



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

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PRESS RELEASE

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY FOR DR KOH GIM HWEЕ

1. The Disciplinary Committee ("DC") of the Singapore Medical Council ("SMC") held a disciplinary inquiry (the "Inquiry") for Dr Koh Gim Hwee ("Dr Koh"), age 49 years, a registered medical practitioner specialising as an Obstetrician and Gynaecologist practising at the Raffles Hospital, 585 North Bridge Road, Singapore 188770. The Inquiry was held in April and June 2011. The proceedings arose out of a complaint to the SMC dated 11 November 2008 and a supplementary complaint dated 23 November 2008, by the husband of one of Dr Koh's patients.
2. Dr Koh faced three charges of professional misconduct in relation to the management of his patient:
 - (a) that Dr Koh performed a procedure on his patient, namely using Hegar dilators to forcibly open the patient's cervix for induction of labour, which was not within the norms of acceptable medical practice;
 - (b) that Dr Koh failed to provide his patient with adequate information so as to enable her to make an informed choice about whether to proceed with a trial of vaginal birth after a Caesarean section ("VBAC"); and
 - (c) that Dr Koh induced labour for trial of VBAC without making his patient aware of the benefits, risks and possible complications of doing so, thereby failing to obtain her informed consent for induction of labour for trial of VBAC.
3. Dr Koh contested all three charges, of which the DC convicted him on the first and third charges and acquitted him of the second charge.

The Charges on which Dr Koh was convicted

First Charge

4. In relation to the first charge, the DC found that Hegar dilators are not to be used in the induction of labour and there were three other acceptable alternatives open to Dr Koh to induce labour.
5. The use of Hegar dilators for induction of labour was therefore a departure from the norms of medical practice and amounted to professional misconduct.

Third Charge

6. On the third charge, the DC found that Dr Koh had not made his patient aware of the benefits, risks and possible complications of an induction of labour for trial of VBAC and therefore failed to obtain her informed consent for the same. This amounted to professional misconduct.

The Charge on which Dr Koh was acquitted

Second Charge

7. On the second charge, the DC did not find that it had been proven beyond reasonable doubt that Dr Koh had failed to advise his patient on the risks of VBAC in the patient's antenatal consultations. The DC therefore acquitted Dr Koh of the second charge.

Sentence/Verdict

8. Taking all the factors into account, the DC ordered that Dr Koh:
 - (a) pay a penalty of S\$10,000;
 - (b) be censured;
 - (c) provide the following written undertakings as to his future conduct:
 - (i) an undertaking not to use Hegar dilators in the induction of labour;
 - (ii) in relation to any patient of his who undergoes VBAC with induced or augmented labour or related obstetric procedures, an undertaking to:
 - advise that patient of the relevant risks of such procedure in accordance with Guideline 4.2.2 of the SMC's Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines ("ECEG") or any future guideline which governs his professional obligation in the same respect; and
 - record that advice in accordance with Guideline 4.1.2 of the ECEG or any future guideline which governs his professional obligation in the same respect.
 - (d) pay to the SMC the costs and expenses of and incidental to the disciplinary proceedings.
9. The DC also ordered that the Grounds of Decision be published.

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