

Council News

I. ADDRESSING MANAGED CARE

The next Council Dialogue with Members will be held on **13 October 2007 (Saturday), 2pm at the SMA Conference Room**. We invite members to share their experiences and feedback on managed care with us. Please look out for the registration form in the mailbag.

2. PROVISION OF ACUPUNCTURE IN MEDICAL CLINICS



MOH has reviewed its policy on the provision of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) services in medical clinics, and with immediate effect, acupuncture services may be provided within the premises of medical and dental clinics licensed under the PHMC Act. (See MOH guidelines below.) The restriction on the provision of other forms of TCM in medical clinics, such as “tui na” and herbal medicine services, will however remain. ■

MOH Guidelines on the Provision of Acupuncture Services in Medical Clinics (August 2007)

PROVISION OF ACUPUNCTURE SERVICES BY REGISTERED MEDICAL & DENTAL PRACTITIONERS

- 1) Registered medical and dental practitioners (who are also acupuncturists/TCM physicians registered with the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Practitioners Board) who wish to provide acupuncture services as part of their package of services to their patients may proceed to do so within the premises of a medical clinic licensed under the Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics (PHMC) Act.
- 2) The provision of acupuncture services should be in accordance with current clinical evidence. The use of acupuncture for conditions where evidence of clinical efficacy is lacking should be carried out with full disclosure and documentation, or on a clinical trial basis, subject to the standard scientific and ethical review and approval from the relevant authorities.
- 3) The registered medical/dental practitioner is responsible for assessing whether acupuncture is appropriate for the patient. He must explain to the patient the reasons for recommending acupuncture treatment and must obtain proper informed consent from the patients before commencing acupuncture treatment.
- 4) The registered medical or dental practitioner who is also a registered acupuncturist/TCM physician will be accountable to the Singapore Medical Council or Singapore Dental Council and the TCM Practitioners Board for his actions.

PROVISION OF ACUPUNCTURE SERVICES BY REGISTERED ACUPUNCTURISTS/TCM PHYSICIANS IN MEDICAL CLINIC PREMISES

- 5) Medical clinics may employ acupuncturists/TCM physicians registered with the TCM Practitioners Board to provide acupuncture services to their patients. The registered acupuncturist/TCM physician cannot administer other modalities of TCM to the patients (e.g. tuina, herbal medicine services) in the clinic.
- 6) Registered medical and dental practitioners who wish to refer their patients to acupuncturists/TCM physicians for acupuncture treatment should first assure themselves that this is in the best interests of their patients. Medical and dental practitioners are responsible for the appropriateness of such referrals. Proper informed consent should be obtained from the patients prior to the referral, and the reasons for the referral must be properly documented.
- 7) The medical and dental practitioners must maintain primary responsibility for the patient and for referral of the patient to the registered acupuncturist/TCM physician. Hence, the patient must be registered to see the doctor or dentist and not the acupuncturist/TCM physician.