



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

MH 6:02/10-3

Ministry of Health
MOH Circular No. 19/2015

30 April 2015

All CHAS Accredited Dental Clinics,

ADVISORY ON CLAIMING SUBSIDIES UNDER THE COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSIST SCHEME (CHAS)

CHAS dental clinics provide important subsidised dental treatment for lower to middle income Singaporeans and Pioneers.

2. MOH is seriously concerned by an increase in public feedback regarding both clinical and charging practices of some CHAS dental clinics. There is unfortunately a small minority of clinics who misuse and abuse Government subsidies for their own financial gain, and tarnish the high standing of the dental profession. MOH takes a serious view of these cases.
3. MOH has been auditing the CHAS claims submitted by dental clinics since April 2014, and highlighted some common pitfalls in making these claims in the July 2014 issue of the *Dental Surgeon*. It has been a year since the audits began, and I would like to highlight more instances of non-compliance which we have encountered (refer to **Annex A**).
4. I would like to remind the dental community to comply with these guidelines when submitting CHAS claims. MOH will not hesitate to take action against those who are non-compliant, including requiring the dental clinic to repay subsidies. Where appropriate, the dental clinic's participation in CHAS may be terminated. In addition, any potentially fraudulent or other criminal behaviour that has been discovered will be referred to the police for investigation.
5. CHAS has enabled Singaporeans to access subsidised dental care more easily. There is a need for the dental profession to be accountable for how CHAS dental subsidies funded by the Government are claimed and used. The profession should also ensure that it provides appropriate and cost-effective treatments and charges patients fairly, at all times. We also urge the profession to proactively engage your patients to explain the treatment provided and charges, and maintain the highest standards of moral integrity and honesty as reflected in the Singapore Dental Council's Ethical Code and Guidelines.



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Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Tseng', with a long, sweeping underline.

A/PROF PATRICK TSENG
CHIEF DENTAL OFFICER, MINISTRY OF HEALTH, SINGAPORE
REGISTRAR, SINGAPORE DENTAL COUNCIL

Examples of Non-Compliant CHAS Claims

- There were cases of incomplete or no documentation of the treatment claimed for, in the patient's case notes. Maintaining accurate, complete and up-to-date patient records is a basic tenet of sound and ethical dental practice, and is also a regulatory requirement under the Public Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act (PHMCA). Complete documentation is also required to substantiate a claim. For example, for caries, the tooth and surface(s) involved should be recorded in the treatment notes. Lab forms must be retained to substantiate claims for dental prosthesis.
- Claims were made for complex procedures when the procedures were clearly simple procedures. For example, Class (I) and Class (V) fillings for abrasion cavities were claimed as complex fillings.
- Claims were made for root planing under curettage. This should not be claimed, as curettage claims are only allowed for the management of an infected or "dry socket" that has arisen post extraction or for an acute periodontal abscess.
- Claims were made for fillings for the same tooth more than once over a period of 3 months. This should not be claimed, as fillings placed are expected to be "permanent". Early dislodgement may be related to inadequate clinical quality, such as insufficient moisture control, residual caries or other clinician related factors (incorrect diagnosis, choice of material, etc.). Hence, it is expected that the dentist replaces the filling without a repeat claim.
- There were claims made for which the visit date indicated did not correspond to the actual date each procedure was performed as reflected in the case notes. Please ensure that the visit dates are correctly stated. Note that if the patient received different treatments on different days, the respective dates should be indicated when claiming for each procedure.
- There were claims that were made in advance. Please note that for a procedure conducted over multiple visits e.g. for dentures, you should only claim the full subsidy on the patient's last visit.
- There were patients who have not signed the new Patient Consent Form dated 1 Jan 2014. All your CHAS patients who have not signed the new form are required to do so. This includes those who had signed the old version. The new form is available on www.chas.sg.