

**SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY AGAINST  
DR AAI HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2008**

**Disciplinary Committee:**

A/Prof Benjamin Ong (Chairman)  
Dr Richard Guan  
A/Prof Alan Ng Wei Keong  
Ms Yeow Mei Leng (Lay Member)

**Legal Assessor:**

Mr Andy Chiok (M/s Michael Khoo & Partners)

**Prosecution Counsel (M/s Harry Elias Partnership):**

Mr Philip Fong  
Ms Kylie Peh

**Defence Counsel (M/s Donaldson and Burkinshaw):**

Mr Charles Lin  
Mr Eric Tin

**DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

*(Note: Certain information may be redacted or anonymised to protect the identity of the parties.)*

1. You, Dr AAI, have been charged with 11 charges for failing to exercise due care in the management of your patients named specifically in Charges 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 18 set out in the Agreed Bundle (Volume 1) in that
  - (a) you inappropriately prescribed hypnotic medication to these patients as set out in the Schedules to the Charges thereto; and
  - (b) you did not record or document in the said patients' Patient Medical Records details or sufficient details of the patients' diagnosis, symptoms and/or condition and/or any management plan such as to

enable you to properly assess the medical condition of the patient over the period of treatment.

2. You have pleaded guilty to the said 11 Charges and admitted to the Agreed Statement of Facts submitted by the solicitor for the Council.
3. Briefly, your Counsel in mitigation had submitted, *inter alia*:
  - (a) that this was not a case where you had failed to refer your patients for specialist management,
  - (b) you had pleaded guilty at the first available opportunity and had thereby saved the Council time and resources,
  - (c) you are a sole breadwinner and a suspension and heavy fine would potentially cripple you,
  - (d) you had voluntarily ceased private practice,
  - (e) a period of suspension now would have an effect on the prison healthcare service where you presently work, and
  - (f) that you had participated and volunteered in public service, and there are testimonials from your patients and professional colleagues in respect of your character and discharge of your duties as a doctor.
4. The Disciplinary Committee had considered all the points raised in the plea in mitigation including the above, and had come to the following conclusions:
  - (a) Benzodiazepines are prescribed as hypnotic medication for patients who have insomnia or as anxiolytics for the short term relief of anxiety. Long term consumption of benzodiazepines and hypnotics may lead to drug dependence and tolerance.
  - (b) The Committee considers that you have acted in disregard of your professional duties since the improper prescription of benzodiazepines and hypnotic medication and failure to maintain proper medical records

in accordance with the said Guidelines is inappropriate and unprofessional.

- (c) Nonetheless, the Committee accepts that there are strong mitigating factors in respect of your record of public service, testimonials from your patients and professional colleagues, and the fact that you had voluntarily ceased private practice.
5. We note that you have pleaded guilty to the 11 Charges and did co-operate with the authorities. However, inappropriate prescription of hypnotic medication is misconduct for which we believe a period of suspension is called for, although in view of the strong mitigating factors we are prepared to depart from the usual imposition of a fine.
6. In light of all the circumstances, we would determine as follows:
- a) that you be suspended from practice for a period of **3** months;
  - b) that you be censured;
  - c) that you give a written undertaking to the Medical Council that you will not engage in the conduct complained of or any similar conduct; and
  - d) that you pay the costs and expenses of and incidental to these proceedings, including the costs of the solicitor to the Council and the Legal Assessor.
7. The hearing is hereby concluded.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008.