

President's Message



*D*ear colleagues,

The Medical Registration (Amendment) Act 2020 (MRAA) came into force on 1 July 2022. Previously, in the [15th](#) and [17th](#) editions of the SMC Newsletter, the SMC shared the key changes to the SMC's disciplinary processes under the MRAA. In this issue, we reiterate the salient facets of the MRAA, and how the changes will improve the disciplinary process, particularly in terms of providing quicker resolution of complaints and separation of the disciplinary tribunal functions from the SMC. It is noteworthy that only complaints from 1 July 2022 will come under these new processes and that complaints up to 30 June 2022 will be processed under the old Medical Registration Act. Any complaint from 1 July 2022 referred to a tribunal will now be handled by the new Disciplinary Commission under the Ministry of Health. This effectively separates the processing of complaints, investigations and referrals by the SMC from the disciplinary tribunal function which handles the formal inquiries referred by the Complaints Committees of the SMC.

Doctors facing disciplinary proceedings can now approach the three Professional Bodies, namely the Academy of Medicine Singapore (AMS), College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS), and Singapore Medical Association (SMA), for advice to deal with any anxieties they may have. Doctors can also seek help from the support programme jointly established by the SMA, CFPS and AMS, should they receive complaints against them, or face disciplinary proceedings.

Starting from this edition, we will have a dedicated column on a Series in Professional Ethics. The SMC will share guidance on how to deal with the intimate examination of patients. We start with the topic of "Propriety and Sexual Boundaries" where we highlight Guideline C4 of the Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines and the corresponding section in the SMC Handbook on Medical Ethics, which sets out clear and actionable guidance on how to deal with the intimate examination of patients.

In the past weeks, there had been a surge in the number of COVID-19 infections driven by the newer BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron sub-variants. We take this opportunity to again thank fellow healthcare colleagues for your continued vigilance and care in keeping Singapore safe.

Professor Chee Yam Cheng
President