



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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PRESS RELEASE

SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY FOR DR KONG SIN MING

1. A Disciplinary Committee ("DC") Inquiry ("Inquiry") was held on 23 March 2011 for Dr Kong Sin Ming ("Dr Kong"), age 64 years, who was a general practitioner practising at Kong Clinic & Surgery located at Block 293, Yishun Street 22, #01-223, Singapore 760293. The inquiry arose from a complaint dated 19 June 2009 to the Singapore Medical Council ("SMC") by the Ministry of Health ("MOH").
2. Dr Kong initially faced 27 charges of professional misconduct under the Medical Registration Act for failing 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.
3. The SMC proceeded with 20 of the 27 charges, and Dr Kong pleaded guilty to these 20 charges.
4. The DC noted that while Dr Kong was charged with inappropriate prescription and no other misconduct, for example, inadequate documentation or failure to refer the patients to specialist treatment, they categorically stated that inappropriate prescription is a serious misconduct in itself. Long-term consumption of hypnotics may lead to the development of drug dependence and tolerance. Therefore, in the interests of their patients, it is incumbent on all medical practitioners to be apprised of the current medical standards and prescribing practice.
5. The DC also noted with concern that in Dr Kong's case, 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 guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health, which warranted a substantial punishment.

6. The DC further noted that for a substantial number of patients, the prescription on an overall basis took place over several years, and involved large quantities of medication being prescribed. Such practice did not allow Dr Kong to closely monitor his patients' conditions in order to formulate appropriate treatment.
7. Taking the evidence and mitigating factors into consideration, the DC ordered that Dr Kong be suspended from practice for 5 months, be fined \$5,000 and censured. The DC also ordered that Dr Kong provide a written undertaking to the SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of, or any similar conduct. Dr Kong was also ordered to pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to these proceedings, including the costs of the counsel to the SMC and the Legal Assessor.
8. Dr Kong's 5-month suspension took effect on 23 April 2011.

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