



SINGAPORE DENTAL COUNCIL

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PRESS RELEASE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE (“DC”) INQUIRY FOR DRS SNG WEE HOCK, JUN SOO LEE AND PARK SEUNGHYUN

1. The Singapore Dental Council (“**SDC**”) held a Disciplinary Inquiry on 28 June 2017 against (1) Dr Sng Wee Hock (“**Dr Sng**”); (2) Dr Jun Soo Lee (“**Dr Lee**”); and (3) Dr Park Seunghyun (“**Dr Park**”). Dr Lee and Dr Park were both conditionally registered dentists. Dr Sng was a fully registered dentist who had been approved by the SDC to be the supervisor of both Dr Lee and Dr Park.
2. The SDC preferred 2 charges against Dr Sng for professional misconduct for failing to provide the required supervision of Dr Lee and Dr Park over the periods 27 October 2014 to 16 May 2015 and 3 April 2015 to 16 May 2015 respectively. The SDC also preferred 1 charge each against Dr Lee and Dr Park for professional misconduct for failure to work under Dr Sng’s supervision whilst being supervisees under conditional registration.
3. All 3 dentists worked at WH Dental Surgeons. WH Dental Surgeons has 3 clinics situated at 3 separate locations, namely: (1) 1 Hougang Street 91 #01-16/17, Singapore 538692; (2) 33 Sengkang West Avenue #03-34, The Seletar Mall, Singapore 796653; and (3) Block 198, Punggol Field #02-01, Singapore 820198.
4. The SDC had issued numerous circulars to supervisors and supervisees stating that conditionally registered dentists had to work under supervision in the same clinic as the supervisor. These circulars were published on the SDC’s website. The SDC had also sent email reminders of such supervision requirements to the 3 dentists.
5. The charges regarding Dr Sng’s supervision of Dr Lee related to occasions where Dr Lee worked independently and without supervision from Dr Sng in different WH Dental Surgeons clinics at separate locations. Similarly, the charges relating to Dr Sng’s supervision of Dr Park related to occasions where Dr Lee worked independently and without supervision from Dr Sng in different WH Dental Surgeons clinics at separate locations. The unsupervised dentists provided treatments to members of the public over the periods that they were unsupervised.
6. All 3 dentists pleaded guilty to the respective charges against them. The DC duly considered the 3 dentists’ pleas of mitigation of sentence.
7. In the course of handing down its decision, the DC noted that:

- a. Dr Sng had failed to supervise Dr Lee (and Dr Lee had failed to be supervised) over a course of about 7 months and about 100 clinic sessions.
 - b. Dr Sng had failed to supervise Dr Park (and Dr Park had failed to be supervised) for about 3 weeks and about 9 clinic sessions.
 - c. Breaches of supervision requirements in the dental industry “*were/are prevalent enough for the SDC to issue circulars*” 3 times in the 6 months between July 2014 and January 2015.
 - d. Dr Sng had 2 previous convictions recorded against him for professional misconduct.
 - i) In 2013 Dr Sng had been fined \$15,000 and censured (the DC noted that in this case the “*Grounds of Decision dated 29 November 2013 ... held that he had been motivated by profit and had not adequately informed the patient*” about claimable costs under the patient’s Medisave Account relating to a treatment).
 - ii) In 2016 Dr Sng was fined \$40,000 and suspended for 15 months (in this case the charges related to the delegation of dental procedures by Dr Sng to unqualified persons).
 - e. Dr Sng is currently serving his suspension for the second conviction.
8. The DC was satisfied that Dr Sng’s motivation for the lapses of supervision was “*driven by profits*”. Given the profit motive of the breaches, and “*in view of [Dr Sng’s] previous convictions*” the DC held that “*the maximum fine of \$50,000.00 should be levied and an appropriate period of suspension be imposed on him*”. Dr Sng was suspended by the DC for an effective 15 months. This suspension was ordered to run only after Dr Sng’s current suspension period ends.
9. The DC considered that “*a strong message ought to be sent out to registered dentists that such conduct would not be tolerated and that the high standards set should not to be compromised under any circumstances*”.
10. In its Grounds of Decision, the DC stated that Dr Sng’s supervisees were to be given a “*lighter sentence*” than Dr Sng. By contrast to Dr Sng’s sentence Drs Lee and Park received the minimum suspension period (3 months) for their role in the breaches. Also, Dr Sng was also ordered to pay 90% of the legal costs—whereas Dr Lee and Dr Park were ordered to pay 8% and 2% of such costs respectively. The DC did not consider Dr Lee and Park’s breaches to be serious enough to require their conditional registrations to be cancelled.
11. The DC also took into consideration the differing periods that Dr Lee and Dr Park failed to be supervised for. A lighter fine for Dr Park was ordered (\$2,000); while Dr Lee was fined \$8,000.

12. With respect to Dr Sng, the DC ordered:
 - a. Dr Sng be suspended for 15 months (for failing to supervise Dr Lee) and 4 months (for failing to supervise Dr Park)—such suspensions to run concurrently (and to begin after Dr Sng’s current suspension under DC 2014/01 ends).
 - b. Dr Sng pay the maximum fine of \$50,000.
 - c. Dr Sng to be censured.
 - d. Dr Sng to provide a written undertaking to the SDC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of.
 - e. Dr Sng to pay 90% of the costs and expenses of and incidental to the DC’s proceedings, including the costs of counsel to the SDC and the Legal Assessor.

13. In relation to Dr Lee, the DC ordered:
 - a. Dr Lee be suspended for 3 months (to begin running 4 weeks from the date of the handing down of sentence).
 - b. Dr Lee pay a fine of \$8,000.
 - c. Dr Lee be censured.
 - d. Dr Lee to provide a written undertaking to the SDC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of.
 - e. Dr Lee to pay 8% of the costs and expenses of and incidental to the DC’s proceedings, including the costs of counsel to the SDC and the Legal Assessor.

14. In relation to Dr Park, the DC ordered:
 - a. Dr Park be suspended for 3 months (to begin running 4 weeks from the date of the handing down of sentence).
 - b. Dr Park pay a fine of \$2,000.
 - c. Dr Park be censured.
 - d. Dr Park to provide a written undertaking to the SDC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of.
 - e. Dr Park to pay 2% of the costs and expenses of and incidental to the DC’s proceedings, including the costs of counsel to the SDC and the Legal Assessor.

15. The 3 dentists have 30 days to appeal to the High Court against the sentence.

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18 September 2017