

Newsletter

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Imminent Revision of Rules to Allow Pharmacists and Nurses to Prescribe Medicines

The Ministry of Health ("MOH") will soon be revising its rules so that veteran and qualified pharmacists and advanced practice nurses in the public healthcare sector can legally prescribe medicines, under doctors' supervision. The purposes of such an initiative are to give patients greater convenience and access to quality and holistic care, while allowing selected senior healthcare personnel to play more significant roles in providing care, thereby heightening productivity.

Several safeguards to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the services provided by such qualified healthcare personnel are set out below:

- Healthcare personnel must have at least five years' experience and complete a Collaborative Prescribing Programme before they are allowed to prescribe medicines.
- Healthcare institutions which provide prescribing services must establish a "Credentialing Committee" to approve the pharmacists and nurses, and a Service Review Committee to ensure that the institutions' services are safe and of a certain quality.
- Qualified healthcare personnel may only prescribe medicines from a list of medications found in the Collaborative Prescribing Agreement, which will be decided upon by both qualified personnel and the collaborating doctors.

Collaborative prescribing services are currently not envisaged under the Private Hospitals and Medical Clinics Act ("PHMCA"), which regulates the provision of healthcare services in Singapore. However, with the new Healthcare Services Act replacing the PHMCA in the second half of 2018, healthcare institutions will have to apply to the MOH for a collaborative prescribing service licence before providing such services.

Our recent client alert on the Healthcare Services Bill can be found [here](#). More details can also be found in a news article published [here](#).

Healthcare Productivity Fund to Receive S\$80 Million Boost

The Singapore Government will be injecting another S\$80 million, over the next three years, into the Healthcare Productivity Fund to boost the productivity of nursing and support care personnel in the acute and community care settings. The Healthcare Productivity Fund was established in 2012, and has backed over 250 projects in community care settings to date.

The MOH will collaborate with hospitals to initiate productivity solutions in several aspects of acute care (e.g. care documentation and patient transfer), and work with operators in the community care sector to develop process blueprints for operational success, and to leverage assistive technologies and equipment for care. The MOH would also examine the further expansion of demand

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aggregation and bulk procurement of services and products to realise economies of scale. Further, the MOH will set up a new supply chain agency to consolidate functions and supply chain assets of the three healthcare clusters.

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More details can be found in a news article published [here](#).

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