



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

16 College Road, #01-01 College of Medicine Building, Singapore 169854

E-mail Address: enquiries@smc.gov.sg

Website: <http://www.smc.gov.sg>

Fax Number: (65) 6258-2134

06 July 2011

PRESS RELEASE

DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY FOR DR LING NGAN NGIENG

1. A Disciplinary Committee Inquiry ("Inquiry") was held for Dr Ling Ngan Ngieng ("Dr Ling"), age 88 years, who was practising as a locum at First Medical Clinic & Surgery located at Block 167, Woodlands Street 11, #01-11, Singapore 730167. The inquiry arose from a complaint to the Singapore Medical Council dated 18 April 2008 by the Ministry of Health.
2. Dr Ling pleaded guilty to 19 charges of professional misconduct under the Medical Registration Act, in that he failed to exercise due care in the management of his patients in the prescription of Subutex for the purported treatment of the patients' opioid addiction. Subutex was used in opioid replacement therapy to reduce the use of illicit opiates in an opiate-dependent individual.
3. Dr Ling's breaches were that (a) he failed to formulate any long term plan for the treatment of the patient's medical condition, (b) he failed to record or document in the said patients' Medical Records sufficient details of the patients' diagnosis, symptoms and/or condition throughout the period of treatment save for the initial consultation, (c) he failed to carry out an adequate assessment of the patients' medical condition over the period of treatment, in respect of the prescription and/or administration of dosages, (d) he contravened the Ministry of Health's Professional Circular No. 21B/2005 on Treatment of Opiate Dependence dated 26 October 2005 ("MOH Guidelines") and that (e) he failed to refer the patients to the Community Addiction Management Programme, thereby contravening the MOH Guidelines.

4. The Disciplinary Committee (“DC”) observed that a medical practitioner ought to be aware of, and should adhere to guidelines prescribed by the MOH. The DC considered that Dr Ling had acted in disregard of his professional duties since the prolonged prescription of Subutex without specialist referral, proper medical records or in a manner not in accordance with the MOH Guidelines was inappropriate and unprofessional.
5. Taking the evidence and mitigating factors into consideration, the DC ordered that Dr Ling be suspended from practice for **3 months**, be censured, give a written undertaking to SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of or any similar conduct, and pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to these inquiry proceedings, including the costs of the counsel to the SMC and the Legal Assessor. The DC also ordered that the Grounds of Decision be published.
6. Dr Ling’s 3-months suspension took effect on 27 June 2011.

- END -