



# ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

No. 6, SLMA Building, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 07.

Tel : 011 4506772 E-mail : [ams.health@yahoo.com](mailto:ams.health@yahoo.com)

## PRESIDENT

**Dr L A Ranasinghe**  
MBBS, MS, FRCS  
Consultant Surgeon  
0777763661

## GENERAL SECRETARY

**Dr Asoka Gunaratne**  
MBBS, MD, FCARCSI  
Consultant Anaesthetist  
0773419313

## VICE PRESIDENTS

**Dr K Umopathy**  
MBBS, MS, FRCS  
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

**Dr A H A Prasantha**  
MBBS, MS, MRCS  
Consultant Surgeon

## TREASURER

**Dr A K Pathirana**  
MBBS, MD, MRCP, FCCP  
Consultant Cardiologist

## EDITOR

**Dr A D K S N Yasawardane**  
MBBS, MS, FRCS  
Consultant ENT Surgeon

## ASSISTANT SECRETARIES

**Dr T G Y R Gunapala**  
MBBS, MD, DCH, MRCP  
Consultant Paediatrician

**Dr R Gnanasekaram**  
MBBS, MS, MSc, MRCS, FRCS, FCS  
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

## MEDIA COORDINATOR

**Dr R P Dayasena**  
MBBS, MS, FRCS  
Consultant ENT Surgeon  
0777475338

## IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

**Dr S R Wijayasinghe**  
MBBS, MS, FRCS  
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

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His Excellency Gotabhaya Rajapaksa  
HE the President of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka  
Presidential Secretariat  
Colombo 1

Your Excellency,

### Proposals to combat COVID 19 pandemic

As a collective group of medical specialists representing the Ministry of Health, we are extremely concerned about what we have been observing over the last few days with regard to the Covid-19 epidemic.

Whilst appreciating the positive steps taken, we have also repeatedly observed very many delays and lapses in some of the steps taken by the various committees set up to advise the government about what is best. We note with sadness the inadequate interactions the said committees have had with concerned clinicians involved with patient care at the hospital level. We have many instances where hospital administrators were not receptive to suggestions and requests of clinicians at institutional level and has become an obstacle to properly design a clinical plan. Since its directly us and our teams who have to manage cases very much more than those 'decision makers', we collectively decided to place before you a plan we believe that should be implemented without delay for the sake for saving lives and containing the virus without exploding into catastrophic situation experienced in some countries.

We wish to point out that the way each country's decision makers or advisors to the governments handled the epidemic was responsible for varying case fatality rates on those countries, for eg. 0.22% in Germany vs 8% in Italy vs 2.5% in United Kingdom.

Our proposals which suggest changes to clinical practice (obviously for temporary period) have been largely guided by three main overarching principles : 1) clinical urgency 2) Patient and health care worker protection 3) conservation of health care resources.

1. Stop and curtail all routine and non-emergency hospital visits by restricting routine clinics. Methods to minimize inconvenience could be brought in such as giving drugs from clinics for 3 months, setting up telephone consultation methods to provide essential advice to patients.
2. Cancel all routine non urgent surgeries until further notice.