



# SPCONNECT

The e-newsletter from the Singapore Pharmacy Council

Issue 1, January 2009

## HIGHLIGHTS:

**Message from the President of the Singapore Pharmacy Council**

**Message from the Registrar of the Singapore Pharmacy Council**

**CPE Requirements – An Update**

**FAQs on Practising Certificate**

**Public Health Lectures**

**Please bookmark our new website address:**  
[www.spc.gov.sg](http://www.spc.gov.sg)

## Message from the President of the Singapore Pharmacy Council

Dear Fellow Pharmacists,

It gives me great pleasure to wish you all a blessed 2009.

This is a year of new beginnings for the Singapore Pharmacy Council. We have become a statutory board on 1 Sep 08 similar to the Singapore Medical Council (SMC) and the Singapore Dental Council (SDC). The Singapore Pharmacy Council will move out of its present office at the College of Medicine Building by mid February 2009 to its new premises on the 9th floor of the NKF Building located at 81 Kim Keat Road. The Academy of Medicine, SMC, SDC, Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board and the Singapore Nursing Board will all be located there by mid-2009.

As a profession, pharmacy is poised to contribute even more to society. The Singapore Pharmacy Council will soon be setting up a Register of Specialists. This will allow for the easy recognition of pharmacists who have acquired advanced skills. The list of specialties to be recognised will be finalised by the Pharmacy Specialists Accreditation Board.

The new Pharmacist Registration Act 2007 now incorporates rules for handling complaints and disciplinary issues. Pharmacists are reminded to uphold their professional practice diligently.

As a good practice, all pharmacists are urged to record all prescription interventions, therapy recommendations and Over-The-Counter (OTC) prescribing. They should also record all cases of counseling e.g. smoking cessation, diabetes, asthma, etc. This will serve to document the professional service delivered and its value. The pharmacists' intervention record will also serve as a record of accountability if there are any complaints or disputes. This should be done in all patient care areas in retail and hospital settings.

I look forward to a successful, fulfilling and meaningful 2009 with your support!

Yours faithfully,  
Wu Tuck Seng  
President, Singapore Pharmacy Council



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## Singapore Pharmacy Council

**1. President**  
**Mr. Wu Tuck Seng**

**2. Registrar**  
**Ms. Ang Hui Gek**

**3. Members:**

**A/P (Ms.)**  
**Chan Sui Yung**

**Ms. Chan Soo Chung**

**Mrs. Chan Yiam Moi**

**Ms. Lita Chew**

**Mr. Koe Khoon Poh**

**Dr. Christina Lim**

**Ms. Linda Seah**

**Mr. Sia Chong Hock**

**Dr. Ellick Wong**

## Message from the Registrar of the Singapore Pharmacy Council

Dear Pharmacists,

Though 2009 has begun worldwide on a somber note due to the economic climate, yet the demand for pharmacists in Singapore is increasing due to the growth in the biomedical and pharmaceutical sectors and particularly in healthcare.

The SPC is therefore exploring possibilities of registering pharmacists from neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and Taiwan. The 126 pharmacy qualifications that are recognised currently are from Australia, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand, UK and USA.

Mandatory Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for the renewal of Practising Certificates (PCs) had commenced from 1 September 2008. Lifelong learning is essential for our personal and professional development.

I urge all pharmacists to take responsibility for their learning journey and to fulfill the CPE requirements set by the council. We owe it our patients, clients and to society at large to do so.

If you need help with your CPE efforts, do let us know.

Finally, I wish all our readers a happy 2009!

Xin Nian Kuai Le! (新年快乐!)

Yours sincerely,

Ang Hui Gek  
Registrar, Singapore Pharmacy Council



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Closed on Saturdays,  
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College of Medicine Building  
16 College Road  
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Visit the [Singapore  
Pharmacy Council Website](http://www.spc.gov.sg)  
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## Continuing Pharmacy Education Updates

The present qualifying period is from 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2010. SPC would like to urge all pharmacists to actively log in their points and plan their CPE activities pro-actively to prevent last minute rush.

Pharmacists, who had achieved 50 points for the Qualifying Period (QP) of 1 September 2006 to 31 August 2008, will be deemed to have accumulated 10 points for the QP of 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2010. The update in the CPDS will be done before the end of April 2009.

Pharmacists who are residing overseas will no longer be allowed to pro-rate their CPE requirements. Pharmacists may obtain their CPE points from online learning and events organized by accredited overseas CPE providers while residing overseas.

However, pharmacists may apply for an inactive status if they are not working at all or if they are not practising as pharmacists. "Inactive pharmacists" need to achieve only 20 CPE points for each QP of 2 years. The cap for each claim category will not be pro-rated.

When the pharmacist decides to resume active practice again, he will need to achieve at least 25 CPE points for the preceding 12 months before he resumes active practice.

Pharmacists who are residing overseas and have difficulties attending CE events (due to language barriers) may write to the Singapore Pharmacy Council for permission to meet all their CPE requirements by online learning.

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Pharmacist Practising Certificate

**WHY MUST WE RENEW THE PRACTISING CERTIFICATE FOR 2 YEARS IN 2009 & 2010 WHEREAS PREVIOUSLY THE ANNUAL RETENTION FEE WAS ONLY FOR 1 YEAR AT A TIME? I DON'T PLAN TO PRACTISE IN 2010.**

The practising certificate for Singapore registered pharmacists is now valid for 2 years. This aligns the Singapore Pharmacy Council (SPC) with the practice of other related professional bodies like Singapore Medical Council and Singapore Dental Council.



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## The First Singapore Pharmacy Council Pledge Affirmation Ceremony will take place at 6pm on Wednesday, 13 May 2009

The Minister for Health, Mr. Khaw Boon Wan, will be the Guest of Honour. The Ceremony will be held at the College of Medicine Building Auditorium.

Pharmacists who have not taken the pharmacists' pledge are invited to attend the ceremony. A certificate will be awarded to all pharmacists who take the pledge.

Please e-mail us at [enquiries@spc.gov.sg](mailto:enquiries@spc.gov.sg)

If you would like to attend this ceremony. Acceptance is on a "first-come-first-served basis".

Even if you do not plan to work in 2010, as long as you plan to work in 2009 as a pharmacist, you'll need to pay the 2 years renewal fee of \$400.

If you do not plan to work in 2009 but only in 2010, and if you do not renew your PC in 2009, but wish to renew in January 2010 you will have to pay the late payment fee of \$200 and \$200 for the remaining period of January 2010 to December 2010 (or part thereof depending on the date of renewal)

If you plan to work only from June 2010, and if you do not renew your PC in 2009 but wish to renew in June 2010, you will have to pay the late payment fee of \$200 and \$100 for the remaining period of June 2010 to December 2010.

### **WHY DID SPC ALLOW PHARMACISTS WHO DID NOT MEET THE 50 CPE POINTS FOR THE QUALIFYING PERIOD OF 1 SEPTEMBER 2006 TO 31 AUGUST 2008 TO RENEW THEIR PCs FOR 2009 - 2010?**

In preparation for the Pharmacist Registration Act which was scheduled to be read in Parliament in 2006, the Singapore Pharmacy Council had informed the pharmacists ahead of time on the requirements needed to renew their practising certificate (PC). This was to give them sufficient time to accumulate the required CPE points for renewal of their PC.

When the Pharmacists Registration Act was later passed in Parliament in September 2007 and subsequently implemented on 1 September 2008, we had informed our pharmacists of the changes to the requirements of PC renewal via e-mail on 2 October 2008 and through the quarterly e-bulletin, SPConnect. Pharmacists were also informed by letter, from the Registrar of the Singapore Pharmacy Council, on 16 October 2008 when the PC renewal notices were mailed to them.

For the pharmacists who achieved the 50 CPE point requirements, the Singapore Pharmacy Council recognised their good efforts by awarding them with 10 bonus points for the current QP of 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2010.

Pharmacists were not informed of this earlier because we could not confirm the date that the Pharmacist Registration Act (PRA) would be passed.



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## The Pharmacist's Pledge

**"As a pharmacist, I sincerely pledge to:**

**P**ractise my profession with honesty, integrity and compassion;

**H**onour traditions and embrace advances in my profession;

**A**bide to the governing laws and Code of Ethics;

**R**espect and keep in confidence patient information;

**M**aintain a high standard of professional competence through life long learning;

**A**lways place patient's interests first and treat them equally;

**C**ollaborate with other healthcare colleagues to achieve the desired treatment outcomes;

**I**mpart my knowledge, experience and skills to nurture future pharmacists;

**S**trive to provide high quality and cost-effective health services and products;

**T**ranslate scientific advances into better healthcare.

**I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon mv honour."**

Pharmacists are bound by the Singapore Pharmacy Council's Code of Ethics to maintain the highest standard of professional competence by keeping abreast with the progress of pharmaceutical knowledge. Embarking on continuing education is therefore not something that pharmacists should be doing just because it is compulsory and a requirement for their PCs, but a personal responsibility and commitment expected of a professional.

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## 87% OF PHARMACISTS ACHIEVED THEIR CPE REQUIREMENTS. WAS THIS EXPECTED?

Pharmacists practise in many sectors; broadly 48% practise in patient care areas, 41% in non-patient pharmaceutical areas, 3% in non pharmaceutical areas and 8% are not currently working. It is very encouraging that 87% of pharmacists have achieved their CPE requirement in the first two years of implementation. This is a testament of the pharmacists' commitment to continuing education to maintain professional competence. In fact, a further 8% had accumulated some CPE points but they fell short of the 50 points requirement. It is the responsibility of all pharmacists who want to remain in the Register of Pharmacists to achieve their CPE requirements.

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## Public Health Lectures @ COMB

The Ministry of Health holds regular public health lectures at the College of Medicine Building (COMB) for healthcare professionals. Each session lasts one hour, and is usually held from 1 pm to 2 pm at either the COMB lecture room or auditorium. You may attend the event and get 1 CPE point. However, do note that lunch is not provided. If you are not currently on the mailing list and would like to be informed of these events, please e-mail your request to [enquiries@spc.gov.sg](mailto:enquiries@spc.gov.sg)

Pharmacists are reminded to write their names, PRN (Pharmacist Registration Number) and to sign the attendance sheet. Failure to do so may disqualify them from claiming CPE points.

## Ministry of Health Public Health Lectures in January 2009

<b>Topic:</b>	<b><i>Emerging Diseases Programmes.</i></b>
<b>Speaker:</b>	<b>Prof Rodney Hoff, Executive Director, REDI</b>
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	<b>Thursday 22 January 2009, 1pm-2pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Lecture Room, College of Medicine Building</b>