to be revised. All input and comments are very much welcome and will be forwarded to MMA on behalf of MEMS.