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07 Jul 2014

**MOH Circular 17/2014**  
**MOM Circular 20140707 - 066**

All Registered Medical Practitioners

### **ISSUANCE OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES TO INJURED WORKERS**

Last year, MOH and MOM issued a circular to (i) remind all medical practitioners to ensure that medical sick leave given should be based on good clinical assessment and be commensurate with the nature and severity of the workers' injuries, and should not be influenced by requests from workers/employers; and (ii) encouraged medical practitioners to report to MOM any employer who try to influence their decision on the issuance of medical certificates.

2. We have since continued to receive feedback about employers who attempt to influence or pressurise medical practitioners to shorten the prescribed duration of medical sick leave. Medical practitioners are reminded to report any employer or safety professional who attempts to circumvent the WSH reporting requirement by influencing a medical practitioner's professional decision on treatment of, and the issuance of medical certificates to injured workers. Such malpractices can be reported to MOM at [mom\\_oshd@mom.gov.sg](mailto:mom_oshd@mom.gov.sg), or via the Safety Hotline at 6317 1111. Please be assured that MOM will not reveal details of the informant to the employers.

3. MOM will take stern actions against errant employers and will refer potentially errant medical practitioners to the Singapore Medical Council for investigation.

4. For any clarification, please email MOM at the email above, or MOH at [moh\\_info@moh.gov.sg](mailto:moh_info@moh.gov.sg).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Benjamin Ong".

A/PROF. BENJAMIN ONG  
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ho Siong Hin".

ER. HO SIONG HIN  
COMMISSIONER FOR WORKPLACE  
SAFETY AND HEALTH  
MINISTRY OF MANPOWER

#### ENCLOSURE:

MOH's circular, MOH 17/2013, dated 19 Jun 2013





MH 61:12  
MOM HQ/PlnPol/WSH/Resrch/RptRat

19 June 2013

All Registered Medical Practitioners

**MOH CIRCULAR 17/2013  
ISSUANCE OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATES TO INJURED WORKERS**

This circular informs all registered medical practitioners of their role and responsibility in the issuance of medical certificates.

2. Recently, there have been a number of complaints alleging that medical practitioners have been issuing medical certificates to injured workers that are inadequate in relation to the nature and severity of their injuries. Some of these cases are currently under investigation by the Singapore Medical Council (SMC).

3. The Workplace Safety and Health (Incident Reporting) Regulations and the Work Injury Compensation (WIC) Regulations require employers to report to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) within 10 days:

- a) of an accident which results in the death of an employee;
- b) of an accident which renders an employee unfit for work for more than 3 consecutive days or hospitalised for at least 24 hours; or
- c) where an employee contracts any occupational disease referred to in the Second Schedule of the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Act or Section 4(1) of the WIC Act.

4. To avoid reporting these accidents, some employers may request medical practitioners to issue less than 4 consecutive days of medical sick leave or to issue light duty instead of medical sick leave.

5. Medical practitioners are reminded that the issuance of a medical sick leave carries with it the responsibility of ensuring that the patient deserves it on proper medical grounds. The length of each medical sick leave should be based on good clinical assessment and be commensurate with the nature and severity of the worker's injury. Adequate medical certification ensures that the worker is medically fit to perform his tasks at work, without jeopardising the health and safety of himself or his colleagues. Medical practitioners should not be influenced by requests from workers and employers in determining the medical sick leave given. Medical practitioners who have issued medical certificates inadequate for the nature of the medical condition and are complained against may be the subject of disciplinary inquiries by the SMC.

6. MOM will also remind all employers that they should not attempt to influence medical practitioners to under- or over-prescribe medical sick leave. Should any medical practitioner

encounter an employer who attempts to circumvent the WSH reporting requirement by influencing a medical practitioners' decision on the issuance of medical certificates, he/she may inform MOM at [mom\\_oshd@mom.gov.sg](mailto:mom_oshd@mom.gov.sg). MOM will not reveal details of the informant to the employers.

7 For any clarification, please email MOM at the email given above, or MOH at [moh\\_info@moh.gov.sg](mailto:moh_info@moh.gov.sg).



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