

MEDICAL REGISTRATION ORDINANCE (Chapter 161)

ORDER MADE BY THE INQUIRY PANEL OF
THE MEDICAL COUNCIL OF HONG KONG

DR CHUNG RONALD SIU HONG (REG. NO.: M12488)

It is hereby notified that after due inquiry held on 2 June 2023 in accordance with section 21 of the Medical Registration Ordinance, Chapter 161 of the Laws of Hong Kong, the Inquiry Panel of the Medical Council of Hong Kong (“Inquiry Panel”) found Dr CHUNG Ronald Siu Hong (Registration No.: M12488) guilty of the following charge:—

“That on 20 September 2018, he, being a registered medical practitioner, disregarded his professional responsibility to his patient (“the Patient”), in that he failed to keep proper and adequate medical records in respect of the Patient.

In relation to the facts alleged, he has been guilty of misconduct in a professional respect.”

2. Briefly stated, the Patient first consulted Dr CHUNG at the Tseung Kwan O Polyclinic (the “Clinic”) of the Union Hospital (“UH”) on 20 September 2018 for her left eye problem.

3. There was conflicting evidence as to the Patient’s medical complaint. According to the Patient, she had told Dr CHUNG during the consultation that there was a shadow at the lower part of her left eye which disturbed her vision. But according to Dr CHUNG, the Patient merely complained of grittiness, discomfort and increase in watery discharge of her left eye.

4. There was no dispute that having conducted an eye examination on the Patient, Dr CHUNG told her that she was suffering from left eye conjunctivitis and mild cataract in both eyes. Dr CHUNG then prescribed the Patient with Tobradex eye drop, which contained antibiotic and steroid, and asked her to return for follow-up if the symptoms persisted or worsened.

5. And according to the Internal Communication Record of the Clinic kept by UH, the Patient made a telephone call to the Clinic on 21 September 2018 and mentioned to a clinic nurse, amongst others, that she started to see shadow in her eye and wanted to know if that was due to the side effect of the eye drop prescribed to her and whether she needed to come back to have an earlier follow up visit.

6. According to Dr CHUNG, the Patient’s enquiry as recorded in the Internal Communication Record of the Clinic was relayed to him for instructions. He believed that the shadow in the Patient’s eye would not be caused by the eye drop that he prescribed. Nevertheless, he considered that the Patient should attend an earlier follow-up in view of such new symptom. He therefore noted down his instructions in the Internal Communication Record of the Clinic and asked the clinic nurse to inform the Patient of the same immediately.

7. According to the medical records obtained from UH, the Patient returned to the Clinic on 24 September 2018 and was diagnosed by another doctor to be suffering from macular haemorrhage.

8. According to the Patient, she consulted another private ophthalmologist on 26 September 2018 and was subsequently referred by the latter to the Hospital Authority for treatment of her left eye vitreous haemorrhage.

9. Meanwhile, the Patient lodged this complaint against Dr CHUNG with the Secretary of the Medical Council.

10. Dr CHUNG admitted the factual particulars of the amended disciplinary charge against him but it remains for us to consider and determine on the evidence whether he has been guilty of misconduct in a professional respect.

11. It was the unchallenged opinion of the Secretary’s expert witness, Dr LAI, which the Inquiry Panel accepted, that *“The clinical notes on 20 September 2018 are inadequate. There was no documentation of patient’s history and examination findings. There was only a diagnosis and the prescription... proper clinical notes in this case should contain the patient’s chief complaint, the duration of onset of the symptom(s), the visual acuity, the eye pressure, the cornea clarity, the distribution of the conjunctival injection, the eye involved, the anterior chamber clarity, the optic disc and macula if patient was examined with 90D lens. In Dr Chung’s statement dated 18 February*

2021..., he stated that he had performed all the above and also confrontation visual field test and Amsler grid test and the findings were all normal. However, all these examinations findings were not recorded in the clinical notes...

12. It is clearly stated in section 1.1 of the Code of Professional Conduct (2016 edition) (the “Code”) that:

“1.1 Medical records

1.1.1 The medical record is the formal documentation maintained by a doctor on his patients’ history, physical findings, investigations, treatment, and clinical progress...

1.1.2 A medical record documents the basis for the clinical management of a patient. It reflects on the quality of care and is necessary for continuity of care...

1.1.3 All doctors have the responsibility to maintain systematic, true, adequate, clear, and contemporaneous medical records...”

13. In failing to keep proper and adequate medical records in respect of the Patient, Dr CHUNG had in the view of the Inquiry Panel by his conduct in the present case fallen below the standards expected of registered medical practitioners in Hong Kong. Accordingly, the Inquiry Panel found Dr CHUNG guilty of misconduct in a professional respect as charged.

14. The Inquiry Panel took a serious view on Dr CHUNG’s failure to comply with section 1.1 of the Code and was most concerned about the substantial lack of details in the medical records kept by Dr CHUNG on his consultation with the Patient, which were essential for the management and continuity of care for the Patient, be it by Dr CHUNG or other professional colleagues.

15. Having considered the serious nature and gravity of disciplinary charge and what was heard and read in mitigation, the Inquiry Panel ordered that Dr CHUNG’s name be removed from the General Register for a period of 1 month and the operation of the removal order be suspended for a period of 6 months, subject to the conditions that Dr CHUNG shall complete during the suspension period satisfactory peer audit by a Practice Monitor to be appointed by the Council.

16. The orders are published in the *Gazette* in accordance with section 21(5) of the Medical Registration Ordinance. The full decision of the Inquiry Panel of the Medical Council is published in the official website of the Medical Council of Hong Kong (<http://www.mchk.org.hk>).

TANG Wai-king, Grace Temporary Chairman,
The Medical Council of Hong Kong