

HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Report by Dr Lim Kheng Choon

Dr Lim is the Honorary Secretary of the 60th SMA Council. He is currently an associate consultant at Singapore General Hospital.



SMA welcomes Court judgement on professional misconduct

In response to a media query regarding the recent court judgement, SMA released a statement on 25 July 2019, which is reproduced below.

"We welcome the Court of 3 Judges (C3J) decision to absolve Dr Lim Lian Arn of professional misconduct.

Specifically the point that not all breaches of the Singapore Medical Council (SMC) Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines (ECEG) amount to professional misconduct; there should be a proven case of serious negligence. This is important for all doctors who try their best for their patients, but some will inadvertently make human errors. Honest mistakes should therefore be judged as such.

It is the responsibility of the SMC to adduce evidence to prove professional misconduct beyond reasonable doubt in the specific context of the case, which in this case is informed consent.

The SMA was concerned that the previous SMC Disciplinary Tribunal decision could lead to the practice of defensive medicine. We therefore fully welcome the C3J decision."

Visit <http://bit.ly/31k9dra> to view the case summary and <http://bit.ly/2YGC86Q> to view the full judgement.

Publication of joint CFPS-SMA study on effect of a disciplinary proceeding on practice behaviour

SMA congratulates the authors of the paper "A descriptive study of the effect of a disciplinary proceeding decision on medical practitioners' practice behaviour in the context of providing a hydrocortisone and lignocaine injection".

Following the conviction of Dr Lim Lian Arn for professional misconduct by SMC earlier this year, SMA and the College of Family Physicians Singapore (CFPS) commissioned a study evaluating the impact of the case and how it affected medical practice. The results of the study were recently published in the *Singapore Medical Journal*. It showed that after the conviction, fewer doctors offered the hydrocortisone and lignocaine injection. The median price charged for performing the injection also increased among the surveyed doctors. The study concluded that when the deterrent effect of a conviction is unintended, negative consequences will be increased healthcare costs and increased prevalence of defensive medicine.

SMA congratulates the authors Drs Wong Chiang Yin, Subramaniam Surajkumar, Lee Yik Voon and Tan Tze Lee for their work.

The details of the study can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2GMDmYa>.

SMA selects preferred partners in medical indemnity

Given the changing landscape in medical indemnity, the wide variety of products being offered and the varied needs of our members, SMA has named the Medical Protection Society as the preferred mutual, NTUC Income as the preferred insurance company and Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group as the preferred

insurance broker for providing medical practice indemnity to SMA Members.

Our preferred partners were chosen based on many factors, including their track record in medical practice indemnity, their openness to our suggestions, the transparency in their processes and the quality of their products.

We are confident that the range of products and services provided by our preferred partners will meet the needs of the vast majority of doctors practising in Singapore.

Meeting with HSA

On 8 July 2019, SMA, represented by 1st Vice-President Dr Tan Yia Swam, met with Health Sciences Authority (HSA) CEO Dr Mimi Choong and her team. Others present included attendees from the Academy of Medicine, Singapore, CFPS and Singapore Dental Association. Various issues were discussed, including the import and supply of unregistered therapeutic products and medical devices, health products manufactured by healthcare institutions for their patients' use, and communication of health product safety information. SMA will provide further updates on these issues when details are finalised.

SMA Council connects with overseas student leaders

SMA Council members met with student leaders from the Singapore Medical Society of Ireland and Singapore Medical Society of the United Kingdom on 18 July 2019. There was an open discussion on the needs of overseas Singapore medical students and how SMA may assist in several areas, including facilitating reintegration with the local work environment and highlighting available local job openings. ♦