

DOCTORS AND THE MCA

Text by Dr Lambert Low

The SMA Centre for Medical Ethics and Professionalism (SMA CMEP) started a project in 2013 titled "Caring for Persons with Diminished Capacity". The project aims to educate, enable and empower medical doctors to fulfil their legal and professional duties in caring for persons with diminished capacity under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and other legislations.

The impetus for this project was the enactment of the MCA in Singapore in 2010. With the enactment of the MCA, the Office of the Public Guardian was established to perform important duties related to the MCA, such as maintaining a register for Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA). A Code of Practice that provides guidance on the application of the MCA was also established. Indeed, there are many nuances to the application of the MCA in clinical practice and it is important for the medical fraternity to comprehend the duties and responsibilities in relation to the MCA.

SMA CMEP thus set out to train and educate medical professionals on various aspects of the MCA. In 2013, we set up a free online training module to educate physicians on issuing the LPA certificate. More than 1,500 doctors have registered for this programme since, with more than 900 completing it. Since then, we have also developed educational materials and ran courses on topics such as mental capacity assessment for dementia, writing medical reports for the courts and assessment of persons with intellectual disability.

Additionally, SMA CMEP has signed a Letter of Memorandum with the College of Psychiatrists, Academy of Medicine, Singapore, to further develop the educational agenda and run seminars pertaining to this project. The next webinar is to be held on Saturday, 13 November 2021, from 12.30 pm to 4.30 pm.

We encourage all doctors, especially our primary care colleagues, to attend

this webinar to learn and discuss the practical situations in which the MCA is applied in their area of work. Through the webinar, we will get to hear from inter-professional speakers and panellists from medical, allied health and legal backgrounds on the application of MCA in the clinical setting. Ample time would be set aside for questions from the audience. ♦

Dr Low is a psychiatrist with the National Addictions Management Service at the Institute of Mental Health. He completed his MSc in Addiction Studies at King's College London. Dr Low holds a Graduate Diploma in Acupuncture and is a registered acupuncturist with the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board.



Mental Capacity Assessments Made Easy!

An invitation to all primary care professionals

13 November 2021, Saturday
12.30 pm to 4.30 pm



Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/3g4aZGu> for the programme details and to register.