

This Code of Practice of the Private Hospitals Association applies to all medical practitioners who are granted admission privileges at any one of the private hospitals in Hong Kong.

The Code of Practice provides a framework to ensure that visiting and residential doctors are able to provide their services in accordance with the principles of good clinical governance and public accountability.

(In this document what applies to one gender also applies to the other.)

Any doctor who provides clinical services in private hospitals must obtain appropriate privileges from the hospital in writing.

These privileges are conditional upon the doctor's compliance with the regulations of individual hospitals, and are to be renewed every 3 years with yearly updating of annual practicing certificate and indemnity insurance cover.

The hospitals reserve the right to withdraw these privileges at their discretion. Notwithstanding each hospital's own requirements, the following apply to all the twelve member hospitals of the Private Hospitals Association.

1. A doctor must at all times possess a valid annual practising certificate issued by the Medical Council of Hong Kong. In the regard, he shall update the hospital on a yearly basis.
2. A doctor must at all times be insured or protected against professional indemnity. He shall produce evidence for such insurance cover, specifying scope of coverage whenever required by the hospital.
3. A doctor must adequately document his patient's history, physical findings, treatment and clinical progress in the patient's hospital record.
4. A doctor shall refer his patient to an appropriately trained colleague whenever the condition of his patient falls beyond the scope of his expertise.
5. A doctor shall not perform any procedure on a patient unless he has obtained the necessary training and experience.

6. A doctor who involves a patient in any intervention or treatment of an experimental or trial nature may do so only with the express permission of the hospital and with the informed consent of the patient and in accordance with Chapter 11 articles 11.1 and 11.2 of the Code of Practice for Private Hospitals issued by the Department of Health (Appendix).

7. Special privileges are required for use of operation theatres, delivery rooms, lasers and other potentially harmful equipment.

7.1 Use of operation theatres shall be limited to the relevant specialty and surgical expertise of the doctor.

8. Before performing any surgical or invasive procedure on a patient, a doctor must ensure that proper written informed consent from the patient has been obtained.

8.1 He must ensure that the consent form is properly witnessed and signed.

8.2 The only exception is for life-threatening emergencies.

9. Verbal orders may be accepted by nursing staff. Such verbal orders shall be recorded in writing by the nursing staff and duly signed by the doctor within 24 hours.

10. A full discharge summary shall be written by the doctor in charge upon discharge of the patient from the hospital.

11. A doctor shall fully co-operate with the hospital in conducting reasonable clinical audits in which the identity of the doctor and patient shall be kept confidential. These audits are to be conducted on an anonymous basis.

12. In the event that a doctor's registration status with the Medical Council of Hong Kong should in any way be altered or suspended, he shall notify the hospital immediately.

Chapter 11 Research

11.1 Overview

The "*Professional Code and Conduct*" issued by the Medical Council of Hong Kong provides guidance on good clinical research practice. Each establishment should set out its policy on whether clinical research would be allowed on the patients.

11.2 Requirements

11.2.1 The organisation should set up an Ethics Committee to monitor clinical research.

11.2.2 The purpose of an Ethics Committee is to review clinical research to safeguard the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of all actual or potential participants.

11.2.3 The Ethics Committee should provide independent and timely review of the ethics of proposed study.

11.2.4 Before any clinical research is to be carried out, a research proposal should be prepared and submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

11.2.5 The Ethics Committee should be multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral in composition, including independent scientific expertise, professionals and specialists.

11.2.6 The Ethics Committee should have clear procedures in selecting and recruiting members. Conflicts of interests should be avoided when making appointments.

11.2.7 For study involving pharmaceutical products that are not yet registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board, a Certificate for Clinical Trial/Medicinal Test is required under the Pharmacy and Poisons Regulations.

11.2.8 The findings of the research or study conducted in the establishment are submitted to the Ethics Committee.