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## PRESS RELEASE

### UTILISATION OF FULL NAME AND REGISTRATION NUMBER UNDER THE MEDICAL ACT 1971 BY REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS IN OFFICIAL TRANSACTIONS

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1. Of late, the use of the title doctor (Dr.) as a prefix following one's name is being widely used.
2. Apart from medicine, veterinary, dentistry and various doctorate study graduates use such title to indicate their academic achievement.
3. However, there are also 'graduates' from dubious programs/studies both conducted locally as well as abroad, utilising such title with malice intensions. To avoid detection by authorities, they abbreviate their names.
4. Deceiving public into believing that he/she is a registered professional having the qualifications to profess as one is not only confined to medicine, it affects all professions.
5. To curb this illegal activity, certain licensing authorities mandate its registered members to use their registration number in all official transactions.
6. *Section 32* of the *Medical Act 1971* explicitly states that is an offence for any unregistered person to fraudulently portray himself as being registered.
7. *Section 33* of the Act defines fraudulent misrepresentation as follows:
  33. (1) *Any person not registered or exempted from registration under this Act who-*
    - (a) *wilfully and falsely pretends to be registered under this Act or to be qualified to practise medicine or surgery; or*
    - (b) *wilfully and falsely takes or uses the name or title of physician, doctor of medicine, licentiate in medicine and surgery bachelor of medicine, surgeon, general practitioner or apothecary; or*
    - (c) *wilfully and falsely takes or use any name title, addition or description implying that he is registered under this Act, or that he is recognized by law as a physician or surgeon or licentiate in medicine and surgery or a practitioner in medicine or an apothecary; or*

8. Section **33(2)(a)** further defines as follows:

*(a) the taking or using by any person of the term 'doctor' or 'clinic' or "dispensary" or "hospital" or the equivalent of any of these terms in any other language in relation to the practice of medicine or surgery shall be deemed to be the taking or using of a name, title, addition or description calculated to induce any person to believe that he is qualified to practise medicine or surgery according to modern scientific methods:*

9. The penalty under Section 35 of the Act is as follows:

**'35. General penalty**

(1) Any person guilty of an offence against this Act for which no specific penalty is provided shall be liable on conviction -

- (a) in respect of a first offence to a fine not exceeding two thousand ringgit; and
- (b) in respect of the second or subsequent offences to a fine not exceeding five thousand ringgit or imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or both such fine and imprisonment.

(2) In the case of a continuing offence such person shall be liable to a further penalty of fifty ringgit for each day during the continuance of such offence in addition to the respective penalty under paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (1). '

10. Quite often the Ministry of Health and the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) are queried on sick leaves and medical reports which are dubious in nature purportedly generated by individuals whose registrations with the Council are doubtful. Undeniably, a few of the queries cannot be responded due to incomplete names of the maker of the document.

11. The deceiving acts may result in various negative implications such as causing disadvantage to the public, questioning the integrity of registered medical practitioners, affecting the quality in medical services and jeopardizing health tourism, amongst others.

12. Realizing the need to curb these malpractices the MMC at its monthly meeting on **10 September 2008** decided that all medical practitioners registered under the Medical Act 1971 need to use their full names according to their registration and to include their full registration numbers in all their official transactions such as rubber stamps and calling cards with effect from **01 January 2009**.

13. Practitioners temporarily registered under section 16 of the Medical Act 1971 can use the **Temporary Practising Registration** numbers. However, they still need to use their names in full.

14. House officers who have not been fully registered yet may use the **Provisional Registration** numbers with their names in full whilst undergoing the two-year internship training.

15. Based on the particulars given comprising names and registration numbers, the public can verify their registration from the MMC's official website address at <http://mmc.gov.my/> in the **Medical Register** section. By this approach, it is envisaged that the illegal usage of the title 'Dr' can be curtailed.

16. If necessary, the public can seek the practitioner's full name and registration number from the practitioner concerned during consultation.

17. Hence, it is the responsibilities of all registered practitioners to use full names complete with registration numbers in all official transactions with effect from **01 January 2009** to curb illegal activities by unscrupulous individuals.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



**(TAN SRI DATO' SERI DR. HJ. MOIID. ISMAIL MERICAN)**

President.

**Date:** 13 November 2008.