



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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

SMC CIRCULAR NO. 2/2022
[SMC 13.1.5]

10 June 2022

Dear Doctor,

REMINDER ON THE DISPLAY OF QUALIFICATIONS, TITLES AND DESIGNATIONS AND THE STANDARDS REQUIRED OF ADVERTISING INFORMATION

The Singapore Medical Council (SMC) wishes to remind all registered medical practitioners to comply with Sections 64¹ and 65² of the Medical Registration Act (MRA) when displaying qualifications, titles and designations.

Qualifications

- 2 Medical practitioners will only be allowed to display qualifications that are:
- (i) entered under their registration details in the Register of Medical Practitioners, the Register of Specialists, or the Register of Family Physicians and
 - (ii) additional qualifications (AQs) approved by SMC to be entered in a register.

¹ Medical practitioner to use only qualifications entered in register and approved title, etc.

64. — (1) A registered medical practitioner must not —

- (a) use or exhibit or publish in any card, letter, stationery, nameplate, signboard, placard, circular, handbill or any notice displayed at the premises used by him for the practice of medicine any qualification other than the qualifications which are entered in any register kept under this Act or which has been approved by the Medical Council; or
- (b) use any title, addition or designation other than the title, addition or designation which has been approved by the Medical Council.

(2) Any registered medical practitioner who contravenes subsection (1) may be subject to disciplinary proceedings under this Act.

² False assumption of title of specialist or family physician

65. — (1) A registered medical practitioner who is not registered under section 22 as a specialist in a branch of medicine must not —

- (a) practise medicine or that branch of medicine under the style or title of a specialist in that branch of medicine, or under any name, title, addition or description implying that he is such a specialist or has any degree, qualification or experience in that branch of medicine; or
- (b) advertise or hold himself out as a specialist in that branch of medicine.

(1A) A registered medical practitioner who is not registered under section 22A as a family physician must not —

- (a) practise under any name, title, addition or description implying that he is registered under that section as a family physician or has any degree, qualification or experience that could make him eligible for such registration; or
- (b) advertise or hold himself out as being registered as a family physician.

(2) A registered medical practitioner who contravenes subsection (1) or (1A) may be subject to disciplinary proceedings under this Act.

3 The SMC Circular No. 1/2020 on 24 January 2020 (**Annex I**) informed about the updated list of displayable Additional Qualifications which took effect from 24 January 2020 and this can be found on SMC's website at:

<https://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/smc/information-for-registered-doctors/display-of-qualifications>

Titles and designations

4 All registered medical practitioners are also reminded to adhere to the SMC's guidelines on the display of titles and designations (**Annex II**). The guidelines can also be found on SMC's website at:

<https://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/docs/librariesprovider2/publications-newsroom/circulars/smc-circular-on-latest-guidelines-on-display-of-titles-and-designations.pdf>

Standards required of advertising information

5 Attention is also drawn to section G2 (**Annex III**) of the [SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines \(2016 Edition\)](#) on the standards required of advertising information for compliance.

6 Medical practitioners are to ensure that their qualifications, titles and designations and advertising information if any, are approved or correctly displayed so that they do not mislead patients and members of the public.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KENNETH MAK
REGISTRAR
SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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SMC CIRCULAR NO. 1/2020

[SMC 13.1.5]

24 January 2020

Dear Doctor,

DISPLAY OF ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (AQs)

1 Section 64(1)(a) of the Medical Registration Act states that no registered medical practitioner shall use or exhibit or publish in any card, letter, stationery, nameplate, signboard, placard, circular, handbill or any notice displayed at the premises used by him for the practice of medicine any qualification other than the qualifications which are entered in any register kept under this Act or which has been approved by the Singapore Medical Council (SMC).

2 The updated list of displayable Additional Qualifications (the "list") which takes effect from 24 January 2020 can be found on SMC's website.

3 For additional qualifications ("AQs") that are not in the updated list published on SMC's website, please submit an application¹ to SMC for verification and approval. Once SMC has verified and approved the AQ, the AQ will be displayed against your name in the online register under the 'Search for Registered Doctors' tab on SMC's website. See Annex for an example of how an approved AQ is displayed on the online register.

4 For more information on the display of AQs, please visit SMC's [website](#) or email SMC at SMC@spb.gov.sg if you have any query.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Lee", is written over a thin horizontal line.

PETER LEE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

¹ With a prescribed fee of S\$100, for one (1) additional qualification.

Example

Dr A wishes to display Postgraduate Diploma in Palliative Medicine, “PG Dip (Palliative Medicine)”, conferred by Cardiff University (UK).

Dr A must submit an application for the SMC to verify and approve the qualification. Once verified and approved, “PG Dip (Palliative Medicine)” will be displayed against Dr A’s name in the SMC’s online register.

Dr A can also display the AQ in printed materials for his practice of medicine.

Before Approval

Qualification	MBBS (U of Melbourne, Australia) 2013		
Type of first registration / date	Provisional Registration (26/02/2014)		
Type of current registration / date	Full Registration (04/10/2017)		
Practising Certificate Start Date	01/01/2019	Practising Certificate End Date	31/12/2020

After approval for display of AQ

Qualifications	MBBS (U of Melbourne, Australia) 2013 PG Dip (Palliative Medicine) (Cardiff U, United Kingdom) 2018		
Type of first registration / date	Provisional Registration (26/02/2014)		
Type of current registration / date	Full Registration (04/10/2017)		
Practising Certificate Start Date	01/01/2019	Practising Certificate End Date	31/12/2020



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Our Ref: SMC 13.1.5

27 April 2010

ALL MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

LATEST GUIDELINES ON DISPLAY OF TITLES AND DESIGNATIONS

1. The Singapore Medical Council (SMC) notes that an increasing number of medical practitioners are displaying their titles and designations inappropriately, with the potential to mislead patients and members of the public.

2. Designations used should reflect a doctor's official appointment in a Hospital, Institution or Clinic. In addition, while one may use titles such as Professor, Associate Professor, Adjunct Professor and Honorary Professor as part of their salutation, medical practitioners should only display such titles if:

- (a) The title is currently valid and not a past appointment.
- (b) The title represents a substantive appointment. For overseas universities, there must be a letter of verification.
- (c) Only professorial titles associated with accredited Medical Faculties of accredited Universities in Singapore may be placed before the name of the doctors.
- (d) All other titles must be stated underneath the doctor's name only.

3. Council would also like to remind all registered medical practitioners to comply with the standards set in Sections 64¹ and 65² of the Medical Registration Act (MRA) when they display their qualifications, titles and designations for publicity purposes. Attention is also drawn to sections 4.4.2³ and 4.4.5.1 of the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines

¹ No registered medical practitioner shall: -

- a. use or exhibit or publish in any card, letter, stationery, nameplate, signboard, placard, circular, handbill or any notice displayed at the premises used by him for the practice of medicine any qualifications other than the qualifications which are entered in any register kept under this Act or which has been approved by the Medical Council; or
- b. use any title, addition or designation other than the title, addition or designation which has been approved by the Medical Council.

² (1) A registered medical practitioner who is not registered under section 22 as a specialist in a branch of medicine shall not –

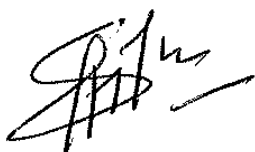
- a. practise medicine or that branch of medicine under the style or title of a specialist in that branch of medicine, or under any name, title, addition or description implying that he is such a specialist or has any degree, qualification or experience in that branch of medicine; or
- b. advertise or hold himself out as a specialist in that branch of medicine.

³ In general, doctors may provide information about their qualifications, areas of practice, practice arrangements and contact details. Such information, where permitted, shall have the following standards: Factual, Accurate, Verifiable, Not Extravagant claims, Not misleading, Not Sensational, Not Persuasive, Not Laudatory, Not Comparative and Not Disparaging.

with reference to the SMC circular on rules on the display of titles and designations by medical practitioners dated 21 April 2008, which is available on the SMC website www.smc.gov.sg.

4. Doctors are reminded that the addition of a title: Practitioner, Consultant, Expert, Physician, Therapist, or other descriptive (either as a prefix or a suffix) cannot be used in conjunction with their specialty, scope of practice or area of interest. Only specialist titles approved by the Specialist Accreditation Board, Ministry of Health can be used or displayed. For example, the description “*Expert in Interventional Neuroradiology*”, Professor in Neurosurgery or “*Senior Consultant Rehabilitation Physician*” will not be allowed. Please refer to Annex A for examples of titles and designations approved for display by the Council.

5. Medical practitioners found contravening these rules will be subjected to disciplinary proceedings.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Satku', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

PROF K SATKU
REGISTRAR
SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

Examples of Display of Titles and Designations approved by SMC**(I) Appointments in Public or Private Institutions**

1. Dr <<Name of Doctor>>
Cardiologist
Senior Consultant
Dept of Cardiology
<<Name of Hospital>>
Singapore
Clinical Interest – Electrophysiology

2. Dr <<Name of Doctor>>
Specialist in General Surgery or Specialty: General Surgery or General Surgeon
Senior Consultant
<<Name of Clinic>>
Singapore
Scope of Practice – Laparoscopic surgery

(II) Professorship Titles

3. Professor <<Name of Doctor>>
Obstetrician & Gynaecologist or Specialty: O&G or Specialist in O&G
Professor and Senior Consultant
Division of Maternal and Fetal Medicine
Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
National University of Singapore
National University Hospital

4. Dr <<Name of Doctor>>
Anaesthesiologist or Specialty: Anaesthesiology
<<Name of Clinic>>
Singapore
Clinical Professor
Department of Anaesthesiology
<<Name of College and University>>
<<State and Country of Origin of University>>

Section G2 of the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical guidelines (2016 Edition) on the standards required of advertising information for compliance

The standards of medical advertising must be high to maintain the public's trust in and respect of the profession. Upholding these standards means:

(1) Medical advertising and the provision of information in the public domain must meet the following standards:

- (a) Factual
- (b) Accurate
- (c) Verifiable
- (d) Not misleading
- (e) Not unduly persuasive
- (f) No extravagant claims
- (g) Not sensational
- (h) Not enticing or alluring
- (i) No financial inducements
- (j) Not laudatory
- (k) Not comparative
- (l) Not disparaging

(2) You may advertise by providing neutrally toned and objective information about your SMC-registered qualifications, experience, areas of practice and your expertise in procedures. You must not include information that could mislead the public as to your registered qualifications, experience or expertise.

(3) You must not use "before" and "after", or even only "after" images or information for medical advertising in the public domain as anecdotal cases create unjustified expectations of the results of treatment, which may vary.

(4) Advertising must not seek to unduly persuade beyond logic and reason through arousing intense curiosity or interest, or stimulating strong emotional reactions that may impair rational decision making about whether to seek healthcare services.

(5) Advertising must not seek to induce ill-founded fear or insecurity about health or longevity, nor play on the public's sense of self-esteem or generate overly critical perceptions or dissatisfaction with self, body image or physical attractiveness. You must not advertise using elements of glitz, glamour, style, famous locations, associations with celebrities and the entertainment or fashion world.

(6) You must not offer financial inducements such as free or discounted examinations or treatments (outside of legitimate non-commercial health promotion activities). You must not lure patients through time-limited special offers, tie-ups with unrelated commercial entities (such as credit cards) or offering gifts or other material incentives, to persuade them to take up your services. You must not offer medical services and products as prizes or gifts in any context.

(7) Testimonials are subjective and must not be used in advertising on any media where you have any control over the content about yourself. You must not ask or induce your patients or anyone to write positive testimonials about you in any media.

(8) You must not disparage other doctors or their practices in your advertising and you must not give any impression that you and your practice are superior in any way compared to other doctors who provide similar services.