

# Medical & Dental Council

*"Guiding the professions, protecting the public"*



## **POLICY ON PRACTITIONERS' STAMP, NAME TAGS AND APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL APPAREL**

July, 2022

## **First Edition**

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You can find the latest version of this guidance on  
our website: **[www.mdcghana.org](http://www.mdcghana.org)**.

## 1. Preface

The Medical and Dental Council is the statutory agency under the Ministry of Health established under Part II of the Health Professions Regulatory Bodies Act, 2013 (Act 857) with the object to secure in the public interest the highest standards in the training and practice of medicine and dentistry in Ghana.

One of the functions of the Council as provided for in Section 27 of Act 857 is to prescribe and enforce professional standards and conduct for members of the professions under its regulatory mandate.

Accordingly, Council's regulatory focus is to, among others,

- promote and protect public health, safety, and well-being,
- assure and maintain confidence and trust in the profession and its members, and
- promote and maintain public confidence in the health care system.

Council notes that currently, the number of medical doctors, dental surgeons and physician assistants including certified registered anaesthetists (hereinafter referred to as practitioners) in the country has increased significantly in the last decade. Unfortunately, the resources available to Council to monitor and track the performance of practitioners have been dwindling over the same period. This may impact negatively on the capacity of Council to safeguard the quality and safety of the healthcare provided by the practitioners under its regulatory authority.

The situation calls for innovative and strategic approaches to assure and maintain the quality and safety of the health care given by practitioners. Towards these ends, Council as part of its

strategies to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided by practitioners and enforce conformity to approved standards has developed this policy on Practitioners' Stamp, Name Tags and Appropriate Apparel. It is therefore the hope of Council that a strict adherence to the guidance contained herein by all practitioners working in Ghana will advance the object and purposes of Council.

## **2. Rationale for the Policy**

The purpose of the policy on Practitioners' Stamp, Name Tags and Appropriate Apparel is to assist the Council to better protect the public through:

- enforcing professional standards,
- assuring quality and safety practice,
- promoting easy identification of the various categories of practitioners working within the healthcare space,
- promoting professionalism and Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) practices
- linking a practitioner to every medical record or report or test request or prescription or document he or she generates in the course of his or her practice,
- facilitating clinical audits, and
- weeding out unlicensed or unregistered or unqualified or fake practitioners.

## PART ONE: PRACTITIONERS' STAMP

### 3. Scope and Target Groups for the Self-Inking Stamp

The unique self-inking stamp will cover all practitioners registered with and licensed by the Council. These include practitioners working in the following types of facilities:

- *Public Health Facilities (Tertiary, Specialist, Secondary, and Primary levels) including practitioners in public health divisions at the national, regional and district levels.*
- *Private health facilities*
- *Quasi-Government health facilities*
- *Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) facilities*
- *Other Faith-Based-Organisations (e.g. Ahmadiyya, etc.)*
- *Others*

### 4. Features of the Self-Inking Stamp

The self-inking stamp as approved by Council must bear the following unique features:

- *Full Name of Practitioner*
- *Designation*
- *MDC Registration Number*
- *Facility (Optional for practitioners unattached to facilities)*
- *Signature*
- *Date*

The Medical and Dental Council's registration number will act as the unique identifier and help differentiate between the various categories of practitioners on the class of registers (*Provisional, Temporary and Permanent*) under the Act.

### 5. Acquisition of Stamp

- The institutions shall have the primary responsibility of producing the stamps for practitioners working with or within them,

- Where a practitioner is not attached to a facility, he or she shall bear the sole responsibility of procuring the stamp,
- A practitioner may own more than one stamp,
- Only stamps that meet the strict features as prescribed by Council under this policy shall be procured.
- The stamps shall be replaced under the following circumstances:
  - *change of status (i.e. from provisional or temporary to permanent registration),*
  - *loss of stamp,*
  - *change of name,*
  - *damaged or defaced stamp, and*
  - *Change of facility.*
- In the event of loss of stamp, the practitioner shall report the loss to the facility head for replacement within 48 hours of the loss.

## **6. When to Use the Stamp**

The stamp shall be used when:

- writing prescriptions (*in-patients and out-patients*),
- issuing medical reports or records or documents required by law to be issued by a practitioner,
- writing referrals, and
- issuing laboratory tests or imaging requests.

## **7. How to Use the Stamp**

Practitioners shall:

- apply the stamp,
- sign signature, and
- enter the appropriate date.

## **8. Validity of Stamp**

The document stamped is only valid insofar as the practitioner is in good standing with the Medical and Dental Council.

## **9. The Role of MDC in the Use of the Stamp**

The Council shall monitor compliance of the policy by facilities and practitioners.

## **10. The Role of Facilities in the Use of the Stamp**

Facilities are to

- develop and produce stamps for practitioners including e-stamps,
- keep a register of all stamps produced and issued,
- ensure the proper usage of stamps,
- be responsible for replacing all lost, damaged or defaced stamps,
- render a stamp invalid if the practitioner is no more an employee of the facility or deceased, and
- ensure that the stamp is returned to the facility head in case of suspension from practice or death of a practitioner.

## **11. The Role of the Practitioner in the Use of the Stamp**

Practitioners are to

- keep the stamp safe and prevent access to other persons,
- report loss of stamp to head of facility within 48 hours of the loss,
- use the stamp appropriately,
- be in full control of the stamp, and
- be personally responsible and accountable for its use.

## **12. Inappropriate Use of the Stamp by the Practitioner**

Inappropriate use of the stamp shall include, but not limited to, use of the stamp:

- by other persons other than the practitioner,
- for purposes other than specified,
- by unlicensed or unregistered practitioners or practitioners not in good standing,

- by practitioners deemed not fit to practise,
- by practitioners under disciplinary sanctions, and
- by quacks.

### **13. Sanctions Against Inappropriate Use of the Stamps**

#### Practitioner

- Withdrawal of the stamp by facility head, and
- Referral of the practitioner to the Council for disciplinary action.

#### Facility

- Referral of the head of facility (*in appropriate cases*) or the clinical head to Council for disciplinary action, and
- Referral of the facility head to the Police where appropriate.



## PART TWO: NAME TAGS

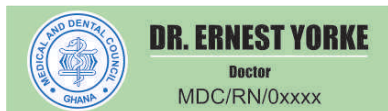
Council requires that name tags should always be worn by practitioners on duty. The prescribed features of Name Tags for practitioners shall be as follows:

- The Name Tag shall bear the name of the practitioner as registered with Council with the practitioners unique registration number as identifier.
- The Name Tag shall also bear the appropriate background colour of the various registers as shown below:

No.	Category	Background Colour
1.	Practitioners on Permanent Register	Green
2.	Practitioners on Provisional Register	Pink
3.	Practitioners on Temporary Register	Yellow

Consequently, the sample Name Tags for the various categories of practitioners on the various registers with their pantomime numbers as prescribed under this policy should be as indicated below:

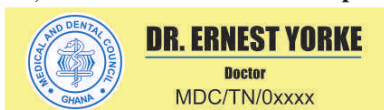
### I. Practitioners on the **Permanent** Register



### ii) Practitioners on the **Provisional** Register



### iii) Practitioners on the **Temporary** Register



### **PART THREE: APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL APPAREL**

Following increasing reports that some persons have been passing themselves off as medical or dental practitioners or physician assistants and concerns relating to unethical practices in the healthcare space, Council issued an earlier *Policy advisory dated 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018* and distributed to stakeholders (including agency heads) in respect of the importance of practitioners wearing the appropriate apparel within the healthcare setting or facility.

This Policy guide formalises the earlier policy advisory and requires that all practitioners (doctors, dental surgeons, and physician assistants) must wear the appropriate professional apparel at all times while they are within the health care facility or remain in the care environment.

It is hoped that doing so will help enhance professionalism, promote IPC practices, and make it easier (taken together with the other guidance in this document) for patients to identify their caregivers, make informed decisions about the choice of their practitioner and improve the quality and safety of care to the patients.

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**The Registrar,  
Medical and Dental Council, Ghana,**

**P. O. Box AN 10586,  
Accra, Ghana.**

**Tel.:** +233 302 661 620  
+233 302 661 606

**Email:** [registrar@mdcghana.org](mailto:registrar@mdcghana.org)

**Website:** [www.mdcghana.org](http://www.mdcghana.org)