



## **PRESS STATEMENT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH MALAYSIA**

### **EMPLOYMENT OF LOCUM DOCTORS**

1. The recently concluded 341<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) recorded its concern on the involvement of unqualified persons practicing medicine as locums in medical clinics. This is against the provisions of the Medical Act 1971 and compromises the quality and safety of care provided to patients.
2. The Medical Act 1971 stipulates that any medical practitioner must be registered with the MMC before being able to practice medicine legally in Malaysia. The Council's Code of Professional Conduct also provides that any registered medical practitioner involved in improper delegation of medical duties, including the employment of unqualified or unregistered persons, will be liable to disciplinary punishment. This allows the Malaysian Medical Council to ensure that the Malaysian public receives competent and safe medical care.
3. Of late, the Council has received a number of complaints from the public regarding healthcare provider premises, especially general practitioner clinics, employing unregistered or unqualified persons to work as part-time doctors (locums).
4. Over the past 3 years, there have been 7 medical practitioners brought before the Council for such offences. In the same time period, 4 medical practitioners were found guilty of which 3 were reprimanded and 1 practitioner was suspended for 6 months.
5. These unregistered persons include those who do not have medical qualifications or those who possess a medical qualification but are not eligible for registration with the Council. There have been instances where owners or persons in charge of the clinics are duped into believing that a particular locum applicant is registered after they are shown forged documents including registration and annual practicing certificates (APC's).
6. The onus is on the doctor or the person in charge of the clinic, to ensure that the employed locum is a qualified and registered medical practitioner, and in possession of a valid current annual practicing certificate issued by the MMC. Whether having done so knowingly or unknowingly, the doctor in charge of the premises involved in employing an unqualified or unlicensed person has violated the Code of Professional Conduct, and thus the Medical Act 1971, and is liable to disciplinary action by the Council.

7. As such, all medical practitioners are called upon to properly verify the qualification, registration and APC status of any doctor to be employed in their clinic, and to make sure that they practice in accordance to what is stipulated in their APCs, failing which, they may be charged with violating the provisions in the Code of Professional Conduct and the Medical Act 1971.

Thank you.

**DATUK DR NOOR HISHAM ABDULLAH**  
Director General of Health Malaysia, and  
President, Malaysian Medical Council.

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