

**SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY FOR  
DR ABR HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2010**

**Disciplinary Committee:**

Prof Lee Eng Hin (Chairman)  
Prof Walter Tan (Member)  
Dr Tong Khim Leng (Member)  
Prof Feddy Boey (Lay Member)

**Legal Assessor:**

Mr Joseph Liow (Straits Law Practice LLC)

**Prosecution Counsel (Yeo- Leong & Peh LLC):**

Mr Kelvin Fong  
Mr David Kong

**Defence Counsel (M/s Rodyk & Davidson LLP):**

Mr Lek Siang Pheng  
Ms Sharon Liu

**GROUND OF DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

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

**The Charge**

1. The Respondent, Dr ABR faced 28 charges relating to his failure to exercise due care in the management of his patients. At the start of the hearing, prosecuting counsel for the Singapore Medical Council informed this Disciplinary Committee that Prosecution will not be proceeding on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> charge.
2. The Charges were admitted into evidence via an Agreed Bundle of Documents.
3. Of the 25 charges proceeded upon, six (6) charges related to inappropriate prescription of Subutex, eight (8) charges related to inappropriate prescription of Subutex **and** benzodiazepines and eleven (11) charges related to inappropriate prescription of benzodiazepines.

4. The Charges were confirmed by the Defence Counsel as having been read to the Respondent. The Respondent confirmed that he had read the charges. He was then informed by this Disciplinary Committee of the possible punishment that could be meted out to him. After confirming that he understood the nature and consequences of the 25 charges, the Respondent pleaded guilty to these 25 charges.
5. This Disciplinary Committee accepted the plea of guilt and then considered the issue of the appropriate sentence to impose.

### **Sentence and Verdict**

6. After hearing submissions from prosecuting counsel and after reading the plea of mitigation presented by the respondent's counsel, as well as the oral submissions made by both counsels, this Disciplinary Committee took into consideration the following:-
  - (a) The Respondent kept good records of his patients;
  - (b) The Respondent had been discriminating in his treatment of patients and did decline to treat patients that he viewed to be drug addicts or abusers as opposed to persons who were genuinely in need of help. We accept the fact that the Respondent did spend considerable time in the initial consultation with his patients to be able to discern patients who were in need from those who were drug addicts.
  - (c) We accept that the Respondent, in treating these patients, was not motivated by profit. Based on the testimonials of his patients and members of various church groups where the Respondent volunteers his time, it was clear to us that he provided medical services to those in need and without payment.
  - (d) The strong testimonials from two doctors of good repute, namely Dr. D1 and Dr. D2.

7. In addition to the strong mitigating circumstances above, we also note that the Respondent is a first time offender and that his plea of guilt has saved the Singapore Medical Council and the Disciplinary Committee much time and costs.
8. In these circumstances, we hereby exercise our powers as provided for in Section 45 (2) of the Medical Registration Act as follows:-
  - (a) that the Respondent be suspended from practice for a period of **3 months**;
  - (b) that the Respondent be fined a sum of **\$3,000**;
  - (c) that the Respondent be censured;
  - (d) that the Respondent gives a written undertaking to the SMC that he will not engage in the conduct complained of, or any similar conduct; and
  - (e) that the Respondent pays the costs and expenses of and incidental to these proceedings, including the costs of the counsel to the SMC and the Legal Assessor.
9. The hearing is hereby concluded.

Dated this 29<sup>th</sup> day of November 2010.