



# SMC

## NEWSLETTER

Doctor Support  
Service



CME on  
Medical Ethics



Guidelines on  
Aesthetic Practices  
for Doctors

2016 Edition



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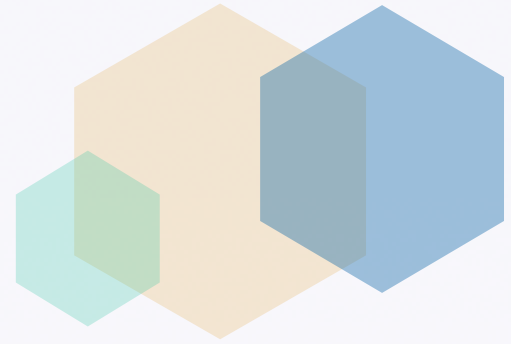
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## SMC President's Message



*D*ear colleagues,

We are already past the halfway mark of 2023 and this is the second SMC Newsletter of the year. In this issue we revisit some areas to learn and re-learn.



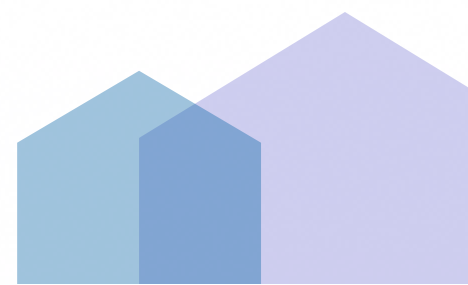
### Mandatory Medical Ethics (MME)

In the last three issues of the SMC Newsletter, the SMC started a Series in Professional Ethics and there were two articles highlighting two of the most common areas of complaints in SMC viz Propriety and Sexual Boundaries in a doctor's practice, and the prescriptions of Hypnotics, Benzodiazepines and Codeine Containing Cough mixtures. Doctors have been suspended or removed from the medical registration register for such offences.

The SMC Physician's Pledge states that we must comply with the provisions of the Ethical Code. No doctor can comply with an Ethical Code which he/she neither reads nor knows about. The number of complaints that SMC receives can be significantly reduced if doctors are aware of their ethical and professional obligations and make the health of their patients their first consideration.

The Council issued a circular on 11 May 2023 to inform doctors that Mandatory Medical Ethics (MME) CME core points must be acquired before the renewal of Practising Certificates (PCs) from 2026. SMC reminds practitioners to start acquiring these core points from January next year for those whose PCs are expiring this year in December 2023.

We are grateful to the three medical professional bodies viz the Academy of Medicine Singapore (AMS), College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) and Singapore Medical Association (SMA) who have established the Medical Ethics curriculum for the MME core points. The curriculum which includes four basic topics encompassing the doctors learning are Professionalism; Ethics; Informed Consent and Medical Decision Making; and Medical Records, Privacy and Confidentiality. The curriculum has been thought through and thoroughly discussed in the SMC CME Co-ordinating Committee and its subcommittee looking into the implementation of MME.



## Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors

The current Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors came into effect from 1 August 2016. In this issue, doctors involved in aesthetics practice are reminded to comply strictly to the Guidelines, including the type of aesthetic procedures they can perform. Complaints regarding aesthetic practices are also on the rise and doctors who perform aesthetic procedures should be mindful of the types of aesthetic procedures that they are allowed to perform in Table 1 and Table 2 of the Guidelines.

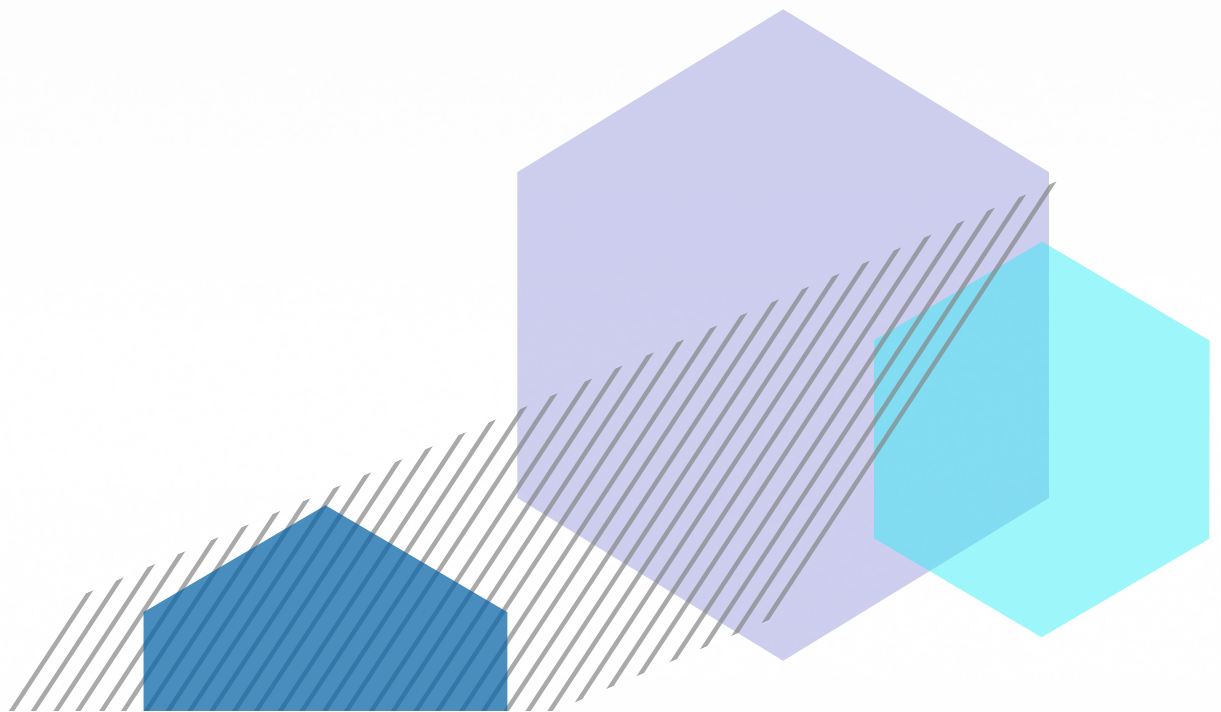
## Support Programme for Doctors

While we protect the safety of patients, the well-being of our doctors is just as important. We continue to remind doctors on the Emotional Support Programme jointly launched by AMS, CFPS and SMA last year to provide advice and guidance to doctors as well as provide counselling and emotional support if needed, for those undergoing the disciplinary process.

## SMC Election

I would also like to thank all doctors who had participated in the recent SMC Election 2023 and warmly welcome two newly elected members, Dr Chua Jun Jin and Dr Lai Siang Hui and the five re-elected members to the Council namely Dr Chen Suet Ching Jeanette, Dr Lim Khong Jin Michael, A/Prof Ng Wei Keong Alan, Dr Subramaniam Surajkumar and Dr Wong Chiang Yin. I would also like to thank immediate past Council members Dr Tay Miah Hiang and Dr Christopher Chong for their various contributions to the work of the Council in its policies, disciplinary processes and in various committees.

**Professor Chee Yam Cheng**  
**President**



# Compulsory Continuing Medical Education (CME) on Medical Ethics

The SMC had, on 11 May 2023 informed doctors via a Circular that they must acquire Mandatory Medical Ethics (MME) CME core points before they can renew their Practising Certificate (PC) from 2026 onwards.

Doctors whose PCs are expiring on 31 December 2023 and who will be renewing their PC from 1 January 2024 can **begin acquiring** the medical ethics CME core points from 1 January 2024. Those whose PCs are expiring on 31 December next year (December 2024) can begin acquiring the points from 1 January 2025.

For doctors who intend to renew their PCs two yearly from 1 January 2026, 5 core points for medical ethics will be required and for those who intend to renew for only one year, 3 core points for medical ethics are required. You may refer to the SMC Circular [here](#) and also the Frequently Asked Questions at SMC's website [here](#) for your queries.

PC Types	CME Requirements for PC Renewal
2-year PC	<p>At least 50 CME points, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20% or 10 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and</li> <li>- 5 core points in Ethics CME</li> </ul>
1-year PC	<p>At least 25 CME points, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20% or 5 points shall be core points in each of their registered specialty and/or in Family Medicine; and</li> <li>- 3 core points in Ethics CME</li> </ul>



# Update on the Emotional Support Programme

On 1 June 2022, the SMC announced the establishment of a support programme for doctors who faced disciplinary proceedings. The programme was jointly set up by the three medical Professional Bodies namely the Academy of Medicine Singapore, College of Family Physicians Singapore and Singapore Medical Association.

Understandably, being informed of a complaint against one's medical practice can be a difficult, fearful and stressful experience. The disciplinary process may also take time to reach a conclusion, depending on the complexity of the case. Though this may cause anxiety, the majority of complaints in fact do not result in formal disciplinary proceedings. Most complaints result in dismissals or letters of advice.

We understand that some doctors may choose to keep such complaints to themselves and may not confide with family, friends or colleagues about their anxieties and worries. Doctors need not have to face this predicament, stressful situation or fears alone.

Through this support programme, a panel of doctors from the three Professional Bodies who fully understand the SMC disciplinary process will be able to advise and guide doctors on what to expect from the disciplinary process, how to deal with this stress, and provide guidance on access to legal advice and insurance support if required.

For detailed information on this programme, please refer to the e-brochure [here](#).

## Who we are

The three medical Professional Bodies (PBs) - the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (AMS), College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) and Singapore Medical Association (SMA) have come together to implement a doctor support service to provide emotional support to you and to help you manage your anxieties and fears. This is a confidential service and all that transpires is confidential between you and the supporting doctor.

Volunteers who participate in providing this support service are fellow doctors who would be able to provide a listening ear and collegial support. They are also knowledgeable about the Singapore Medical Council's (SMC) disciplinary system and would be able to provide appropriate support as you navigate the various stages of complaint, investigation, and outcome of the process.



## Doctor Support Service

Are you facing a complaint or disciplinary proceedings? A support service for doctors set up by AMS, CFPS and SMA can help.

Find us at

**AMS**  
6593 7870  
drsupport@ams.edu.sg

**CFPS**  
6223 0606  
contact@cfps.org.sg

**SMA**  
6223 1264  
sma@sma.org.sg

## What support is provided?

The supporting doctor from the professional bodies is an experienced member who fully understands the Singapore Medical Council's (SMC) disciplinary process.

Areas where the supporting doctor may advise you include:

- what to expect from the disciplinary process;
- how to deal with undue stress; and
- guidance on access to legal advice and insurance support.

Please note that the supporting doctor is unable to provide you with legal advice or guidance regarding your case or how you should respond to the complaint. The supporting doctor is also not authorised to speak for the SMC, or any party involved in the inquiry of your complaint. Your legal counsel is the appropriate party to advise you on these matters.

## Who can use this service?

All doctors who are facing a complaint can access our support service. The support is available from the time the doctor receives the notice of complaint until the final conclusion of the inquiry into the complaint.

## The service is confidential

The professional bodies will obtain the necessary information such as names, emails, and phone numbers to facilitate communication between you and the supporting doctor. Any information shared is kept confidential between parties.

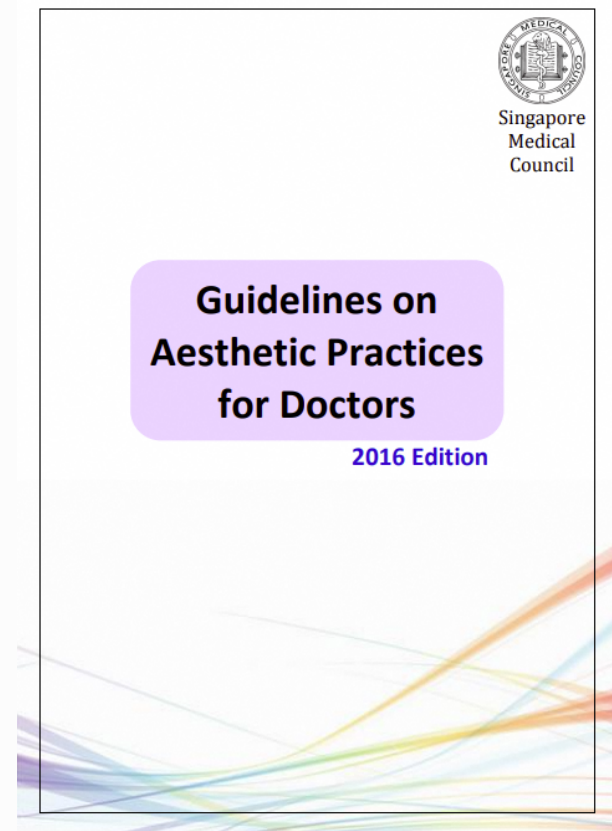


## Series in Professional Ethics

# Compliance with the 2016 Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors

The SMC would like to remind all registered medical practitioners that strict compliance with the 2016 Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors (2016 Guidelines) is required if they are involved in aesthetic practice.

Regardless of specialty, all medical practitioners must fulfil the relevant criteria. They must have performed the requisite number of aesthetic procedures between 1 October 2006 to 30 September 2008; or obtained the relevant Certificate of Competence specified in either Table 1 or Table 2 of the 2016 Guidelines as applicable to them.



The Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors was first developed by the Academy of Medicine, Singapore, the College of Family Physicians, Singapore and the Singapore Medical Council in July 2008 and updated in October 2008 (2008 Guidelines) to provide a framework for doctors who perform aesthetic procedures under appropriate regulatory oversight.

*Aesthetic practice represents...Operations and other procedures that revise or change the appearance, colour, texture, structure, or position of bodily features, which most would consider otherwise to be within the broad range of 'normal' for that person.*



To stay abreast with newer developments and emerging trends in aesthetic procedures, a Working Committee was appointed in January 2014 to review the 2008 Guidelines to advise on the standards for aesthetic practices and make recommendations.

The revised 2016 Guidelines came into effect on 1 August 2016 and superseded the 2008 Guidelines. A circular was published on 5 August 2021 to remind doctors of the need to pay heed to the Guidelines.

As with the 2008 Guidelines, the 2016 Guidelines sets out that aesthetic practice represents an area of practice involving: *“Operations and other procedures that revise or change the appearance, colour, texture, structure, or position of bodily features, which most would consider otherwise to be within the broad range of ‘normal’ for that person.”*

In this regard, the 2016 Guidelines reiterate that aesthetic practice is not regarded as a speciality or sub-specialty of medicine. Doctors performing aesthetic procedures must also ensure that all display and/or use of qualifications, titles or designations for publicity purposes are in accordance with the requirements set out in the provisions of the Medical Registration Act.

Furthermore, the content of any advertisement (especially images) must not be misleading, and they must show that such procedures are carried out in appropriate clinical settings.



Doctors who perform aesthetic procedures should be mindful of the types of aesthetic procedures that they are allowed to perform in Table 1 and Table 2 of the 2016 Guidelines.



For the avoidance of doubt, Table 1 applies to non-specialists and specialists who are not listed in Table 2 while Table 2 only applies to certain specialists as specified.

Medical practitioners who are performing procedures under Table 1 should comply strictly with the Guidelines and listed specialists who did not receive training to perform the procedures in Table 2 should not perform the procedures unless or until they have undergone the requisite training and acquired the necessary experience to perform the procedures competently.

It is recommended that doctors who have been performing aesthetic procedures should have sufficient and appropriate medical malpractice insurance to safeguard patients' interests.

All registered doctors are also advised to keep abreast of medical knowledge relevant to such practice and ensure that their clinical and technical skills are maintained as stated in the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines (2016).

For more information on matters relating to aesthetic practice, please refer to the [SMC website](#).

# Outcome of SMC Election 2023

## Elected Council Members

The SMC held an election from 18 April 2023 to 2 May 2023 to fill seven vacancies arising from the end of term of office for seven Council members.

The seven candidates who were successfully elected as Council members in SMC for a three-year term from 9 June 2023 under regulation 7 of the Medical Registration Regulations 2010, are:



**DR CHEN SUET CHING  
JEANETTE**



**DR CHUA JUN JIN**



**DR LAI SIANG HUI**



**DR LIM KHONG JIN  
MICHAEL**



**DR NG WEI KEONG  
ALAN**



**DR SUBRAMANIAM  
SURAJKUMAR**



**DR WONG CHIANG YIN**

We congratulate the elected members on their successful appointment and welcome them to the Council.

# Practising Certificate (PC) Renewal 2023

## *For Who?*

Fully and conditionally registered doctors whose PCs are **expiring on 31 December 2023**, can submit their application from 2 September 2023.

## *How to Renew?*

Doctors need to **log into the Professional Registration System (PRS)** on the SMC website with their Singpass **at least one month** before their PC expires to apply for a renewal.

Applications submitted on and after **1 December 2023** will be considered as late applications. A late application fee of \$80 will apply.

## *PC Renewal Criteria*

- Obtained **sufficient Continuing Medical Education (CME) points** within the qualifying period.
- **Must not have any outstanding fine** for not voting in previous SMC's Elections (applies to doctors on full registration only).

## *Reminder*

Doctors are reminded to log into the PRS to **update their contact details** such as **email addresses, handphone numbers** and **employment information** so as not to miss any important notifications from SMC.



## **SMC Newsletter Editorial Committee**

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