



Malaysian Medical Council Guideline on Plagiarism

Introduction:

The Malaysian Medical Council views and considers plagiarism to have significant medical ethical and medical legal implications, and its practice is considered an abuse of professional privilege and skills conferred by custom (Section 2: Code of Professional Conduct) in respect of academic and professional medical publications, which includes medical text books, research articles and case reports, in the print or electronic media.

Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and a breach of journalistic ethics (O'Connor Z, 2015).

Definition:

Plagiarism is the "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another author's "use or close imitation of the language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. (Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary 1995, quoted by Vera S, Nelson RS, 2007).

Academic plagiarism encompasses "The use of ideas, concepts, words, or structures without appropriately acknowledging the source to benefit in a setting where originality is expected" (B. Gipp, 2014).

"Plagiarism occurs when someone uses words, ideas, or work products, attributable to another identifiable person or source, without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained, in a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship, and in order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be monetary." (T. Fishman, 2009)

Medical Publications:

The World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) Publication Ethics Committee defines plagiarism as "the use of others' published and unpublished ideas or words (or other intellectual property) without attribution or permission, and presenting them as new and original rather than derived from an existing source. The intent and effect of plagiarism is to mislead the reader as to the contributions of the plagiarizer. This applies whether the ideas or words are taken from the abstracts, research grant applications, Institutional Review Board applications, or unpublished or published manuscripts in any publication format (print or electronic). Plagiarism is scientific misconduct and should be addressed as such.

Medical Journal of Malaysia and Singapore Medical Journal state in an Editorial on the subject of plagiarism:

“This utterly dishonest practice is universally deplored by editors of all medical and scientific journals. As it is imperative that journal readers should be able to trust that what they are reading is original, we feel very strongly that punitive measures should be applied to authors found guilty of plagiarism, in order to discourage this undesirable practice.” (Peh WC, Arokiasamy J. 2008),

Conclusion:

A Registered Medical Practitioner shall ensure that any professional or academic publication, in print or electronic media, created and authored by him adheres to this Guideline, as any breach in this respect may raise question of serious professional misconduct and be subjected to disciplinary procedures.

Self-plagiarism refers to the practice of an author using portions of his previous writings on the same topic in another publication, without specifically citing it formally in quotes. This may violate the copyright granted to the publisher. The Malaysian Medical Council will address this issue on a case-to-case basis.

[Adopted by the Malaysian Medical Council on 5 September 2017.]

Reference:

1. Code of Professional Conduct Malaysian Medical Council, 1987.
2. Fishman, Teddi ""We know it when we see it is not good enough: toward a standard definition of plagiarism that transcends theft, fraud, and copyright"". Proceedings of the 4th Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity. 2009; pg.5
3. Gipp, Bela "Citation-based Plagiarism Detection: Detecting Disguised and Cross-language Plagiarism using Citation Pattern Analysis". Springer Vieweg. 2014; ISBN 978-3-658-06393-1. pg.10.
4. O'Connor, Z Extreme plagiarism: The rise of the e-Idiot? International Journal of Learning in Higher Education; 2015; 20 (1), pp1-11. ISSN 2327-7955 [1]
5. Peh WC, Arokiasamy J. Editorial: Plagiarism: a joint statement from the Singapore Med J and the Med J Malaysia. 2008; 63(5):354-5).
6. Vera S; Nelson RS. Library plagiarism policies. Assoc. of College & Resrch Libraries. 2007. p. 65. ISBN 0-8389-8416-9
7. WAME: www.wame.org/about/recommendations-on-publication-ethics-policies. Accessed 10 Dec 2016.

Note:

This MMC Guideline on Plagiarism was prepared with consensus of the Ethics Committee (Dato Dr. Abdul Hamid Abdul Kadir, Chairman, and members Datin Dr. Fadzilah Binti Hasan, Prof. Datuk Dr. Looi Lai Meng, Dato Dr. NKS Tharmaseelan, Dato Dr. Jacob Thomas, Dr. Lim Kuan Joo, Dr. T Mahadevan, Dr. Ashok Zachariah Philip and Dr. Milton Lum Siew Wah, present during the meeting on 1st June 2017, along with Dato Dr. Azmi Shapie, Secretary MMC and Dr. Shireen Sumita Mahalingam, Deputy Secretary MMC Ethics Committee) and adopted by the Malaysian Medical Council on 5 September 2017.