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PRESS RELEASE

DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY FOR DR CHU SIU KONG

1. A Disciplinary Committee (DC) Inquiry ("Inquiry") was held for Dr Chu Siu Kong ("Dr Chu"), of Green Cross Medical Centre located Block 824 Tampines Street 81, #01-30, Singapore 520824, on 9 March 2011. The proceedings arose out of a complaint to the Singapore Medical Council ("SMC") dated 5 September 2007 by the Ministry of Health ("MOH").
2. Dr Chu initially faced 42 charges of professional misconduct under the Medical Registration Act for failing to exercise due care in the management of his patients with benzodiazepines, and/or medication containing codeine.
3. The substance of the charges against Dr Chu is that he failed to exercise due care in the management of his patients by inappropriately prescribing hypnotics and/or codeine-containing medication either in terms of the amount prescribed or in terms of the duration over which they were prescribed for the patients.
4. The SMC proceeded with 30 of the 42 charges against Dr Chu, and Dr Chu pleaded guilty to these 30 charges.
5. The DC found that Dr Chu demonstrated a clear indifference to the accepted standard of practice and in particular, the prescribing guidelines issued by the MOH in relation to benzodiazepines.

6. The DC also noted the danger of improper care in the management of patients with regards to the prescription of such hypnotic medicine as it could result in patients developing tolerance and dependence for such medicines. The severity of such improper conduct thus warranted a sentence which would act as a deterrent to the profession at large, especially those who may consider committing such transgressions for pure financial gains.
7. In making its decision, the DC also considered several mitigating factors, including Dr Chu's personal mitigating factors.
8. Taking the evidence and mitigating factors into consideration, the DC suspended Dr Chu from practice for a period of 5 months. The DC also ordered a fine of S\$5,000.00 to be imposed on Dr Chu. In addition, the DC ordered Dr Chu to give a written undertaking to the SMC that he will comply with existing and future guidelines on the prescribing of benzodiazepines issued by the MOH. Dr Chu was also ordered to pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to the inquiry proceedings, including the costs of the counsel to the SMC and the Legal Assessor.
9. Dr Chu's 5-month suspension took effect on 9 April 2011.

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