

22 March 2020

**Term  
2019 - 2021**

**Statement by the Malaysian Society of Ophthalmology regarding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and implications on Ophthalmology services**

**President**

*Dr Kenneth Fong Choong Sian*

The Malaysian Society of Ophthalmology (MSO) represents Ophthalmologists (Eye Doctors) in Malaysia and views with great concern the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and fully supports the efforts of the Ministry of Health, Malaysia, in trying to contain this outbreak.

**Vice President**

*Dr Muiz Mahyudin*

Conjunctivitis can be a presenting symptom of COVID-19 infection and Ophthalmologists are the front liners in treating such cases. The MSO also takes note that the late Dr Li Wenliang, an Ophthalmologist in Wuhan, was one of the first doctors to raise the alarm on this outbreak in December 2019 and he passed away from this infection.

**Hon. Secretary**

*Dr Manoharan Shunmugam*

The MSO would like to recommend the following steps for our members in this current crisis:

**Asst. Hon. Secretary**

*Assoc Prof Dr Amir Bin Samsudin*

1. All non-urgent clinic and surgery appointments to be postponed and that only urgent care is provided, and this should be determined by the Ophthalmologist and their institutions. This would reduce visits by patients to the hospital or eye clinic and reduce the risk of virus transmission in the community.

**Treasurer**

*Dr Lee Ming Yueh*

2. Extra precautions be taken when examining patients with conjunctivitis. This includes seating the patient away from other staff and patients, the doctor to wear a face mask, gloves and eye protection, thorough cleaning of all surfaces in contact by the patient and to avoid the use of tonometry for such patients. In addition, slit-lamp breath shields are helpful for protecting both health care workers and patients from respiratory illness.

**Committee Members**

*Dr Fang Seng Kheong*

*Prof Dr Liza Sharmini Ahmad Tajudin*

*Dr Shelina binti Oli Mohamed*

*Prof Dr Mae-Lynn Catherine Bastion*

3. Adequate screening of all staff and patients entering the department be undertaken which includes temperature screening, asking for symptoms of cough, cold, and/or fever, travel history and contact with suspected COVID-19 patients. Staff members carrying out the screening should be provided with face masks and gloves.

**Secretariat**

*Watt Siew Wah (Mr)*

*Clare Law Li Lien*

Further details can be obtained here: <https://www.aao.org/coronavirus>

This statement is only meant as an advisory to our members.

Dr Kenneth Fong  
President