

17 May 2017

Dear SMA Members,

It has come to our attention that a letter from Fullerton Healthcare Group Pte Limited (“FHG”) with the subject matter of “Addendum”, dated on or around 8th May 2017 had been sent to members of FHG’s Healthcare Panel. Within the letter, it contained a statement that FHG had “consulted the Ministry of Health and the Singapore Medical Association on (FHG’s) new fee structure”.

SMA would like to state the following for clarification:

- 1) SMA met up with FHG at their request. The meeting took place on the 13 April 2017 at the SMA office.
- 2) SMA reiterated to FHG that SMA’s position is stated in the Joint Advisory on fees paid to Managed Care and Third-Party Administrator Companies co-issued with Academy of Medicine, Singapore, and College of Family Physicians, Singapore, dated 11 April 2017. The Joint Advisory can be found in SMA’s website. The Joint Advisory states clearly a fixed fee arrangement is preferred.
- 3) That SMA reiterated to FHG that any scheme by any MCO or TPA has to enable the medical professional to comply with the 2016 Edition of the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines.
- 4) SMA has not endorsed any MCO or TPA scheme as being compliant (or otherwise) with SMC requirements. The SMA Council is of the opinion that it is not the role of SMA to endorse any particular scheme.

SMA advises our members to be personally convinced that any scheme offered by any MCO or TPA allows for your compliance with the 2016 Edition of the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines, SMC’s Handbook on Medical Ethics, and SMC’s advisory issued on 13 Dec 2016 [“Advisory to Medical Practitioners on payment of fees to Managed Care Companies, Third Party Administrators, Insurance Entities or Patient Referral Services”] and be prepared to defend your position and participation in any MCO or TPA scheme if and when required to do so by the SMC.

SMA further advises our members that if you are uncomfortable, unsure, or do not have enough information with regard to any proposed scheme on whether the scheme complies with your obligations to SMC requirements, you are advised, from a point of ethical prudence, to not sign up on the proposed scheme before you seek appropriate legal advice.

Dr Lee Yik Voon  
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Singapore Medical Association