



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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PRESS RELEASE

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY FOR DR GOH CHING LUCK

1. A Disciplinary Committee ("DC") Inquiry ("Inquiry") was held on 19 September 2011 for Dr Goh Ching Luck ("Dr Goh"), age 52 years, a registered medical practitioner practising as a General Practitioner at Drs Goh & Tan Family Clinic & Surgery located at Blk 283 Bishan Street 22 #01-191 Singapore 570283 at the material time. The proceedings arose out of a complaint to the Singapore Medical Council (SMC) dated 10 November 2009 by the Ministry of Health.
2. Dr Goh faced 13 charges of professional misconduct under the Medical Registration Act for failing to exercise due care in the management of his patients by inappropriately prescribing Benzodiazepines and/or cough mixtures containing codeine.
3. Dr Goh pleaded guilty to all 13 charges at the Inquiry and accordingly, the DC convicted him of the charges.
4. The DC emphasised that inappropriate prescription is a serious misconduct in itself. Hypnotic medication is prescribed for patients who have insomnia or as anxiolytics for the short term relief of anxiety. However, the long-term consumption of hypnotics may lead to the development of drug dependence, psychomotor impairment, tolerance and depression by patients. It is therefore incumbent on all medical practitioners to be appraised of the current medical standards and prescribing practice, in the interests of their patients.
5. The DC found that Dr Goh had acted in disregard of his professional duties because the prescription of hypnotic medication and/or codeine-based cough medication on a long-term basis was inappropriate.

6. The DC also noted with concern that there were more than a few instances of concurrent prescription of different types of cough medication and/or different types of hypnotic medication at the same consultation. This constituted a serious breach of the relevant Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health due to the potentiating effect of concurrent prescription, and such a breach warranted a substantial punishment.
7. Taking into account the mitigating factors, the DC ordered that Dr Goh be suspended from practice for 3 months, be fined \$1,000 and censured. The DC also ordered that Dr Goh provide a written undertaking to the SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of, or of any similar conduct. Dr Goh was also ordered to bear the costs and expenses of and incidentals to these proceedings, including the costs of the counsel to the SMC and the Legal Assessor.
8. The DC also ordered that the Grounds of Decision be published.
9. Dr Goh's 3-months suspension took effect on 20 October 2011.

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