

**Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board
PRESS RELEASE**

Suspension of Registration of TCM Physician

Tan Thiam Swee @ Tan Ee Thiam (陈怡天)

Tan Thiam Swee @ Tan Ee Thiam (陈怡天) (“Tan”), of Chen Yi Tian Chinese Physician & Medical Hall at 101 Upper Cross Street, #05-41 People’s Park Centre, Singapore 058357, a registered TCM physician and registered acupuncturist, was found guilty of the complaint related to the treatment rendered by Tan to a female patient for her suspected slipped disc problem.

2. Tan administered tuina and suggested acupuncture treatment on the patient. Tan then proceeded to administer treatment on the patient by drawing out some fluid from the swollen area around the muscles to reduce inflammation and compression of the nerves. After the treatment, the patient experienced a severe headache for which Tan gave 2 pain-relief tablets. Thereafter, the patient vomited and continued to vomit on her way home from the clinic. The next day, the patient continued to experience severe and persistent headaches together with vomiting. She went to the Accident and Emergency Department of the Singapore General Hospital wherein a CT scan revealed pocket of air in the patient’s subarachnoid spaces over the right frontal region, right sylvian fissure and the basal cisterns. She was diagnosed as suffering from post-lumbar puncture.

3. An Investigation Committee (“IC”) Inquiry was subsequently conducted, and the following findings were made against Tan:-

- (a) Tan failed to obtain informed consent from the patient prior to administering “blood-letting and cupping” treatment, in that he did not explain the potential dangers, risks or consequences of the treatment rendered, in breach of Clause 4.2.2 of the Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines for TCM Practitioners (the “Ethical Code”).
- (b) The treatment rendered by Tan on the patient, ie, inserting the 22GX needle deeply into the spinal area and drawing cerebrospinal fluid, was neither appropriate nor generally accepted method of TCM treatment, in breach of Clause 4.1.1(e) of the Ethical Code.
- (c) Tan failed to provide competent, compassionate and appropriate care to the patient, in breach of Clauses 4.1.1(e) and 4.2.2 of the Ethical Code.
- (d) In light of the above, the IC found that the treatment rendered by Tan constituted professional misconduct or negligence contrary to Section 19(1)(i) of the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Act (the “Act”).

4. Having considered the findings of the IC and submissions by all parties, the Board decided that Tan had breached Sections 19(f) and (i) of the Act and Clauses 4.1.1(e) and 4.2.2 of the Ethical Code, with the following sanctions:

- (a) To suspend Tan’s registration as a TCM physician and as an acupuncturist for a period of 6 months, with suspension to commence on 15 Aug 2011;
- (b) To impose a penalty of \$2,000;

- (c) To censure Tan, including a very stern warning that he cannot and should not use of inappropriate and generally unaccepted method of TCM treatment which involves the deep insertion of needle(s) into the human body, especially near the spinal cord;

In addition, the Board also ordered Tan:

- (d) To undergo further training in TCM and/or acupuncture and/or observe a registered TCM physician or acupuncturist in practice, during the period of suspension and to submit documentary evidence in this regard at least 14 days before the end of his suspension;
- (e) To give a written undertaking that he will not perform or offer to perform any inappropriate and generally unaccepted form of TCM treatment on his patients in the future; and
- (f) To pay costs and expenses of or incidental to the inquiry before the Investigation Committee, under Section 20 of the Act.

TCM PRACTITIONERS BOARD 中医管理委员会
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