HSA continued to make good progress over the past year in a dynamic operating environment. Through the strong commitment of the HSA team, we became a Singapore Quality Class organisation this year and were also re-certified for the People Developer and Singapore Innovation Class standards. This affirmed that our key organisational systems, processes and initiatives are robust and responsive for our journey ahead. We continued to strongly emphasize our Core Values and living these out to grow the responsible, innovative culture rightfully associated with a national scientific and regulatory authority.

We completed a holistic review of our human capital framework that simplified and streamlined our schemes of service. From this, we rolled out a new performance appraisal framework to enable clearer target setting, enhanced transparency in performance assessment, and more fruitful interactions between supervisors and staff. The establishment of a HSA Professional Board, the introduction of a clear professional staff track, and the ongoing review of our talent development framework will serve to empower and grow all members of the HSA family as they contribute and achieve their potential. We also refreshed the connections between our business decisions and various social and environmental concerns through a new corporate social responsibility framework.

Our Corporate Headquarters was restructured to ensure better coordination in order to provide clear directions and support to better harness the synergies of our professional groups. Our strategic planning process and service quality initiatives continue to be enhanced, and we are looking into strengthening our risk management and process management systems.

At our Health Products Regulation Group, we continued with the rollout of the Health Products Act, particularly the requirements in the medical devices and cosmetics regulatory frameworks. This was balanced by initiatives to minimise unnecessary regulatory costs and administrative process. Listening to our stakeholders, responding to their concerns promptly, and refining our regulatory policies and frameworks accordingly were accorded high priority to strengthen our pro-enterprise orientation. We made several improvements to our work processes by introducing more efficient ways of working, while promoting integrity, responsibility and transparency in our public health protection mission.
Our Blood Services Group spared no effort in making sure that a safe and stable supply of whole blood and blood products is available to every patient in need. We achieved accreditation to the most stringent current international safety and quality standards for tissue typing and transplant support activities. We pressed on in developing procedures and practices to promote blood conservation and ensure we remain a premier blood bank and critical national resource. As an active member of the international community, we also made many useful contributions in blood banking and transfusion medicine through participation in global forums and providing consultancy advice to other standard-setting bodies. We also continued to advance on the pioneering research and service front. With the success of our pilot Cell Processing Laboratory, we are now expanding our facilities to undertake more collaborative projects with clinical colleagues, applying cells such as natural killer cells and haematopoietic stem cells for therapeutic use.

Stability, reliability, consistency and quality were what the laboratories at our Applied Sciences Group continued to offer to all our clients. This was made possible with a proven track record founded on sound scientific expertise and strong synergy amongst the various scientific disciplines across our laboratories. With our strong orientation towards creating more value-add for our customers, we developed a host of innovative products and testing methods in-house that will offer our customers faster turnaround times and renewed assurance in the quality of our services. We also look forward to the opening of our new Chemical Metrology Laboratory, currently being purpose-built in a cleanroom environment, in August 2009. This will add another new capability and dimension to our growing pool of expertise in the applied sciences.

A vibrant and productive research environment in our areas of scientific expertise will be a vital catalyst for the expansion of our current work scope and open up new areas of innovation and excellence. We are excited by new developments already shaping up in promising fields such as pharmacogenomics and cellular therapy and seeing ideas and hypotheses being transformed into powerful, practical solutions to improve the quality of healthcare. This will enable an even stronger and more concrete expression of our mission imperatives.

Our ongoing ability to form new alliances will significantly add breadth and scale to our capabilities. These partnerships, particularly through worksharing collaborations with our international counterparts, give us the opportunity to share our unique perspectives and develop thought leadership as a valued global partner in health sciences. Having hosted the 3rd Summit of Heads of Medicines Regulatory Agencies in December last year, we now look forward to co-hosting the 14th International Conference of Drug Regulatory Authorities with the World Health Organisation, in September 2010.

Much of what you will read in the following pages reflect the successful partnerships we have with our parent Ministry, our Board and our partners in Government, industry and overseas counterpart agencies. We thank them for their collaboration and counsel which not only have energised us but enabled us to function more effectively.

The future is uncertain but also exciting and full of opportunity. We choose to set our sights on the limitless possibilities, building our stakeholders’ trust and confidence in what HSA has already accomplished and the potential and promise it holds. This will galvanise our thinking and actions throughout our organisation, and be the impetus for us to press on towards achieving our goals and mission in a transformational manner.

Dr John Lim
Chief Executive Officer