



SINGAPORE DENTAL COUNCIL

c/o Secretariat of healthcare Professional Boards (SPB)
81 Kim Keat Road #10-00 Singapore 328836
Email: SDC@spb.gov.sg
Website: <https://www.sdc.gov.sg>

27 May 2022

PRESS RELEASE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY FOR DR OLIVER HENNEDIGE

1. The Singapore Dental Council (“**SDC**”) held a disciplinary inquiry over the span of nine days between October 2020 and February 2021 against Dr Oliver Henedige (“**the Respondent**”), a dentist who had been practising at Oliver Dental Surgery Pte Ltd located at 242 Tanjong Katong Rd, Singapore 437030 (“**Clinic**”), and Oliver Dental Surgery Pte Ltd, located at 1 Orchard Boulevard, Camden Centre, #12-08/09, Singapore 248649 (“**Camden Clinic**”).
2. The inquiry arose out of a complaint made on 12 March 2016 by a patient (“**Patient**”) in relation to a dental procedure performed by the Respondent. The SDC preferred two charges against the Respondent. The First Charge was on recommending and placing 15 mini-implants to support a 14-unit bridge (“**the Treatment**”) in her lower jaw that the Respondent knew or ought to have known was not appropriate in light of the Patient’s limited bone width. The Amended Second Charge was on failure to exercise due care in the design and execution of the Patient’s Treatment to ensure that it was carried out appropriately.
3. Initially, the Respondent elected to contest the charges. However, halfway through the inquiry, the Respondent pleaded guilty to both charges.
4. The Disciplinary Committee (“**DC**”) accepted the Respondent’s guilty plea. In relation to the first charge, the DC noted that the key issue was in the practice of using mini dental implants on a patient when there were clear red flags that potentially precluded it. The use of a fixed roundhouse prosthesis cemented in the Patient would cause problems such as peri-implantitis and bone loss and a Cone Beam Computed Tomography or 3D X-ray should have been obtained and the bone flap should have been raised for visibility. Taking into consideration the Patient’s condition and the failure of the Respondent to take proper precautions, the recommendation of mini-dental implants was deemed inappropriate and improper in these circumstances.
5. In relation to the second charge, the DC observed that the design of the Permanent Bridge was doomed to fail from the start for various reasons. It was fabricated with a rough and concave intaglio surface which acted as a food trap. The bridge was poorly fitted with excess cement. This would foreseeably cause inflammation of the gingiva and bone loss around the implants. The limited

embrasure space between the implants made it difficult for the Patient to maintain an adequate level of hygiene, exacerbating any such inflammation and irritation.

6. In determining the appropriate sentence, the DC was guided by the Sentencing Guidelines for Singapore Medical Disciplinary Tribunals. The charges were within the category of serious/ severe harm and moderate culpability with the harm caused lying at the lower end of the serious/severe harm spectrum. The appropriate starting point would then be a suspension period of 30 months. The DC stated that a discount of 12 months should be applied in light of the delay in prosecution. As the Respondent was prepared to do and complete a basic course in dental implantology, conducted by the Centre for Advanced Dental Education, Faculty of Dentistry at the NUS, a further discount of 3 months was accorded, which would bring the suspension period down to 15 months.
7. Additionally, the DC agreed with counsel for SDC that a fine should be imposed as this was a situation where there was evidence that the Respondent had profited or intended to profit from his misconduct.
8. The DC made the following orders on 22 February 2021:
 - (i) That the registration of the Respondent in the Register of Dentists shall be suspended for a period of 15 months;
 - (ii) That the Respondent shall pay a fine of SGD 15,000;
 - (iii) That the Respondent be censured;
 - (iv) That the Respondent shall give a written undertaking to the Singapore Dental Council that he will not engage in the conduct complained of or similar conduct;
 - (v) That the Respondent shall also give a written undertaking to the SDC to complete a basic course in dental implantology conducted by the Centre for Advanced Dental Education prior to the end of the suspension period; and
 - (vi) That the Respondent will pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to these proceedings, including the costs of the solicitors to the Singapore Dental Council and of the Legal Assessor.
9. The DC also ordered that the decision shall be published.

10. The Respondent subsequently filed an appeal with the High Court against the decision of the DC which was dismissed on 28 April 2022 and the decision of the DC was affirmed by the High Court.
11. The Respondent's suspension from the Register of Dentists for a period of 15 months took effect on Thursday, 26 May 2022.

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For media enquiries, please contact

Ms Sherry Chia
Deputy Manager, Corporate Communications
Secretariat of healthcare Professional Boards
On behalf of Singapore Dental Council
Email: Sherry_Chia@spb.gov.sg

Ms Angela Yeo
Deputy Head, Corporate Communications
Secretariat of healthcare Professional Boards
On behalf of Singapore Dental Council
Email: Angela_Yeo@spb.gov.sg