



SINGAPORE MEDICAL COUNCIL

c/o Secretariat of healthcare Professional Boards (SPB)

81 Kim Keat Road #10-00 Singapore 328836

Email: SMC@spb.gov.sg

Website: <https://www.smc.gov.sg>

SMC CIRCULAR NO. 1/2023

11 May 2023

To all registered medical practitioners

COMPULSORY CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION (CME) ON MEDICAL ETHICS

In the SMC's newsletter published in November 2022, doctors were informed that compulsory CME on Medical Ethics would be required for Practising Certificate (PC) renewal in 2026 (please refer to the newsletter article [here](#)). Details on the accumulation of CME core points for medical ethics will be made available in SMC's website from 1 January 2024. Registered doctors can begin to accumulate their core points for Medical Ethics CME and submit their claims based on their CME qualifying periods from 1 January 2024.

2. Compulsory CME for Medical Ethics was recommended under Recommendation 10 of the Report on Recommendations by the Workgroup to review the taking of Informed Consent and SMC Disciplinary Process (see MOH website [here](#) for the published report in November 2019).

3. The Medical Ethics programmes and activities will be conducted by the three medical Professional Bodies (PBs), i.e. Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS), College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) and Singapore Medical Association (SMA). Doctors who are not members of AMS, CFPS or SMA can participate in their Medical Ethics programmes as these three PBs offer their programmes to all doctors regardless of membership.

4. Doctors can submit the required Medical Ethics core points from 1 January 2024 for those whose PCs end this year on 31 December 2023 and from 1 January 2025 for those whose PCs end next year on 31 December 2024. For doctors who renew their PCs two yearly, 5 core points for medical ethics are required and for those who wish to renew for only one year, 3 core points are required.

5. You are advised to refer to the FAQs (Annex) (<https://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/smc/feedback>) for more details on compulsory CME on Medical Ethics.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chee Yam Cheng', written over a thin horizontal line.

Prof Chee Yam Cheng
President
Singapore Medical Council

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ON MANDATORY MEDICAL ETHICS CME FOR DOCTORS

Q1	Why was Medical Ethics Core points for CME implemented by SMC to renew doctors' practising certificates?								
A1	<p>In the Report on Recommendations by the MOH Workgroup to review the taking of Informed Consent and SMC Disciplinary Process published in November 2019, one of the Recommendations was to establish compulsory continuing medical education (CME) on Medical Ethics for all doctors.</p> <p>The Workgroup identified the need to increase doctors' awareness of ethical issues and developments, such as informed consent, as these developments could have a significant impact on the practice of medicine. Doctors need to be updated on ethical issues to ensure that they have the knowledge that would enable them to practise ethically and safely.</p> <p>You may read the MOH Workgroup report at MOH's website here.</p>								
Q2	How many Medical Ethics CME Core points will I need to accrue?								
A2	<p>Doctors applying for a 2-year Practising Certificate (PC) will need to compulsorily accrue at least 5 Medical Ethics CME core points while doctors applying for a 1-year PC require at least 3 Medical Ethics CME core points as shown in the Table below.</p> <p>Table</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="311 1209 1316 2056"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="311 1209 646 1265">PC Types</th> <th data-bbox="646 1209 1316 1265">CME Requirements for PC Renewal</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="311 1265 646 1534">2-year PC</td> <td data-bbox="646 1265 1316 1534"> At least 50 CME points, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% or 10 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and • <i>5 core points in Ethics CME</i> *New* </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="311 1534 646 1803">1-year PC</td> <td data-bbox="646 1534 1316 1803"> At least 25 CME points, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% or 5 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and • <i>3 core points in Ethics CME</i> *New* </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="311 1803 646 2056">Doctors already on SMC's Register and applying for a new PC</td> <td data-bbox="646 1803 1316 2056"> At least 50 CME points, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% or 10 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and • <i>5 core points in Ethics CME</i> *New* </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PC Types	CME Requirements for PC Renewal	2-year PC	At least 50 CME points, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% or 10 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and • <i>5 core points in Ethics CME</i> *New* 	1-year PC	At least 25 CME points, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% or 5 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and • <i>3 core points in Ethics CME</i> *New* 	Doctors already on SMC's Register and applying for a new PC	At least 50 CME points, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% or 10 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and • <i>5 core points in Ethics CME</i> *New*
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Q3	What if I am applying for the reduced practice lower CME requirement Practising Certificate (PC)?						
A3	Doctors who are on lower CME requirement PC with reduced practice will only need to accrue 10 or 20 CME points respectively for their 1-year or 2-year PC. No core points including Medical Ethics core points is needed.						
Q4	When do I need to start accumulating Medical Ethics CME Core points?						
A4	<p>Doctors whose PCs are expiring on 31 December 2025 can start accumulating the required Medical Ethics Core points in the CME qualifying periods (QP) from 2024/2025 as shown in the table below.</p> <p>Table</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>PC Type</th> <th>Period for accumulating Compulsory Medical Ethics CME (CME QP)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2-year full PC</td> <td>From 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-year full PC</td> <td>From 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PC Type	Period for accumulating Compulsory Medical Ethics CME (CME QP)	2-year full PC	From 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025	1-year full PC	From 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025
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Q5	Who are SMC's approved Medical Ethics CME providers? How do I find out about their Medical Ethics programmes?						
A5	<p>Currently three Medical Professional Bodies (PBs) ie the Academy of Medicine Singapore (AMS), College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) and Singapore Medical Association (SMA) are approved by the SMC to conduct mandatory medical ethics programmes. Please visit their websites for more information.</p> <p>Medical Ethics programmes organised by the other CME providers may be considered for non-core points. Other CME providers may also collaborate with the three PBs to co-organise programmes in accordance with the framework for approved mandatory medical ethics programmes.</p>						
Q6	I am not a member of AMS, CFPS or SMA (PBs). Can I participate in the Medical Ethics CME organised by them?						
A6	<p>Yes, you can. Doctors who are not members of any of the three PBs can register to participate in Medical Ethics programmes and other CME activities offered by them. Please visit the respective PBs' website via the following links for more details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.ams.edu.sg/news-events/calendar-of-events • https://www.cfps.org.sg/events/events-calendar/ • https://smacmep.org.sg/events-calendar/ https://www.sma.org.sg/cme-programme 						

Q7	How can I know whether there are fees to participate in the PBs' Medical Ethics courses?												
A7	Doctors may check for such details in the websites of AMS, CFPS and SMA.												
Q8	What kind of CME are they organising for doctors to obtain Medical Ethics CME Core points?												
A8	<p>Doctors may participate in Medical Ethics events or distance learning programmes (DLPs) offered by the three PBs. Examples of the categories of Medical Ethics CME Core points are as follows:</p> <p>Table 3</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Ethics CME point submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cat 1B</td> <td>Local events (e.g. workshops, scientific meetings, conferences)</td> <td>PBs will submit the CME points for doctors who had participated in their events</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cat 2</td> <td>Authors of Medical Ethics distance learning programmes (DLPs)</td> <td>PBs will submit the CME points for doctors who are authors/trainers of the respective PBs' DLPs for Medical Ethics</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cat 3B</td> <td>Accredited distance-learning programmes (DLPs) with verifiable self-assessment</td> <td>PBs will submit the CME points for doctors who had completed their DLPs</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Description	Ethics CME point submission	Cat 1B	Local events (e.g. workshops, scientific meetings, conferences)	PBs will submit the CME points for doctors who had participated in their events	Cat 2	Authors of Medical Ethics distance learning programmes (DLPs)	PBs will submit the CME points for doctors who are authors/trainers of the respective PBs' DLPs for Medical Ethics	Cat 3B	Accredited distance-learning programmes (DLPs) with verifiable self-assessment	PBs will submit the CME points for doctors who had completed their DLPs
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Q9	What topics are covered in the Medical Ethics CME?												
A9	<p>While there are various topics on Medical Ethics by other providers which can be accrued for general CME points, doctors must complete CME under the following four core areas below and organised by AMS, CFPS and SMA to be eligible for Medical Ethics core points.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professionalism / Medical Professionalism 2. Ethics (e.g. Four boxes approach, Ethical analysis in medicine, Public Health Ethics, Research Ethics) 3. Informed Consent and Medical Decision Making 4. Medical Records, Privacy and Confidentiality <p>More details will be given when the Medical Ethics CME organised by the three PBs are ready.</p>												