

Seychelles Medical and Dental Council

Annual Report 2014

Chairman's Report for the year ending 31st December 2014

Introduction

At the last meeting of the Governing Board of the Seychelles Medical and Dental Council for the year 2014 held on 28th November, all members present expressed satisfaction and appreciation to the Chairman that the Council had made great strides forward in 2014. Members expressed the wish that similar strides continue to be made in the years to come.

This report begins with a run down of some of the achievements and highlights of the activities of SMDC in 2014.

- 1) SMDC appointed an auditor to audit accounts that had remained unaudited since 2004.
- 2) SMDC published the list of Medical Practitioners and Dentists in the Official Gazette as per the requirements of the Law. The list had not been published since 2009
- 3) SMDC appointed an Assistant Registrar . The Office of SMDC had been unmanned for several years or manned only by part timers.
- 4) SMDC started serious negotiations with the Ministry of Finance for it to be granted assistance from the national budget given that it is undertaking a national regulatory function. This effort became successful in December 2014.
- 5) (a) for the first time SMDC developed a written Strategic and Operational plans
 - (b) SMDC developed a new vision statement, a new mission statement, a new tag line
 - (c) SMDC spelt out its core values as an organization.
 - (d) SMDC adopted a new logo.
- 6) (a) SMDC created its own website which can now be access at www.s-mdc.org.
 - (b) SMDC appeared for the first time on Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the dictionary of abbreviations
 - (C) SMDC was invited to participate in the Studio Clinic Programme on SBC.
- 7) SMDC sent one doctor and one dentist to attend the conference of the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities held in London in August 2014. All expenses were

paid by SMDC.

8) SMDC redesigned the registration certificate to give it a more modern and professional look.

9) SMDC conducted all planned meetings and all planned meetings had a quorum.

10) Aiming for good Governance, SMDC set up its Finance Subcommittee and its Education SubCommittee. The Education committee met twice. The Finance Subcommittee is yet to meet.

11) SMDC caused the review of the Medical Practitioners and Dentists Act 1994 to be started and theq Minister of Health appointed a Working group to review the regulatory framework for medical and dental practice in Seychelles.

12) financials – take from the audit report.

Regulatory Functions of SMDC

The main function of SMDC is regulatory.

Need for a Specialist Register

SMDC's mandate is to register doctors and dentists eligible for registration. Unfortunately, fulfilling the criteria for registration does not automatically mean that the doctor or dentist indeed has what it takes to practice medicine or dentistry in Seychelles. A small number of doctors, especially specialists, who had been registered in 2014 were subsequently found to be lacking in basic skills of specialists. One Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist who even had the title of Professor to her name had to have her contract terminated the same week she came precisely because she could not even perform a simple tonsillectomy.

There is a need to quickly establish a specialist register and to develop stringent criteria for entry into and exit from the specialist register. SMDC will undertake this task in 2015.

Compliance of the public health sector to the Medical Practitioners and Dentists Act, 1994

Private employers of doctors and dentists in Seychelles cannot have a GOP permit for their doctors and dentists without the registration certificate from SMDC.

The Public Health Sector, represented by the Ministry of Health/Health Care Agency is the only employer of doctors and dentists in Seychelles which systematically abstains from waiting until SMDC's the whole vetting process of doctors and dentists is over before bringing in doctors into

the country.

This situation is especially so with doctors and dentists from China and Cuba. Doctors and dentists from these two countries continue to land in the country at the behest of these agencies without the necessary documentation and without the required knowledge of the national languages. In spite of serious objections to this state of affairs raised on several occasions to the Ministry of Health by SMDC, there has not been any change in the way, the Ministry of Health manages its cooperation with these two countries. But a change is needed.

SMDC is of the view that if the Public Health Sector paid more attention to the process of vetting medical and dental professionals fully, and cooperation doctors from China and Cuba went through the same rigorous vetting process as other doctors, (especially insofar as knowledge of the spoken languages in Seychelles are concerned) the health service and care quality would improve significantly.

In 2015, SMDC will continue to insist that it is allowed, as established by the law, to fully vet all doctors and dentists coming into the country to work even before they arrive in the country.

Quality of professionals in the public health sector

As the prime guardian of medical and dental care quality in Seychelles, SMDC noted with regret that in 2014, the largest employer of doctors and dentists in Seychelles, the public health sector, did not do enough to put in place structures and processes to recruit new professionals of a higher professional background. It did not do enough either, to wean the health service from professionals of dubious competence.

The Health Care Agency continued to **illegally** employ two persons as doctors although these two persons had not been registered by SMDC and although SMDC made it abundantly clear that the Health Care Agency should not employ persons that are not properly registered as doctors.

The public health sector should not flaunt laws intended to uphold the quality of medical and dental care. If it is not happy with a decision it should use the laws that exist to challenge the decision.

There must be a greater sensitization of the public in 2015 to get them to demand that all doctors treating them are properly registered and are being employed legally.

Mechanisms to uphold clinical care quality

The current Medical Practitioners and Dentists act is too silent on many important issues. This is why it was felt that the law needs to be reviewed or at least new regulations should be drafted. Upon the request of SMDC, The Ministry of Health and the Government has taken this

positively forward. A broad sweep committee is already working at reviewing the whole regulatory framework for medical and dental practice in Seychelles.

Emphasis needs to be put on the following areas

- 1) Proof of active continuous professional development as a prerequisite for recertification to practice
- 2) Developing legal standards for the
 - a) national internship programme,
 - b) health care records and improved documentations
 - c) issue of sick leave certificates
 - d) advertising of medical and dental practices
 - e) other emerging and re-emerging issues
- 3) Professional indemnity insurance as a prerequisite to practice medicine and dentistry in Seychelles

Even with the current law SMDC can and should work towards more robust care quality monitoring together with other regulators. Inspection of care premises should become the norm rather than the exception. Indeed there needs to be greater collaboration between the different regulators in the pursuit of care quality improvement and SMDC will vigorously pursue this in 2015.

Office Space

SMDC currently occupies a 6m by 4m office in prime position within the Seychelles Hospital complex.

This office of proximity is well located to serve many medical and dental professionals. However, SMDC is still clamoring to obtain its own independent offices away from the Seychelles Hospital complex. This will enable it to function more effectively as an impartial regulator.

Provision was made in the grant sought for next year from the national budget for SMDC to acquire independent fit-for-purpose offices. But the allocation finally given does not permit the recenting of office space.

Human Resources

The absence of a professional Registrar continues to hamper the work of SMDC. The staffing situation needs to improve if SMDC is to become more effective and efficient in its statutory functions.

Conclusion

SMDC is on the right track although the track to its vision is long and there is still a long way to go along that track.

The health landscape in Seychelles is changing rapidly and SMDC has to be able to adapt to the changes. In 2015, SMDC must continue to work hard to address all the challenges identified in this report before moving on to become a regulator of excellence in the years to come.

Assistant Registrar's Report for the year ending 31st December 20

Introduction

This report of the Office of the Registrar outlines the major administrative occurrences of SMDC during the year 2014.

Human Resource

The year began with Miss Chloe Samy performing the duties of Assistant a Registrar. On the 31st March 2014, her resignation took effect and Mrs Myriam Gabriel was appointed in her place. After serving a probation period of six months, she was confirmed in her post on the 1st October 2014.

The Office

A lot of work has been done to reorganize the Office and give the medical and dental practitioners a positive experience when they come into contact with SMDC.

- a) A FilemakerPro13 database was purchased
- b) A new colour laser printer was purchased
- c) The broken down photocopy machine was repaired
- d) New filing systems for files and other paper records was introduced

Finances

Refer to audit report

Meetings

All meetings of SMDC took place as per the calendar of meetings drawn up in the beginning of the year. A quorum was available for all meetings and average attendance at the meetings was".....Meetings generally started on time and finished on time although there were a few exceptions.

New Registrations

<u>New Seychellois doctors</u>	
<u>New Seychellois dentists</u>	
<u>New Non-Seychellois doctors</u>	
<u>New Non Seychellois Dentists</u>	

<u>New Private doctors</u>	
<u>New private dentists</u>	
<u>New temporary registrations</u>	
<u>Full registration renewals (Seychellois doctors)</u>	
<u>Full registration renewals (Seychellois dentists)</u>	
<u>Full registration renewals (non-Seychellois doctors)</u>	
<u>Full registration renewals (Non-Seychellois dentists)</u>	

Refusal of applications

Three applications for registration were not approved

Letters of Good Standing

Six letters of good standing were issued |

[GM1] Complaints

The office handled only one official complaint.

However, two persons who had complained in earlier times reappeared for a follow up on their cases

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Court Cases

SMDC was involved in two court cases, either as a respondent and as an expert witness.

1. The first case concerned an appeal lodged at the Supreme Court by Mr Ben Wamamili against SMDC's decision not to register him.
2. The second case was the case of Mr Gilbert Eliza against Mr Patrick Bonne at the Magistrates Court in which SMDC was summoned to appear as an expert witness. Mr Eliza claimed that Mr Patrick Bonne, who is not a dentist, worked in his mouth in 2006 while posing as a dentist and, as a result, caused certain damages to his person.