



المجلس الطبي السوداني
Sudan Medical Council

Sudan Medical Council Profile

Sudan Medical Council

Sector Type: An Independent Governmental Organization

Title: Sudan Medical Council

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Introduction

Established in 1955, the Sudan Medical Council (SMC) was and is one of the oldest regulatory authorities in Africa.

The SMC is the national medical regulatory body entrusted with ensuring safe, effective and quality medical service to the public through ensuring quality of medical education, good medical practice and providing guidance to doctors, thus contributing to the strengthening of the health system.

SMC is constituted by a Presidential decree on the recommendation of the Minister of the Ministry of Council of Ministers. The President of SMC, Vice President, and Secretary General are appointed by the President of the Republic. Members of the Council are chosen after wide consultation with partners. They include community representatives, senior members of the profession and representations of different partners from the health sector, and higher education.

The tenure of SMC President, Vice President, Secretary General and membership in SMC is for four years renewable for one further tenure. The total number of the membership is 33.

Sudan Medical Council Act (1993-amended 2004) is the current act governing SMC formation, roles, responsibilities and mandate. The SMC has the mandate to issue its bylaws and internal regulations.

SMC Mandate

The purpose of SMC in exercising its functions is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public through ensuring quality of medical education, good medical practice and quality health medical services. In addition, SMC provides guidance for doctors to ensure proper practice of medicine, dentistry and pharmacy. SMC also issues codes of conduct and ethical practice guides, and enforces disciplinary measures.

SMC Duties

In fulfilling its mandate, the SMC has the following duties:

- Keeping an up-to-date set of registers of qualified medical practitioners, pharmacists and dentists, specialists and consultants
- Fostering good medical practice
- Promoting high standards of medical education
- Establishing code of conduct and dealing firmly and fairly with medical practitioners, dentists, and pharmacists whose fitness to practice is in question.
- Conducting the National Licensing Examination to all interns after completion of internship training rotations
- Approving (in collaboration with Ministry of Higher Education) the establishment of new medical, dental and pharmacy schools
- Ensuring that the standards of medical, dental and pharmacy education are comparable to international and regional standards
- Ensuring that the medical practice in health institutions is in conformity with the prescribed quality
- Issuing and periodically updating the code of ethics
- Issuing and periodically updating the Sudan National Drug Formulary

Vision

To be a distinguished National Regulatory Authority of the medical profession in Sudan, that is internationally recognized.

Mission

Safeguarding the interest of the public, by proper regulation and promotion of the profession, prescribing standards of medical education and ensuring its implementation and nurturing continuous professional development based on concepts of medical professionalism, to attain good quality of medical services and ensure patient safety.

Values

- *Justice and fairness:* We treat everyone fairly.
- *Honesty and transparency:* We are honest and attempt to be open and transparent.
- *Teamwork:* We believe that the best solutions come from and through working together. Enhancing effective teamwork demands maintaining strong relationships, respect and sharing.
- *Partnership:* We collaborate with partners to advance shared and individual interests.
- *Responding to community needs:* We anticipate and act on perceived evolving and emerging community needs.

Strategic Directions

- Help raise standards in medical education and practice by developing our standards and our guidance focusing on ethical practice, professionalism and patient safety
- Develop an effective and efficient register that is responsive to the changing needs of the public and the medical profession
- Maintain the confidence of the public and the profession in the Council's processes by :
 - Working better together to improve effectiveness, responsiveness and the delivery of our regulatory functions
 - working more closely with others to improve standards of medical practice
 - Be proactive to protect patients from harm and protecting the public through engagement with the public and the health system
- Develop a sustainable and high-performing organisation
- Be an open, transparent, responsive and accountable organization
- Develop and sustain mutually beneficial partnerships with medical regulatory and accreditation authorities nationally, regionally and internationally.

The Scope of Sudan Medical Council Mandate

The Sudan Medical Council Registers

It is mandatory for all doctors, pharmacists and dentists to enroll in the SMC Register as a prerequisite to practice medicine, dentistry or pharmacy in Sudan. The SMC maintains a set of registers, which are published regularly.

- Provisional Register
- Permanent Register
- Specialist Register, and
- Temporary Register

The Provisional Register is a register of new graduates of Sudanese or foreign medical colleges who are eligible to work as interns in the Sudan health service. As such, they are eligible to work only in hospitals and under the supervision of specialists. On successful completion of the internship period, as decided by the SMC, interns are transferred to the permanent Register after passing the Sudan Medical Licensing Examination.

The Permanent Register maintains the general medical practitioners, dentists and pharmacists who are eligible to practice independently in the public or private sectors.

The Specialist Register is a register of specialists and consultants eligible to work in the Sudan health service after satisfying SMC regulations.

Registration as a specialist requires obtaining a professional degree from a recognized professional institute in Sudan or abroad and providing evidence of satisfactory performance in a structured supervised training programme for not less than four years.

The Temporary Register is a register of expatriate doctors (general practitioners, specialists and consultants, eligible to work in the Sudan health service for a limited period. This type of register entitles the practitioner to practice medicine only in the institution requesting his/her services.

Sudan Medical Licensing Examination

Since September 2000, SMC regularly holds licensing examinations to all medical practitioners, dentists and pharmacists to ensure that they are competent to enroll in the SMC Permanent Register. The examination is computer-based since 2007.

The purpose of the examination is to ensure that the doctors are safe to practice independently as general practitioners and can make good clinical judgment and evidence based decisions

To sit for the examination the doctor(intern) has to produce certification from the ministry of health of successful completion of his internship rotations

Medical Education

SMC has the general function of promoting high standards of medical education educating and ensuring that all graduates from the medical, dental and pharmacy schools who apply for registration have had an appropriate teaching and training and to enable passed reasonable examinations they practice medicine safely.

For discharging this function, SMC may appoint inspectors to visit any medical, dental or pharmacy school to report to SMC as to the adequacy and appropriateness as well as a thorough scrutiny of all aspects and circumstances pertaining to the conduction of the final examination. It is worth mentioning that SMC has established and enjoys constructive and friendly relationships with all examiners.

In partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education and Medical, Dental and Pharmacy schools new concepts of professionalism and social accountability as well as innovative objective student's assessment methods were introduced.

A framework was piloted and implemented to institutionalize the concept and concepts of social accountability of medical, pharmacy and dental schools.

Accreditation of Medical Schools

SMC Act, amendment in 2004, stated that SMC shall ensure that the standards of medical, dental and pharmacy education are comparable to international and regional standards; and that SMC has the authority not to accredit medical, dental or pharmacy school and their graduates if it violates the current rules and regulations.

To carry this supervisory function, SMC established the Accreditation Committee with representation and in partnership with concerned parties, to be responsible for the development of the accreditation policy and overseeing its implementation. The accreditation policy was endorsed by SMC.

- Standards were issued after a series of national consensus building workshops.
- Guides were issued for schools on how to conduct the self-study
- Bylaws and procedure documents were finalized
- A series of advocacy workshops on self-evaluation and accreditation as well as training of assessment teams were conducted with regional and international support from resource people from WFME and WHO regional office
- A round of external evaluation was conducted by SMC for 22 medical schools during 2010-2013.

Supervision of Standards of care in Medical and Health Institutions

SMC Act, amendment in 2004, stated that SMC has the duty to ensuring that the medical practice in health institutions is conforming to the quality standards. A committee for supervision of standards of practice and service delivery in Health institutions was formed with representation of different partners. A policy document was developed and endorsed. Referenced tools for inspection and procedures for conduction inspection visits were developed.

The first round of inspection was conducted in a representative sample of (32) institutions.

The findings and trends were shared with officials and partners in a consultation meeting in 2014 from which the recommendations formed the basis of a program for improvement of the health institutions in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH).

SMC Disciplinary System

SMC standing disciplinary committees comprise complaints, ethical conduct, penalties and appeal committees. It investigates any complaint against a medical practitioner, a pharmacist or a dentist whether about inappropriate medical practice or misconduct; it also investigates complaints against healthcare institutions that come to its notice. The SMC disciplinary decisions range from cautioning, to temporary withholding of the license, or erasure of doctors from the register temporarily or permanently. Healthcare institutions may be advised to make corrections or corrective actions for any inadequacies or violations within a specified period; as well, they may be subjected to financial penalties.

The National Drug Formulary

SMC publishes and makes available to all medical practitioners, dentists and pharmacists the Sudan National Formulary (SNF). The SNF is a reference book that lists all drugs routinely stocked in the Sudan. The SNF gives the dosage form of all medicines, their indications, and contraindications, precautions on use, interactions and comments on the diseases on which they are used.

Medical Ethics

To uphold high standards of medical ethics, moral integrity, and utmost respect to human life, SMC publishes its guideline booklet (Medical Ethics and Medico-Legal Problems) since 1969 (amended 1979). This booklet is issued to all doctors, dentists and pharmacists on registration. The latest version was issued in 2014.

SMC Publications

SMC covered in publication all documents covering the different aspects of its mandate. Publications include:

SMC Act

Medical Ethics and Medico-Moral Guide

This booklet includes the responsibility of doctors towards their patients, colleagues and communities. It also includes standards of ethics and behaviour expected from them.

Good Medical Practice Guide

This booklet includes the standards of good medical practice they are expected to uphold. These publications are issued to medical, dental and pharmacy graduates on taking the oath. These booklets are issued to all medical practitioners, dentists, and pharmacists.

Sudan National Formulary

The SNF is a reference book that lists all drugs routinely stocked in the Sudan. The SNF gives the dosage form of all medicines, their indications, contraindications, precautions on use, and comments on the diseases for which they are used.

Doctor Advancement Policy and Tools

This booklet describes the process and CPD requirements necessary for their professional upwards mobility.

Accreditation Documents

Including policy, standards, procedures and self-study manuals.

Meetings and Decisions

SMC holds its ordinary business meetings regularly. All decisions are taken by simple majority and frequently by consensus. Extra-ordinary meetings are held at the request of SMC president or at the request of any three SMC members addressing their request to the president. All SMC decisions are made available to all members and concerned parties.

Partnerships

SMC is achieving its goals through forging and sustaining healthy partnerships with institutions that help in advancing its goals within and outside the health sector. Few examples of the important partnerships are mentioned below.

National Partners

Ministry of Higher Education and Research

SMC partnership with (MOHE&R) includes the areas:

- a. Mutual representation in the key policy and professional committees
- b. Partnership in reforming medical education in areas of medical professionalism, accreditation and strengthening students' assessment in Medical, Pharmacy and Dental schools.
- c. Within that partnership, SMC is in partnership with the Association of Deans of Medical Schools in Sudan implementing a project for institutionalizing the concept of Social Accountability of Medical schools through implementing the framework of social accountability.
- d. A number of joint workshops have been conducted to improve the quality of the OSCE in the final years in medical schools.
- e. A guideline to construct and implement courses on medical ethics and good medical practice and communication skills was endorsed by (MOHE&R). These courses are currently mandatory in all medical schools.
- f. SMC conducts training courses for medical schools staff.

Federal Ministry of Health

SMC Partnership with (FMOH) includes the areas:

- a. Mutual representation in all key policy and professional committees improving the quality of training during the internship period
- b. Providing 3-day training courses on medical professionalism for all Interns (medicine, dentistry, pharmacy) before starting the internship practice rotations
- c. Offering a 3-day course on professionalism for consultants, senior physicians and general practitioners at Federal and State level
- d. Inspection of health facilities to ensure that quality standards of practice are implemented at Federal and State levels

Sudan Medical Specialization Board

- a. Mutual representation in all key policy and professional committees
- b. Implementing a 3-day training course on professionalism for trainers and residents in the 4 years residency specialty-training programme for the different specialities

International and Regional Relations

International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA)

SMC is a registered member in IAMRA. SMC regularly attends, and contributes to its functions and General Assembly. SMC is committed to IAMRA charter and policies.

World Health Organization/ East Mediterranean Regional Office (WHO/EMRO)

- WHO office in Sudan and the Regional Office (EMRO) are supportive to SMC projects on social accountability, professionalism and accreditation of medical schools. WHO/EMRO provided funding and technical advisory support in these areas and others
- SMC is playing a leading role regionally in accreditation and its experience is regarded as a pioneering good quality regional example
- SMC is a member of the Association of Medical Education in Eastern Mediterranean Region (AMEEMR).

World Federation of Medical Education

- The SMC relation with the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) started early through adoption and adaptation of the WFME standards for basic medical education as the basis for the national standards by the MOHE&R. On establishing the SMC accreditation policy, the updated standards were adopted; advisors and trainers were involved in updating and finalizing the document and contributed to training of trainers as well as advocacy and planning workshops.
- SMC President was invited as a team member in the accreditation process of one medical school, and in the external evaluation of another school.

IDEAL Consortium

SMC is a member of the IDEAL Consortium for Advancing Learning and Assessment in medical education. This is done in an effort to expand and ensure the quality of the SMC question bank for the Licensing Examination.

Relations with International and Regional Medical Regulatory Authorities

SMC has mutual agreements and cooperation with similar authorities in the fields of authenticating registration certificates, certificates of good standing and exchange of information regarding fitness to practice decisions and probation involving Sudanese doctors abroad. Important partners include:

Regional Relations

Egyptian Syndicate, Saudi Commission for Health professions, Gulf Region Regulatory Authorities, Pakistan Medical and Dental Council and Malaysian Medical Council.

International Relations

General Medical Council - UK, General Medical Council - Ireland, Foundation for Advancement of International Education and Research (FAIMER), Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) USA.

Collaboration with Sudanese Doctors Associations and Unions Abroad

SMC has developed active engagement with associations and organizations of Sudanese doctors working abroad in UK, Ireland, USA and Gulf Region. SMC developed Memoranda of Understanding and collaborative activities in the areas of its mandate. They were engaged in forums to develop SMC policies on registration, certification and good standing.

Selected Achievements

1. Development of electronic registration system and electronic database.
2. Establishment of specialist professional development and promotion system.
3. Expansion of the examination questions bank and the quality through linkage with IDEAL Consortium.
4. Endorsement of the accreditation policy, standards and guide to preparation of self-study based on WFME standards and guidelines after adaptation to Sudan national context.
5. Implementation of advocacy and training workshops on accreditation.
 - a. Development of a generic module and guideline for implementation of teaching and training on professionalism including modules on communication skills, medical ethics and good medical practice. Adoption of the modules by Ministry of Higher Education and implementation by medical schools.
 - b. Design and implementation of CPD 3-day courses on medical professionalism and implementation for interns, residents in speciality training, consultants and general medical officers in collaboration with FMOH, States MoH, SMSB and medical schools.
 - c. Development of a training of trainers course and guide for trainers courses on professionalism. The aim of this step is to ensure sustainability of training and shift it to CPD institutes at facility level and in medical schools.
6. Successful implementation of the pilot study on implementation of the framework of social accountability of medical schools with collaboration and evaluation by international experts.
7. Adoption of the evaluation report recommendations by the Association of Deans of medical schools and agreement on a roll out plan in collaboration with and leadership of SMC.
8. Development of SMC administrative structure, expansion of HRH resources and capacity building and IT support to different departments.
9. Consolidation and expansion of local partnerships, regional and international collaboration.

Organizational Structure of SMC

