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PRESS RELEASE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY FOR DR LOOI KOK POH

1. A Disciplinary Committee (DC) Inquiry (the "Inquiry") was held for Dr Looi Kok Poh ("Dr Looi"), aged 50 years, a hand surgeon in private practice at Pacific Hand, Wrist and Microsurgical Centre, #04-14, at Gleneagles Medical Centre, 6A Napier Road, Singapore 258499 ("the Clinic") on 5 November 2014.
2. Dr Looi faced 3 charges of professional misconduct for failing to exercise due care in the management of a patient ("the patient").
3. The substance of the charges against Dr Looi are as follows:
 - (a) He had acted in breach of Guideline 4.2.2. (Informed Consent) of the Singapore Medical Council Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines ("SMC ECEG") in that he failed to obtain the patient's consent, including the benefits, risks, possible complications and alternatives, before performing a surgical procedure known as "Ulnar Neurolysis and Repair" ("the surgical procedure") on the patient's right hand and wrist on 26 April 2006.
 - (b) He had acted in breach of Guideline 4.1.2 (Medical Records) of the SMC ECEG in that he had falsified the medical records pertaining to his consultations with the patient in the period from 19 April 2006 to 18 July 2006 to suggest that informed consent for the surgical procedure had been given and that there had been a discussion of the treatment options available to the Patient. He had also failed to retain his original set of medical records such that the veracity of the documented entries

pertaining to how the patient's condition was diagnosed and treated could not be verified and had instigated, aided and/or abetted a staff nurse of the Hospital to falsify the patient's medical records kept by the Hospital in relation to the patient's admission, including the patient's original Consent Form pertaining to the surgery.

- (c) He had acted in breach of Guideline 4.1.1.5 (Duty of Care) of the SMC ECEG in failing to provide competent and/or appropriate care to the patient during his consultation with and treatment of the patient in the period from 19 to 26 April 2006 and by failing to provide appropriate and timely investigations and management of the patient's condition prior to and during the surgery on 26 April 2006.

- 4. Dr Looi pleaded guilty to the charges.
- 5. In relation to sentencing, the DC noted that Dr Looi's offences, whether taken individually or together, betrayed the trust reposed in him by the patient individually as well as by society as a whole, and seriously undermined public confidence in the medical profession. Quite apart from having breached the standards of medical competence and professionalism which were expected of him, Dr Looi's instructions to a nurse to alter the patient's original consent form to reflect that the patient had consented to the procedure when no such consent had been given, was objectionable and repugnant and compromised, if not corrupted, the nurse's ethical conduct. In so doing, Dr Looi had flagrantly violated the standards of probity and moral integrity which were expected of doctors who were permitted to practice medicine and his actions were nothing short of dishonest. The DC noted that it was therefore incumbent for it to send a strong message that such misconduct was totally unacceptable and intolerable and that the sentence imposed ought to reflect this message.
- 6. Dr Looi had in his Plea in Mitigation noted that he had acknowledged his wrongdoing, was remorseful, had learnt from his mistake and would not repeat it.

7. In determining the appropriate sentence, the DC also took into account the mitigating factors, including the fact that :
 - (a) Dr Looi was now remorseful, had learnt his lesson and had pleaded guilty;
 - (b) Dr Looi had an unblemished record and that this was the first time he had ever been involved in professional disciplinary proceedings;
 - (c) Dr Looi had performed various charitable works and made contributions to society by his participation in various mission works at his own personal time and expense;
 - (d) Dr Looi had already been subjected to legal proceedings in Court which were commenced by the patient; and
 - (e) Dr Looi's accreditation and privileges at Gleneagles Hospital, Mount Elizabeth Hospital and Parkway East Hospital have already been revoked.

8. In the circumstances, having considered the circumstances of the case, the DC ordered that:
 - (a) Dr Looi's registration in the Register of Medical Practitioners be suspended for a period of **12 months**;
 - (b) Dr Looi pay a penalty of **\$10,000**;
 - (c) Dr Looi be censured;
 - (d) Dr Looi give a written undertaking to the SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of, or of any similar conduct; and
 - (e) Dr Looi pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to the proceedings, including the costs of the solicitor to the SMC and of the Legal Assessor.

9. The DC also ordered that the Grounds of Decision be published.

10. Dr Looi's 12-month suspension took effect from 5 December 2014 and will run to 4 December 2015 (both dates inclusive).

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