

Sudan Doctors Union UK and Ireland

Workshop on Regulation and Governance

(Protecting the Patient and Society)
(Protecting the Doctor)

Facilitator: Dr. Hatim Abdulla Ali

Discussion Group:

1. Mamoun Hussein (Sudan)
2. Ahmed El-safi (Sudan)
3. Isam Osman (UK)
4. Fadil Shebekah (UK)
5. Ahmed Osman Sirag (UK)
6. Zaza Mahmoud El-Sheikh (UK)
7. Mohamad A. Hamour (UK)
8. Hashim Bayomi (UK)
9. Murtada Sirelkhatim (Ireland)
10. Babiker Yahya (Sudan)
11. Ali Nour El-Galel (UK)

Discussion Points

1. Protecting the Patient and Public

- Discussion leader: Dr. Babiker Yahya.

The aim of the workshop is to discuss the current Sudan Medical Council (SMC) charter and review the medical council performance. The SMC was formed by a governmental act with the purpose of protecting, promoting and maintaining the health and safety of the public, ensuring proper standards in the practice of medicine. It is empowered by law, and gives the council the right to regulate the profession by having an up to date register of the practising doctors, supervising good medical practice, and providing high standards of medical care and delivery, and also observing doctors' fitness to practice.

The SMC charter has many laws aimed at regulating the profession, and supervising standards, and also promotes continuous professional development by looking at the medical school curricula, comparing it with international agreed standards, and ensuring that subjects studied in the medical schools are taught to satisfaction. It also provides guidelines for professional conduct and continuous medical education.

Many have noticed that the SMC is critically underperforming and not fit for the purpose. Calls for review of its charter and structure are constantly emerging.

We aim to discuss these issues and call for reforming the SMC, and the creation of an independent, accountable and democratic council, which will protect the health and safety of the public and ensure good standards in the practice of medicine.

Topics for Discussion

1. SMC Formation Act and Charter
 - I. Structure of the SMC
 - II. Election/ appointment of members
 - III. Independence
 - IV. Finance
2. Supervision of graduate medical education
 - I. Supervision of education standards and school curricula
 - II. Accreditation of medical schools
3. Supervision of graduate doctors practice and performance
 - I. Professional development
 - II. Fitness to practise
4. Medical register
 - I. Medical register of doctors, dentists, pharmacists, public health and para-clinical health workers.
5. Drug Registry
6. Legal Powers of the SMC
7. Regulation of private practise
8. Collaboration with MOH (Minister of Health), political parties, trade unions, civic and NGOs
9. Medical ethics and code of conduct
10. Communication with doctors and the public
11. Dealing with negligence and malpractice

Enclosed also see:

1. SMC constitution (attached)
2. Visit the British GMC website

2. Protecting the Doctor

a) Sudan Doctors Union

- Discussion leader: Dr. Mamoun Hussein

The Sudan Doctors Union (SDU) is a democratically elected, independent, professional organisation for all Sudanese doctors of all medical specialities. It is an independent trade union and provides services to all its members, and has both educational and scientific responsibilities. It speaks for the doctors, protects them from political, ethnic and religious disadvantages and bias, and works for their interest and overall wellbeing.

Recently a new body (The Association of Sudanese Doctors) was formed, and given recognition by the Sudanese authorities to replace the SDU. It was felt that the newly formed association was not fit to speak for doctors, as it was not democratic, and failed persistently to protect doctors and their interests. It did not have any demonstrable educational or scientific activities, and is not a trade union. Calls to reinstate the SDU, which has been abolished by the authorities, has now progressed and reached high momentum. A committee to reinstate the SDU has been established and is now operational.

We aim to discuss the present situation and the obvious deficiency in protecting the doctors.

Topics For Discussion

- I. Current situation, Sudan Doctors Association
- II. The need for a democratic union

b) Medical Protection

Discussion Leader:

Fadil Shebekah

Lawyer and Legal Advisor

Practising medicine is endangered by claims from patients and relatives when doctors' clinical performance is called into question, and doctors are faced with civil, criminal courts and tribunals. Doctors in the government and the private sectors should be protected against the financial, ethical and moral dangers, incurred as a result of these claims. The concept of medical protection is not practised in Sudan. We call for the public to challenge the standards of clinical performance in relation to negligence and malpractice of doctors and for them to be reported to the GMC. And we call for the GMC (being the professional regulator) to supervise doctors' performance and investigate any incident it is aware of. This will maintain public confidence towards to profession.

We call for the creation of a body to defend doctors who find themselves faced with claims and litigations from patients, by paying legal costs and compensating claimants. It should also support members with issues which may put practising doctors into the hands of laws in matters related to ethics, confidentiality and consent.

Topics For Discussion

- I. The need for a medical defence union
- II. Litigations