

ANNUAL PRACTICING CERTIFICATE (APC) ONLINE APPLICATION & PAYMENT SYSTEM

Speech by Tan Sri Dato Seri' Dr Hj Mohd Ismail Merican at its launch on 11 January 2011

Today is another historical and meaningful occasion in the annals of the Malaysian Medical Council.

Pursuant to section 20 of the Medical Act 1971, it is mandatory for any fully registered medical practitioner who wishes to practice medicine in this country to apply for an Annual Practicing Certificate (APC) after the first year of his full registration. Failure to do so is an offence against the Act.

In 2010, out of the total 24,500 fully registered practitioners, 20,355 practitioners have applied and were issued with APCs.

The APC is of significant importance for practitioners practising in the private sector as it is required for several regulatory requirements such as for procuring drugs, registering or renewing facilities license under the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act 1998 or for their indemnity insurance applications.

In instances where a practitioner is litigated for negligence or any other action in tort, a current annual practicing certificate is of utmost importance to validate his legality to practice in this country. The APC also identifies a legitimate practitioner from a bogus one.

Although APC applications can be made anytime throughout the year, it has been perennially observed that more than 80% of the applications were received by the Council towards the final quarter of the year causing a bottleneck at the Secretariat. This places a heavy burden on the Council to issue their certificate within a stipulated time much to the chagrin of the applicants. Notwithstanding whatever the reasons are, the APCs need to be issued on a rather urgent basis especially for the private sectors.

Taking into cognizance of the considerable delays arising from the hassle of processing the APC application which are applied at the last minute, the Council had embarked on inaugurating the *MMC Online Application and Payment System* to ease the burden on the Secretariat of the MMC and at the same time facilitate the application of APCs by practitioners online. It is hoped that with the introduction of this system it will completely eradicate missing application forms which has been a point of contention amongst practitioners for a long time.

Aware of the tremendous potentials in ICT, with all the hard work and fullest effort from the secretariat, I am very happy to announce that our newly introduced initiative today, namely the *MMC APC Online Application and Payment* is ready to be utilized on the 15th of January 2011. Under the new initiative, fully registered practitioners not only can apply for their APCs, but more importantly, they can conclude it online.

Through this online application system, medical practitioner will be able to update their particulars, apply for their APC and pay the renewal fees through the internet with a few mouse clicks.

The payment can be made by two methods i.e.

- a. Internet Banking – MEPS; and
- b. Credit Card - Master and Visa.

A printable electronic receipt will be provided after each successful transaction and the APC will be in the mail within three working days. Hopefully medical practitioners will receive it within a week or so.

To access the new initiative, practitioners need to browse the MMC's web portal at www.mmc.gov.my. For security reason, you may need a password to log-in and proceed with the application.

Information for first time log-in including passwords have been posted to eligible practitioners and hopefully it has reached them. For those who have not received any notification, kindly call our staff at 03 8883 1410.

In the initial phase the *MMC APC Online Application and Payment System* is only for the utilization by practitioners in the private sector as currently practitioners from the public sector are exempted from payment of their application fees. However when the Corporatization of the Council is completed after the amendments to the Medical Act all practitioners, irrespective of their employment whether in the private or public sector have to pay the prescribed fee for the application/renewal of APCs. Nevertheless, I urge those from the public sector to fully utilize this system to check and update their particulars online from time to time.

However practitioners who are not conversant with the features of this system may continue to apply via application forms but are advised to apply early and not to wait till the last minute.

There had been a cascading increase in the number of medical practitioners in Malaysia over the last few years which is forecasted to increase even more in the coming years. In 2010, there were about 32,250 medical practitioners registered with the Council encompassing 24,500 fully registered, 7,500 provisionally registered and another 250 temporarily registered. Another 4,000 new practitioners are expected to apply for registration in 2011. Thus, this is another great achievement in terms of numbers of doctors practicing in our country. When the Act was gazetted in October 1971, there were only a mere 837 practitioners.

To serve our registered practitioners better, the Council had introduced our website services *mmc.gov.my* on **06 August 2008**. Through its official website, Registered Medical Practitioners and members of the public all over the world are able to obtain information covering all aspect of the registration and regulation of practitioners in this country

It is my fervent hope that our effort to introduce this new initiative will help to enhance the role of MMC in safeguarding the interests of our doctors, members of the public and the medical profession in Malaysia.