



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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1 March 2010

PRESS RELEASE

DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY FOR DR TAN GEK YOUNG

1. The Disciplinary Committee ("DC") of the Singapore Medical Council ("SMC") held a disciplinary inquiry on 19 January 2010 against Dr Tan Gek Young ("Dr Tan"), a registered medical practitioner.
2. At all material times, Dr Tan was a general practitioner practising at the Meridian Polyclinic & Surgery located at 136 Bedok North Avenue 3 #01-162 Singapore 460136.
3. Dr Tan faced 22 charges of professional misconduct under Section 45(1)(d) of the Medical Registration Act in that he failed to exercise due care in the management of his patients (which were the subject matter of the charges). Dr Tan pleaded guilty to all 22 charges at the Inquiry and accordingly, the DC found Dr Tan guilty and convicted him of the charges.
4. Of the 22 charges, 21 charges relate to the inappropriate prescription of Benzodiazepines as hypnotic medication out of which 2 charges relate to both prescription of Benzodiazepines and Subutex, and 5 charges relate to the prescriptions of both Benzodiazepines and cough mixture containing Codeine. The remaining 1 charge related to the inappropriate prescription of Subutex.
5. In the course of its deliberations, the DC found Dr Tan's mismanagement of patients relating to Subutex to be:

"particularly troubling and given the rising incidences of undesirable conduct of medical practitioners either in indiscriminately prescribing opiates, hypnotics or cough mixtures containing codeine, [was] of the view that public policy requires [the DC] to treat these misconduct seriously and to deter [Dr Tan] and any other like-minded medical practitioners from committing similar acts."

6. The DC also found Dr Tan's 5 charges relating to cough mixtures containing codeine to have contravened the MOH guidelines. In relation to these 5 instances, the DC was of the opinion that in the *"whole scheme of things, this further pointed out the systematic failure on [his] part to conduct [himself] in a professional manner as a doctor."*
7. The DC further found Dr Tan's recording of patient information only at the initial stage to be poor and unacceptable record keeping. The DC emphasized the duty to keep accurate and precise records and case notes.
8. The DC in considering all the factors, including the points in mitigation raised by Dr Tan's counsel, ordered that Dr Tan be suspended from practice for a period of 6 months. The DC also ordered that Dr Tan be fined \$5,000, censured, and that he give a written undertaking to the SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of or any similar conduct.
9. Dr Tan was also ordered to pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to the proceedings, including the costs of the respective solicitors to the Singapore Medical Council and the Legal Assessors.

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