



SINGAPORE DENTAL ASSOCIATION

320 Serangoon Road #10-13 Centrium Square Singapore 218108

Tel: 6258 9252 Fax: 6258 8903

E-mail: admin@sda.org.sg Website: <http://www.sda.org.sg>

GST Reg No.: M90362715C

Council 2024-2026

26th May 2025

Tang Kok Weng Eugene
President

Chye Chuan Hee Kelvin
Vice-President

Samsudin Bin Jetty
Treasurer

Tan Tien Wang
General Secretary

Chew Shen Hui Bertrand
Assistant General Secretary

Intekhab Islam
Council Member

Tan Teck Siang Gerald
Council Member

Boey Sean Kuan
Council Member

Sukanto Jessalynn
Council Member

Dear Members

Minutes of 58th Annual General Meeting

I am pleased to attach herewith the draft Minutes of the 58th Annual General Meeting held on Sunday, 27th April 2025.

I refer to Article VII, item 18 of the SDA Constitution which states

Draft minutes of all General Meetings shall be circulated within one (1) month of the conclusion of the General Meeting and shall be taken as read and adopted if the Council receives no objections or proposed amendments from Members who were present at the General Meeting within two (2) months after the date of the General Meeting. Any such objections or proposed amendments to the draft minutes shall be tabled and considered at the next Annual General Meeting.

As such, do be informed that all objections or proposed amendments are to be submitted in writing and received by our office no later than 26th June 2025.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Dr Tan Tien Wang
General Secretary
Council 2024-2026

Minutes of the 58th Singapore Dental Association Annual General Meeting

The 58th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Singapore Dental Association (SDA) took place on Sunday, 27th April 2025, in the Lavender Room of Orchard Hotel.

The AGM was scheduled to begin at 2.00 pm but was adjourned for 30 minutes in accordance with the constitution. The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm failing to achieve a quorum of 50. At 2.30 pm, 39 members were present, falling short of the required quorum by 11 members. The Chairperson informed those present that, in accordance with the Constitution, the meeting could proceed, but no amendments to the Constitution were allowed.

Members present:

Ang Boon Thye Duncan

Boey Sean Kuan

Chen Yun Chee Gerard

Chew Shen Hui Bertrand

Chew Teck Hong

Chiam Tok Joon

Chua Serene

Chye Chuan Hee Kelvin

Felicia Sundram

Gan Jia Hui

Goh Siew Hor

Hui Chee Wah

Intekhab Islam

Ku Hwee Choo

Kuan Chee Keong

Lee Kee Kai Victor

Lee Keng Yan Gabriel

Lee Moh Hiong Johnny

Leong Jun Keong Melvin

Leung Wing Hung Dominic

Lien Li Choo

Lim Jia Yi Rachel

Lim Yee Xuan Carina

Loh Hong Sai

Ong Eng Yau

Onn Lok Sang

Peck Christopher Charles

Pua Hong Ping

Samintharaj Kumar

Samsudin Bin Jetty

Soh Yi-Wei George

Tang Kok Weng Eugene

Soh Yu Jie

Tang Sin Yee Anna

Tan Hui Xuan Sharon

Tay Ren Wei Joshua

Tan Teck Siang Gerald

Wang Yuying Vivien

Tan Tien Wang

Yeo Kok Beng

Tan Wee Kiat

1. President's Opening Address

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Thank you for your presence today. It means a lot to us that you have taken time off your busy schedules to attend this AGM. Without your participation, continued support and trust in the association, SDA cannot carry on its work. Rest assured that the association exists for you, and because of you.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the various subcommittees who have worked tirelessly over the last 12 months, making it possible for SDA to scale greater heights, and we thank you for your unwavering dedication and hard work.

A great thank you is also due to my fellow council members. Thank you for your collaborations, and continued commitment to our mission, and that enabled us to carry out our work in different areas. I would like to acknowledge and welcome the presence of Prof Christopher Peck, Dean of the School of Dentistry, NUS. Other than his commitment as the chairman of accreditation committee as well as being the scientific chair of IDEM, we look forward to closer collaboration with NUS in the near future.

Thank you everyone, for your presence, and being part of the SDA journey.

2. To confirm the Minutes of the 57th SDA AGM held on Sunday, 28th April 2024.

General Secretary Dr Tan Tien Wang started the AGM by reviewing the SDA 57th AGM, highlighting the corrigendum on pages 45 to 48 of the 57th AGM. Dr Tan subsequently opened the floor for discussion, where no one raised any questions or clarifications.

Dr Ong Eng Yau proposed passing the motion to confirm the 57th Singapore Dental Association AGM minutes. Dr Dominic Leong seconded this motion.

3. Matters arising from the 57th SDA AGM held on Sunday, 28th April 2024.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong requested an update on the "serious allegations" raised in the last AGM, citing the whistleblower report by Dr Tang Kok Weng who was the Vice President then and the current President, and the IAC reports submitted by Dr Samsudin, who was the IAC chairman and the current Treasurer. He further reiterated whether there is truth in the whistleblower and IAC reports against him and Dr Lawrence Yong. He also emphasised that no members of the previous Council had tampered with the records. Hence, he wanted to know if the Council had any updates regarding the allegations.

Dr Tan Tien Wang highlighted that there is a "legal tussle and exchange" between the two parties, hence raising the complications of an investigation by SDA. For this reason, he added that SDA decided "not to complete the investigation." Dr Kuan asked if these allegations have any truth. He explained

that he pursued legal action because of reputational damage to him. The allegations, he said, “almost like a systematic abuse of SDA”; hence, every SDA member has to know the truth.

Dr Kuan stated that legal letters were sent to IAC members Dr Png Rou Jing and Dr Egwin Yeo. A legal letter was also sent to Dr Samsudin after the last AGM. Dr Kuan mentioned that he had gathered from his legal counsel that the parties involved claimed, "We didn't mean any wrongdoing". Dr Kuan asked if there had been any wrongdoing on his part or Dr Lawrence's. If he really did anything wrong, he would not hesitate to apologise.

Dr Eugene Tang stated that members of SDA are open to question the validity of the whistle report. He added that all subcommittee members are serving as volunteers, and there are bound to be differences in their outlook and work pattern. Disagreements will occur because of these differences. The whistle blower report was based on actual happenings in the association, and all evidence was produced in the report, and all members can see for themselves the evidence, and he assured that all reports are well supported by evidence. Dr Eugene Tang said that he merely reported the happenings in the then council. As in many organisations, any whistle blower report goes to the audit committee, so he submitted his whistle blower report to the Internal Audit Committee IAC. The current SDA council decided not to take up Dr George Soh's suggestion to launch a thorough investigation into the allegations because the Council wanted to let the "matter go to rest". Dr Soh asked if the evidence is substantial? Dr Tang replied that, as a council, we could adopt 1 or 2 options. 1st option is to let the matter rest. The 2nd option is to carry out detailed investigations, and if the evidence is deemed substantial, to report to the Singapore Dental Council or even the Attorney-General's Chamber. Question is: is the council going to take this route. Dr Tang stated that "we are not vindictive".

In response, Dr Kuan highlighted that he has no quarrel with the whistle blower report. A Whistle blower report is just any patient making a complaint against us. You can say whatever you want. Patient can claim you pulled out the wrong tooth, and you cannot sue the patient. You have to go through the process. So, I have no issue with the whistle blower report. My issue is with the IAC report. After all the data gathering, is there any evidence at all that was discovered? Please show us the evidence. Dr Kuan urged the council to answer whether he had done anything wrong.

Dr George Soh asked Dr Kuan if he had read the latest report, which he affirmed. Dr Soh subsequently asked whether the latest IAC report has addressed Dr Kuan's concerns, and Dr Kuan affirmed. Dr George Soh then asked if his dissatisfaction or sentiments were against the council or against an individual. If it were on a personal level, then is this the right platform to settle the matter? Dr Kuan replied that Dr Soh is correct, that's why he is taking legal action against the IAC members: Dr Samsudin, Dr Png Rou Jing and Dr Egwin Yeo. If you read the minutes, and later Dr Samin will be presenting his IAC report, there is no evidence of any wrongdoing. Since there is no evidence, why did you even want to write the IAC report at all. Dr Kuan reminded the House that the Annual Report is a permanent depository of proceedings and have to be treated with respect and not used for personal gains. So, Dr Kuan hoped everyone (council, subcommittees, individuals) will treat the Annual Report with respect. "Words have consequences", he added. Responding, Dr Saminthaaraj Kumar, current IAC chairman, added that he had looked into the issues raised by Dr Kuan. He said the IAC committee "decided to look past the complaints that had been brought up". He then highlighted that members of the SDA council, the IAC committee, and subcommittees work for SDA on a Pro Bono basis. The council works for the good of the general body, and for the good of the general public at large. He added that SDA's existence is for the common good. He also highlighted to Dr Kuan that

his IAC committee had looked and checked every detail of the past IAC report, and he would like to remind Dr Kuan that, despite Dr Kuan's frustrations, Dr Kuan's name was not mentioned in the report at all. Dr Samintharaj Kumar proposed moving on to the next AGM item. Dr Kuan objected to this proposal.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong once again sought clarification regarding any evidence related to the personal accusations. He acknowledged the feelings of the members present who wanted to move forward. However, he expressed that he and Dr Lawrence Yong felt aggrieved. He remarked, "If it weren't you, then you would want to move on".

Dr Kuan stated that when his lawyer contacted Dr Samsudin's legal counsel, the response received was, "He (Dr Samsudin) didn't mean it this way". He emphasised his desire to be exonerated if there was no wrongdoing. He mentioned that this situation had caused him considerable frustration.

Taking the floor, Dr George Soh, opined that as a senior member of a close fraternity such as the SDA, the IAC report had exonerated Dr Kuan. He then suggested that if there are any overhanging issues, they should be settled through the non-legal route. His words of advice received applause from the floor.

Dr Goh Siew Hor referred to Section 4.1 in the 57th AGM Minutes and wanted clarification on the actions suggested in 4.1.

1. The Secretariat should be the one booking tickets for council members.
2. Financial reconciliation of bank statements, have these been done every month?

Dr Samsudin Bin Jetty responded that since the day he as Treasurer has received the bank token, financial reconciliations have been done every week.

Dr Kelvin Chye, Vice President, responded that SDA has applied for AMEX corporate cards, which the secretariat will use to book airline tickets. It was clarified that this is a corporate card tagged to the different members and that there is a weekly reconciliation. Dr Samantharaj Kumar said there is no need to earn "miles" using a personal credit card. In addition, checks are done on the expenses made. Also, as IAC chairman, he takes it upon himself to check all accounts going through any particular person, and he can declare to the House that all these have been checked and cleared.

Dr Chew Teck Hong added that there is a need for a formal resolution related to the whistleblower report and to close the matter formally through an independent committee. Dr Saminthaaraj Kumar objected and explained that there may be complications in the presentation and potential omissions in evidence. He challenged the suggestion of setting up a committee but agreed on the need for a resolution, which he said is the "correct thing to do".

Dr Kuan Chee Keong clarified that he is suing three individuals privately for defamation, not the Council. Dr Eugene Tang added that these individuals were sued in their capacity as office bearers of the SDA council and committee. Dr Tang questioned why Dr Kuan is happy with the current IAC report where no individual names were mentioned but is unhappy with the IAC report of 2022-2024 when no individual names were mentioned at all.

Dr Kuan responded that he has also passed Dr Samin's IAC report, and they are studying it. Dr Kuan updated that it appears that Dr Samsudin wrote the IAC report himself, but Dr Png and Dr Yeo were not privy to the aforementioned report. Both Dr Png and Dr Yeo denied any knowledge of the IAC report. He said that this event will clear up in the future. Dr Tang thanked Dr Kuan and made no further comments.

- 4. To receive and, if approved, to pass the Annual Report of SDA Council for the year ended 31st December 2024.**

- 5. Matters arising from the Annual Report of SDA Council for the year ended 31st December 2024.**

Dr George Soh referred to Page 59 of the Annual Report on the Council and noted that four newly elected council members vacated their positions soon after the election. And Dr Tang appointed four new council members to replace them. Dr Soh queried if this was done constitutionally. Dr Soh raised the need for a notice to be given to members on the vacated and appointed members. The Council clarified that a notice was sent to members. Dr Soh added that he did not receive this.

Dr George Soh referred to page 61 and emphasised the need to recruit more student members to enhance the competitive edge of the SDA. He highlighted that only 64 per cent of dentists in Singapore are currently members of the SDA. This membership figure is unacceptable if the association aims to establish itself as a significant influence. He challenged the Council to take action to improve these numbers.

Dr Soh also referred to Page 79, regarding the statement "... broad church CPE programme to our members". Dr Tan Tien Wang apologised and recognised this as a typographical error; the word 'church' should not be in the sentence.

Dr George Soh referred to Page 104 regarding the Oral Health Awareness Committee. Dr Soh further noted that the Singapore Dental Health Foundation might organise similar events. In response, Dr Kelvin Chye stated that the Oral Health Awareness Committee was founded in 2006 and comprises social

media-savvy dentists who use their skills to create oral health messages and content. This committee differs from the Public Dental Health Committee, which Dr Sharon Tan and Dr Felicia Sundram lead. It focuses on policy reviews conducted by trained professionals at both local and international levels.

Dr Soh requested a review of these committees to prevent duplication of activities and responsibilities. Dr Soh also observed that Dr Chye serves as the convener for both committees. Dr Chye also emphasised that one of the objectives of these committees is to encourage greater member participation through increased involvement.

Dr George Soh referred to Page 105 and expressed his belief that a council member should not also serve as a trustee. He stated that only two trustees are required for the property. He pointed out that the SDA constitution prohibits a council member from simultaneously serving as a committee member. Dr Soh recommended that Dr Samintharaj Kumar resign from his position as a trustee.

Dr Soh asked the Council to seek a higher renewal rental for SDA's property on Circular Road. The lease will expire on 31st May. Dr Soh added that the rental of the property as a "pub" holds a premium rental and license, in which he calculated that it is a SGD 3.82 per square foot. Dr Soh added that the rental amount is half the market value based on his research. The rental charges in the vicinity of Prinsep Street, Dhoby Ghaut, River Valley, Selegi and Circular roads range from SGD7.50 to 11.50. He added that a property on Circular Road of about 2,054 sq ft is asking for SGD24,000.

Property chair Dr Samintharaj Kumar stated that the property has been rented to the same tenant since 2010, with the last rental increase being 10 per cent.

He mentioned that, based on rental price trends and conversations with property agents, it is challenging to find comparable properties in the area that have entertainment licenses. Additionally, he noted that the property has an irregular shape, and that the fourth floor is "unusable". Dr Samintharaj Kumar also mentioned that Robert Khan & Co Pte Ltd provided an updated valuation, considering these factors, with a total valuation of SGD 12,900.

Dr Samintharaj Kumar stated that he reached an agreement for a final rent increase of 14%, raising it from \$9,900. The tenant also mentioned that he is nearing retirement and has decided to renew the lease for another two years.

Dr Soh responded by passing on his desktop research to Dr Samintharaj Kumar. He said that he had spoken to a few property agents, and one of them said he could do better than the SGD12,900. Hence, he urged Dr Samintharaj Kumar to explore this further.

Dr Soh also added that modifying the layout of the 4th floor, which will cost SGD300,000, might help increase rental potential. He also suggested doing a property valuation every 2 years instead of annually, saving SGD500.

Dr Samintharaj Kumar highlighted that the paper value of 1 Circular property, which was purchased slightly over SGD1 million, has appreciated to SGD8.5 million. Hence, he said it is in the interest of the Council to do a valuation annually. He agreed with Dr Soh that "redeveloping the property" and "considering the property for other usage or selling it".

Dr Chew Teck Hong asked about the annual property tax as a point of interest. Dr Eugene Tang responded that the combined property tax was SGD 17,222. Dr Chew suggested possibly selling off the property and buying a bigger one.

- 6. To receive and, if approved, to pass the Audited Financial Accounts of SDA for the year ended 31st December 2024.**

- 7. Matters arising from the Audited Financial Accounts of SDA for the year ended 31st December 2024.**

Dr George Soh referred to Page 23 of the Audited Financial Statements. He highlighted the donations amounting to SGD93,511 and emphasised that the auditor should identify the recipients. Additionally, he inquired about the nature of the legal and professional fees totalling SGD13,300, advocating for greater transparency and suggesting that these fees be itemised separately. Furthermore, he pointed out the sponsorship amount of SGD43,452, noting a significant increase of 13 to 14 times compared to last year. He requested information on the recipients of these sponsorships and the purpose behind them.

Lastly, he observed that the overseas expenditure was SGD7,440 and sought to understand why this expense was incurred this year but not in the previous year.

Dr Soh emphasised the importance of governance and suggested that a change in auditor engagement is necessary, as the SDA has been working with the same auditor for many years. He proposed that the SDA should change its auditor every five years. Alternatively, if a change is not feasible, he recommended that the same partner from the auditing firm should not sign off on the audited financial statements for more than five years.

Dr Samsudin stated that the Council acknowledged the suggestion to change the auditor. He mentioned that they had examined the possibility of making this change. However, Dr Samsudin noted that the process of changing

auditors is complicated. Additionally, he emphasised that the current auditor is "familiar with the work", which influenced the Council's decision to continue with them. In response, Dr Soh again suggested they consider changing the auditor partner.

In response to Dr Soh's queries, Dr Samsudin shared the breakdown of donations: NDCS Education Award of SGD10,000, NYP Graduation 2023 of SGD300, NUS initial top up for SDA medal prize and bursary of SGD 75,000, ITE Fund for Graduation 2024 of SGD350 and lastly NUS additional top-up for non-endowed donation fund of SGD7,861.46. All these totalled up to SGD93,511.46.

Dr Samsudin shared the legal and professional fees with a professional fee for SGD800 on TYMODEX, SGD7,500 for QuickDesk Pte Ltd for HR consultancy fee and business intelligence course, printing of "The Dental Surgeon" September issue SGD2,150, QuickDesk technology grant of SGD2,400, and SGD450 to Robert Khan for desktop valuation research on 1 Circular Road. All these fees totalled SGD13,300.

About travelling expenses for council members for NDA conferences, Dr Samsudin said he would need to check on the accounts for the breakdown.

Dr Soh added that the auditor should provide a breakdown for large expenses, ie, SGD7,500. Dr Samsudin said that due to the nature of the accounting posting, the line item was presented as such to the respective accounts.

Dr Tan Tien Wang added it is not exactly "legal fees", which Dr Soh said was a misnomer to classify them as legal fees when they were not. Dr Soh commented that based on the budget, there is a need for a report on the grant spending. Dr Tan Tien Wang concurred.

Replying to Dr Soh, Dr Samsudin added that the SGD7,500 was used to engage QuickDesk, an HR consultancy and business intelligence course, for SDA's digitalisation project. Dr Tan Tien Wang said that the amount of SGD7,500 was part of the SGD250,000 grants budgeted for the SDA's digitalisation project. He added that it was for the training of the SDA secretariat to be skills-ready for its implementation and grant applications. Dr Soh said it was essential to have a report on how the SGD250,000 grant was spent to allow expenditure tracking and to avoid overspending.

Dr Tang shared that the SGD300 expert opinion on TYMODEX, the SDA managed to secure it a seal of approval. As a result, the SDA would receive an annual payment of SGD25,000 for three years.

Dr Dominic Leung supported Dr Soh's proposal, highlighting the need for a more precise breakdown of the Audited Financial Statements to enhance transparency. He noted that previous years' reports included footnotes that explained these financial statements, but such explanations were missing this year. Dr Eugene Tang thanked Dr Leung for highlighting this omission.

Dr George Soh referred to page 112 of the report on "The Dental Surgeon", inquiring about the timeline for the transition to digital newsletters. Dr Eugene Tang responded that, based on the profile of AGM attendees, about half asked for hard copies of the reports. Similarly, for the Dental Surgeons, many of our life members also requested a hard copy of the newsletter. Dr Tang concluded that continuing with printed copies caters to the preferences of SDA members.

Dr George Soh also asked where the funds from the advertisements placed by Wearnes Automotive were in the report. He also questioned the nature of the "advertising" listed. Dr Samsudin responded that the advertisement is a

sponsorship for the Singapore Night Dinner on 20th April 2024, amounting to SGD10,900. Dr Soh raised the concern that there is a need for transparency in sponsorship and spending.

Dr Soh proposed approving the audited financial report, and Dr Samintharaj Kumer seconded the motion. Dr Tang concluded by stating that the audited report had been approved.

8. To transact any other business in accordance with the Constitution of SDA.

Motion A – Constitution Review of SDA logo and address

Dr Eugene Tang announced a lack of quorum, as attendance fell short of 50 members. Therefore, no action can be taken to amend the Constitution.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong highlighted that meeting the quorum had always been challenging based on his past experiences. He recommended conducting a comprehensive review of the Constitution rather than making incremental changes.

In response, Dr Bertrand Chew, responsible for the proposed constitution review, mentioned that due to time constraints, the Council decided to prioritise reviewing the SDA logo and address.

Dr Tan Tien Wang also added that the constitution review committee chaired by Dr Kuan Chee Keong did not look into the virtual meetings as promised in the last constitution review engagement.

As such, the constitution review is not complete for presentation and approval.

Motion B - SDA Academy

Dr Eugene Tang summarised Motion B proposed as the following *"To consider and approve a motion to form a committee of not more than 5 members during AGM to do a feasibility report for the formation of a Singapore Dental Association Academy (SDA Academy) or similar and to submit the findings and recommendations to the Council for deliberation and implementation with a proposed budget of \$150000. The final report is to be submitted not later than 3 months upon the formation of such committee."*

Proposer of this motion were Dr Intekhab Islam and seconded by Dr Bertrand Chew

Dr Intekhab Islam and Dr Eugene Tang went through the details of the motion proposed:

1. Preamble: SDA's Commitment: Providing members a platform for Lifelong learning & Continuing Dental Education (CDE)
2. Aims: To provide structured mentorship programs and professional growth opportunities.
3. Key features: a) faculty with local & internal experts, b) inclusive model with local and overseas professionals and engagement with faculties. Proposed 4-year faculty appointments.
4. Long-term goals: a) organise structured skill-based courses, establish continuity in training beyond council terms, and c) position as a leading regional training institute
5. Governance: 2 nominated SDA council members with no more than five appointed members by the house
6. Regulatory compliance:
 - Step 1) private school registration with MOE,
 - Step 2) registration of Enhance Framework (ERF) under SSG and
 - Step 3) a business incorporation.

Step 4) premises & zoning approval.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong wanted to know if the Academy is software (curriculum) or hardware (building). Dr Intekhab Islam responded that it would encompass both aspects. Dr Kuan then sought clarification from Dr Intekhab Islam, emphasising that in addition to the curriculum, there would also be a need for property to establish the Academy, which Dr Intekhab Islam confirmed.

Dr George Soh said setting up an academy is a "very big undertaking" which he said might have serious financial consequences if it did not pan out well. He inquired whether the Council had discussed this matter at the council level. If so, he requested to know the Council's recommendations.

He also asked for a detailed budget breakdown and whether the Council had explored potential collaborations with existing institutions, such as NUS Dentistry, National Dental Centre, the Academy of Medicine and individual societies for this undertaking. Dr Eugene Tang confirmed that there is council-level approval for this project.

Dr Dominic Leong further clarified the independence of the Academy. Dr Tan Tien Wang responded that there is no COC taken into consideration, indicating that the purpose of mentorship is kept in mind. Dr Eugene Tang added that based on his initial conversations with young lecturers, he highlighted the obstacles faced with monetary compensation. Dr Tan Tien Wang believed that issuing our certification would be beneficial regionally.

Dr Boey Sean Kuan shared with the house that the last intake of NITEC will be in 2026. SDA and NDCS agreed that changing to a 2-year course is not viable. Instead, a 10-month programme is proposed to train dental assistants.

She added that the proposed Academy will be a vehicle to elevate professional training and advancement.

Dr Samintharaj Kumar spoke about the challenges faced in drawing students to Singapore and those faced by other regional academies. He seconded Dr George Soh's suggestion to use the existing resources and infrastructure. He added that costs may prove prohibitive for such a project unless SDA can get sponsorship.

Dr Pua Hong Ping asked if there was any review of the current challenges faced by existing initiatives. He queried why there was a need for such an academy. He added that it might impact SDA's income streams negatively. Currently, the SDA earns income via: 1) The SDA e-blast for private companies that run courses. 2) Collaborations with private companies that bring in speakers, 3) SDA-run courses.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong shared his experience on the challenges of setting up such an academy. He then reminded the floor that SDA's primary purpose is not solely for educational purposes but more "like a social club".

Dr Dominic Leong emphasised the importance of initiating the feasibility study for the Academy instead of endlessly debating its pros and cons.

Dr Soh expressed his concern about course enrolment. He cautioned that the last course enrolment for the NITEC course was 22 enrollees, with 12 lecturers. He further stressed the importance of collaborating with existing partners and facilities that SDA can work with.

Dr Chew Teck Hong iterated on the review of fixed costs and leases for such an undertaking.

Dr George Soh shared that higher education institutions are also responsible for running courses for professional development. He referred to Prof Christopher Peck, Dean of NUS Dentistry, for his comments. Prof Peck shared that assessing the feasibility of this Academy is essential. He highlighted that the NUS Dentistry school can explore the possibility of a partnership with SDA. An area that deserves attention is mentorship, he added. Yearly, NUS Dentistry has about 80 students "looking for good mentors", Prof Peck said.

Dr Dominic Leung highlighted that the growth and development of professional dentistry training in other regional countries is advancing much more rapidly than in Singapore. He had personally attended similar events in neighbouring countries. Consequently, he said, attracting overseas participants may be difficult for the Academy. Many would be deterred by the associated high cost here.

Dr Boey Sean Kuan responded to Dr Soh, noting that there are 25 enrollments for this year, none of which are from NDCS. She expressed concerns about this enrollment and emphasised that reviews were conducted on the various options in response to the NITEC enrollments.

Dr Bertrand Chew expressed his gratitude to the members for their contributions. He emphasised that the establishment of an academy is necessary for efficiency of mentorship. In partnerships and collaborations, there are often challenges to address. Dr Chew discussed the difficulties involved in transferring patients and movement of dental practitioners between different institutions for mentorship, as well as the legal complications surrounding mentor-mentee relationships and the training institution.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong cautioned against the purchase of a property. Dr Bertrand Chew shared the breakdown of the SGD150,000 budget, which is being shared across capital expenditures and operating expenditures. He estimated that about SGD50,000 is needed to run a single course and with a budget of SGD150,000, SDA hopes to run three courses concurrently, with the courses being self-sustainable in terms of costing after the completion.

Dr Chew Teck Hong questioned how the Academy would bring progress. Dr Bertrand Chew responded that there is a resistance to mentorship programmes, highlighting a need to affirm the proposal of this Academy.

Dr Sharon Tan inquired about the potential expansion of the feasibility study to explore various options rather than an academy for "enhancing education for dentists" both locally and overseas. Dr Tan Tien Wang replied that the crux of the matter is setting up the Academy. And with the "infrastructure" in place, "everything is be possible".

Dr Dominic Leong said the Academy cannot be completely independent from SDA. Dr Bertrand Chew assured the floor that the structure is meant to layer the relation to SDA. Although the Academy would not be independent, this layering relation would reduce specific concerns such as "council members having excessive influence on the Academy", Dr Chew said. The Academy will also have a "longer tenure" of four years compared to the council term of 2 years.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong agreed with Dr Bertrand Chew on the importance of continuity. Dr Kuan wanted to know if the budget is used for feasibility or implementation. Dr Bertrand Chew responded that it is for implementation, with the feasibility study being free of charge. Dr Kuan proposed an amendment to the motion to remove "proposed budget of \$150,000" for this

motion, which Dr Samintharaj Kumar seconded. Dr Samintharaj Kumar said the foremost thing to do is complete a feasibility study and let the committee present its findings.

Dr Ku Hwee Choo proposed the deletion of "implementation" in the motion proposed. Dr Kuan Chee Keong took into account Dr Ku's proposal and rephrased his amendment. Motion B was amended to *"To consider and approve a motion to form a committee of not more than 5 members during AGM to do a feasibility report for the formation of a Singapore Dental Association Academy (SDA Academy) or similar and to submit the findings and recommendations to the Council for deliberation. The final report is to be submitted not later than 3 months upon the formation of such committee."*

Dr Eugene Tang declared the motion carried.

Motion C – Proposal for acquisition of dedicated training facility

Dr Samintharaj Kumar, presenting on behalf of the property committee, shared the reasons to acquire at least a 999-year leasehold property of about SGD3 million. He added that it is also an investment for potential appreciation. Dr Samintharaj Kumar also presented the proposed action plan, assured usage of training facilities, property criteria, financial prudence and governance. Dr Samintharaj Kumar summarised the motion to seek members' approval to appoint a subcommittee "to proceed with the purchase of a dedicated training property".

Dr Samintharaj Kumar also presented the 1 Circular Road (2500 sq ft) and its floor plan and explained why it may not be feasible to house the SDA Academy due to its odd shape.

Dr George Soh emphasised his proposal to repurpose 1 Circular Road as either an office space or a training facility. He requested justification for the need to acquire a new property and asked for the profit and loss statement related to the courses offered by SDA. With this information, he stated that he could make a well-informed decision.

Dr Soh asked the committee to consider the acquisition of a property with better facilities so that it can cater to training and office needs. He requested the property committee to study this option. Dr Soh also challenged the rental saving calculations, and shared that the budget of SGD3 million may only acquire a space of 1000 square ft.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong shared his experience, saying that the 1 Circular Road is not feasible for an office or training facility. He raised the possibility of reviewing other properties, such as commercial or industrial areas, which may be cheaper. He suggested that the property committee identify and present a few of these to the house.

Dr Samintharaj Kumer responded that there was the possibility of selling off 1 Circular Road and reinvested the proceeds in property and other assets; however, he noted that a separate committee would be set up to review this acquisition.

Prof Loh Hong Sai seconded that an acquisition of a property for a shared space between an office and a training facility. He said selling 1 Circular Road property and using the proceeds to buy a property to house both the SDA office and training centre would be ideal for SDA.

Dr George Soh added that the committee can try trading the 1 Circular Road property for another facility so that the cash top-up would not be so high. He

suggested that the SGD3 million is a conservative amount. He said, including the purchase of equipment, which he estimated to be about SGD1.5 to 2 million. That would significantly hit SDA's coffers, which is about SGD6 million.

Dr Eugene Tang summarised that the house is interested in purchasing a property and expressed his desire for the house to empower a subcommittee to explore all suggested options. Dr Goh Siew Hor added that the Council can conduct a feasibility study without requiring the house's approval to form a subcommittee. Dr Tang stated he would like to have the "backing of the house". Dr Kuan indicated that a formal motion is not required; instead, the house can give general guidance to the Council to look into this matter. Dr Tang concluded that the Council would explore this further.

Dr George Soh clarified that the direction should be if there is a need for a training venue, and if the training venue is affirmed, how such a venue should be acquired.

Dr Tan Tien Wang acknowledged that the feasibility study should be for the need for training venue and if so, how it should be done with the existing and potentially new properties.

Dr Chew Teck Hong added that the Council should consider which makes sense from a financial point of view: leasing or purchasing. He encouraged the Council not to be too fixated on its options and to explore other viable options.

Dr George Soh urged the Council to examine the financial breakdown and, most importantly, the project's sustainability. He turned down Dr Tang's suggestion to join the feasibility study subcommittee. Additionally, Dr Soh encouraged the Council to leverage the talents of SDA members.

Motion D - Donation of SGD100,000 to the Singapore Dental Health Foundation (SDHF)

Dr Samintharaj Kumar raised a point of order, and Dr George Soh seconded. Dr Samintharaj Kumar shared the IAC presentation – starting with the lack of a constitutional basis for SDA Financial Sponsorship; SDHF's Constitution does not state any provision for SDA to provide funding.

Dr Samintharaj Kumar said that AGM is an inappropriate platform for financial decision-making regarding the disbursement of funds. Dr Samintharaj Kumar further stated that SDHF also lost its IPC status in 2009, with limited possibility for reinstatement. Without the IPC status, any donations to SDHF do not provide tax benefits. Dr Samintharaj Kumar emphasised that any donations to organisations must be "carefully evaluated based on merit and necessity" and "not institutional legacy". Dr Samintharaj Kumar recommended that this motion be removed from the AGM.

Dr Goh Siew Hor replied that although SDHF has lost its IPC for a 250% tax deduction, there is still a pre-existing 100% tax deduction. Dr Goh Siew Hor stated that points of order relate to whether it is constitutionally permissible for SDHF to request donations at SDA's AGMs. He illustrated examples of universities' endowments that had also "come before the house" to seek donations. And he believed that they received SDA's support.

Dr Goh said the IAC was established to "check the Council's decisions", but he believed the house could decide whether to support SDHF. Hence, he sought the house's permission to present the motion. Dr Eugene Tang replied that donations to universities' endowments had gone through "Council level deliberation" before the motion was presented to the house to vote. Dr Tang highlighted that the SDHF had not gone through council review. It was merely

a letter sent via email to the SDA secretariat without a proposer and a seconder. For this reason, Dr Tang said Dr Goh could not present his motion to the house. Dr Goh referred Dr Tang to the Constitution, which allows members to present at the AGM. Dr Goh requested that the motion be read and presented to the house.

Dr Eugene Tang asked the house if the motion could be presented, discussed, and voted on. Dr Eugene Tang called for a show of hands to proceed with the presentation of the motion - 12 members were for, and eight were against. Dr George Soh challenged this as this motion is ultra vires. However, Dr Bertrand Chew clarified that there is no need for a seconder to present motions to the house in the Constitution. The Council had reviewed this motion as prepared in the initial agenda. Dr Goh Siew Hor was allowed to proceed with his presentation of the motion by the chair Dr Eugene Tang.

Dr Goh Siew Hor shared the background and the founding of the SDHF with the house. He added that it was founded in 1984 as an "offshoot of SDA" to promote public oral health awareness. While the SDA focuses on members, the SDHF focuses on public dental health matters. Dr Goh also said that the foundation sought to "plug whatever gaps that were not met" by public health programmes. He added that SDHF focuses on areas where it could "make an impact."

Dr Goh proceeded with the motion of proposing the donation to SDHF – sharing the history and initiatives of SDHF. Dr Goh shared the MOU, highlighting the relationship between SDA and SDHF and SDA's support of SDHF for public health. He also added that SDA is the "main donor".

Dr Goh proceeded with SDHF's activities over the years across different society groups. Dr Goh shared the activities done internally by SDHF and said

that SDHF's future needs to be presented to the house. He acknowledged the point of concern about the sustainability of SDHF.

He stated that the SDHF is acceptable for the SDA to assume the roles of SDHF. However, he cautioned that if the house chooses to dissolve the SDHF, Dr Goh mentioned that it would never be able to use the name "Singapore" in future arrangements due to naming regulations.

Dr Goh noted that this is the first time the foundation approached SDA for funding. In the past, he added that past presidents were forthcoming in terms of funding and support. He said the "relationship between SDA and SDHF seems to have changed", perhaps due to COVID-19.

In clarification of the IAC statement, Dr Goh Siew Hor requested the Council's position on the statement "... SDHF provides limited strategic or financial value to SDA members". Dr Samsudin responded that the IAC had the right to make their statements. Dr Eugene Tang requested clarification on Dr Goh's question to the Council. Dr Goh added that it is a factual statement regarding the future of SDHF when it runs out of funding.

Dr Soh noted that SDHF is a distinct entity from SDA and is no longer a subcommittee. He mentioned that his personal request for SDHF's financial statements had been denied. In response, Dr Goh Siew Hor explained that the request for the SDHF financial statements had not been directed to SDHF itself. Instead, Dr Soh's request was made to SDA, of which Dr Goh was unaware. He added that if the request had been made directly to SDHF, the financial statement would have been provided.

Dr Samintharaj Kumar shared that the IAC requested the Minutes of the SDHF, and the last SDA representative on SDHF was in 2019. Dr Samintharaj

Kumar appealed for a lump sum of SGD100,000 to have a justification alongside the current remaining fund and its planned activities.

Dr Goh Siew Hor responded that SDHF council will deliberate on the house decision and review the relationship between SDA and SDHF internally.

Dr Eugene Tang circled back to the charity status that IRAS indicated that a 100% tax deduction is impossible based on desktop research on the IRAS website.

Dr Victor Lee appealed to the house that the SDA support is vital to the continuity of its activities and shared his understanding that the charity status of SDHF being allowed for tax deduction. Dr Eugene Tang acknowledged the work of SDHF and that there is a need to go through formal channels for requests for funding.

Prof Loh Hong Sai seconded the need for the SDA representation in the Council and to change the title of "President" to "Chairman".

Dr Eugene Tang responded and replied that the MOU signed with Dr Lewis Lee did not explicitly indicate the requirement of donation from SDA, but only administrative support.

Dr Samsudin clarified with Dr Goh Siew Hor on the donations given by SDA and other donors of SDHF to SDHF and highlighted that the monies spent on their activities showed prudent spending across the years with a remaining SGD75,000 in their existing funds; the lump sum donation may offer sustainability across many years. Dr Sansudin highlighted that any turnkey proposal for donation can be proposed to SDA for potential consideration.

Dr Victor Lee responded that SDHF is a separate entity that serves the public, independent of SDA. This, in turn, means that SDHF can support initiatives without deliberation with SDA and support various activities. Dr Victor Lee acknowledged the prudence of their funds in the way they operate. Dr Eugene Tang acknowledged the hard work of SDHF with initiatives such as LOLA.

9. Closing of the AGM

Dr Eugene Tang thanked members for their attendance.

Dr Kuan Chee Keong brought up the point of Honorary Membership and Roll of Honour. He said that they should be presented to the house for confirmation first. Dr Eugene Tang responded that they would refer to the Constitution and revert on the matter.

With no further business, Dr Tang called the 58th Singapore Dental Association Annual General Meeting to a close at 6.00 pm.

Recorded by Dr Chew Shen Hui Bertrand, Assistant General Secretary

Approved by Dr Tang Kok Weng Eugene, President