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PRESS RELEASE

DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL INQUIRIES FOR DR CHIO HAN SIN ROY, DR WONG MEI LING GLADYS AND DR NG HOR LIANG

1. A Disciplinary Tribunal (“DT”) of the Singapore Medical Council (“SMC”) was constituted to conduct a disciplinary inquiry for each of the following medical practitioners:
 - (a) Dr Chio Han Sin Roy (“Dr Chio”), aged 43 years, a registered medical practitioner who was practising at Famicare Bedok Clinic at the material time, on 28 August 2015 and 1 September 2015;
 - (b) Dr Wong Mei Ling Gladys (“Dr Wong”), aged 50 years, a registered medical practitioner who was practising at Healthpoint Family Clinic & Surgery Pte Ltd at the material time, on 1 September 2015; and
 - (c) Dr Ng Hor Liang (“Dr Ng”), aged 48 years, a registered medical practitioner who was practising at Bukit Batok West Clinic at the material time, on 28 August 2015 and 1 September 2015.

(Dr Chio, Dr Wong and Dr Ng will hereafter be collectively referred to as “the Respondents”.)

2. At their respective hearings, each of the Respondents pleaded guilty to one charge of having been convicted in the Subordinate Courts of the Republic of Singapore (as it then was) (“Subordinate Courts”) of an offence of procuring a

Practising Certificate (“PC”) from the SMC by knowingly making a fraudulent declaration.

3. Dr Ng also pleaded guilty to an additional charge of having been convicted in the Subordinate Courts for practising medicine when he did not possess a valid PC, an offence implying a defect in character which makes him unfit for his profession.
4. The common facts of the three cases are as follows:
 - (a) The Respondents had been unable to renew their PC when it expired in 2011 due to a shortfall of Continuing Medical Education (“CME”) points.
 - (b) After making up for the shortfall, the Respondents each submitted a Letter of Undertaking to the SMC for the renewal of their PCs declaring that they had not been practising medicine from the time that their PC expired.
 - (c) The Respondents knew that these declarations were false as they had practised medicine from the time of expiry of their PC, before new PCs were issued to them.
5. The DTs disagreed with the Respondent’s Counsel that the offences could be considered technical breaches of the rules for the renewal of a PC. Instead, the DT agreed with Counsel for SMC that making a fraudulent declaration and practising without a valid PC are both serious matters because integrity and honesty are non-negotiable hallmarks of medical practitioners, and any acts of dishonesty would tarnish and bring disrepute to the medical profession as a whole.
6. However, the DTs also noted the distinction between the Respondents’ cases and other precedent cases in that there was a lack of direct monetary benefit in the Respondents’ cases, whereas the other precedent cases involved more serious tax evasion or illicit gain, an element of perversion of the course of

justice, or a distinct lack of remorse on the part of the medical practitioner in question. The DTs were also mindful that for a “one-off” offender, prosecution for the offences committed was in itself some form of deterrence.

7. Further, the DTs gave full regard to the Respondents’ early plea of guilt both before the Subordinate Courts and the DTs, which the DTs considered to be a very strong sign of their remorse. The DTs noted that each of the Respondents had no criminal or SMC antecedents. The DTs also took into account the factual matrix relating to each Respondent that led to the commission of the offences in question.
8. Having regard to all the circumstances in each of the cases and considering the submissions and precedents cited, the DTs took the view that a significant fine, rather than a suspension, was called for and would serve as adequate specific and general deterrence against any future transgressions by the Respondents and other members of the medical profession. Moreover, the DTs understood that the procedure for attaining CME points for the application for PCs has since been refined, minimising the risk of a similar offence recurring.
9. Noting that the root cause of the Respondents’ failure to qualify for the issuance of a PC was the insufficiency of CME points, the DTs felt that a more direct and effective way to reiterate the importance of CME and deter reoffending was to impose a requirement for the Respondents to fulfil an additional percentage of the CME points requirement for the renewal of their PCs. This requirement was individually calibrated for each of the Respondents after taking into account the specific facts of his or her case.
10. Accordingly, the respective DTs ordered that:-
 - (a) Dr Chio be fined a penalty of \$10,000 and to fulfil no less than an additional 30% of the CME points requirement for the period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2016 for the renewal of his PC on 1 January 2017;

- (b) Dr Wong be fined a penalty of \$10,000 and fulfil no less than an additional 10% of the CME points requirement for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017 for the renewal of her PC on 1 January 2018; and
 - (c) Dr Ng be fined a penalty of \$20,000 and fulfil no less than an additional 50% of the CME points requirement for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017 for the renewal of his PC on 1 January 2018.
11. The DTs also ordered that the Respondents be censured, give a written undertaking to the SMC that they will not engage in the conduct complained of and any similar conduct, and pay the cost and expenses of and incidental to these proceedings, including the costs of the solicitors to the SMC. The DTs also ordered that the Grounds of Decisions be published.
12. The DTs were of the view that these orders would send a strong and clear signal to the medical profession that PC renewal matters must be taken seriously and that false declarations and dishonesty of any kind are never condoned.

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