



# AYURVEDIC PRACTITIONERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE (APAS)

## SELF-REGULATION FRAMEWORK

Ayurveda is a 5000 year old system of medicine with historical roots in the Indian subcontinent. Globalized and modernized practices derived from Ayurveda traditions are a type of complementary or alternative medicine. Traditional science of Ayurvedic medicine is designed to bring the body back into balance so that it can heal itself. In Ayurveda, the mind is thought to be the origin of all disease. In recent times, Ayurveda has been enjoying a major resurgence in both its native land and throughout the world.

Ayurveda has been practised in Singapore for the last 8 decades. At present, there are 15 clinics and 15 Ayurvedic Physicians.

Ayurvedic Practitioners Association of Singapore (APAS) was founded by a group of active and committed Ayurvedic physicians and enthusiasts who are interested in popularising and regulating Ayurveda in Singapore.

APAS understands and agrees that Self-Regulation is a core attribute of learned profession. It encompasses the responsibility and authority to establish and enforce standards of education, training and practice of Ayurveda in Singapore.

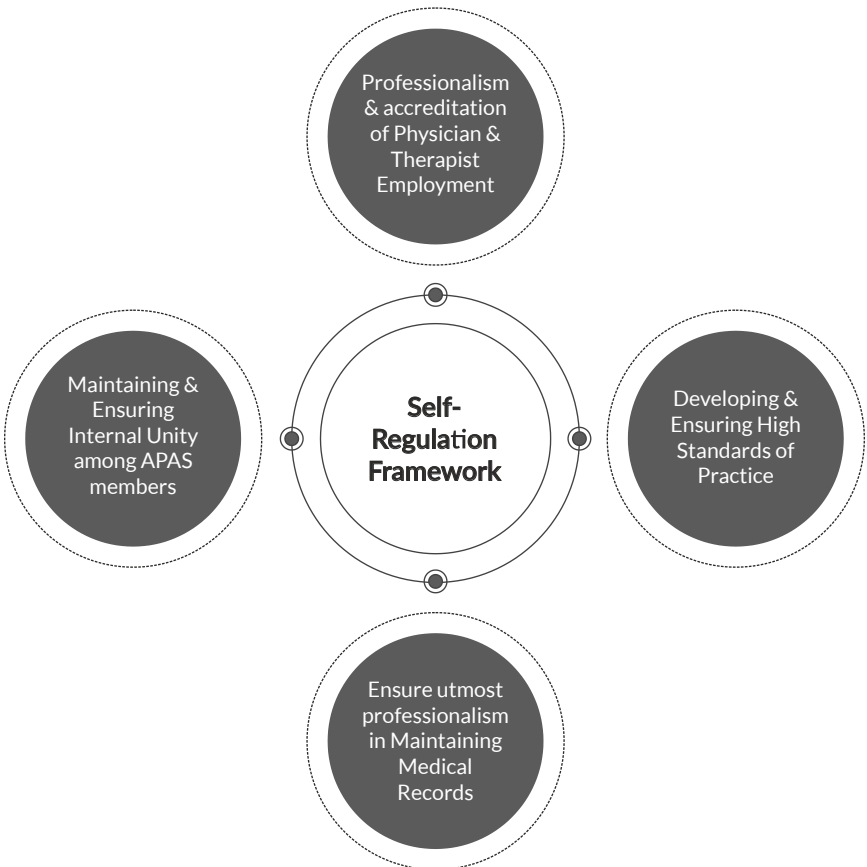
Ayurveda has been struggling towards achieving professional status in Singapore. The goal of the Self-Regulation Framework is to emphasise strategies that aim to improve the standards of Ayurveda in Singapore. These strategies is a demarcation of who is qualified to practice Ayurveda in Singapore and what are the practice standards that have to be adhered to in ensuring patients wellbeing.

APAS acknowledges that there are difficulties with self-regulation. Self-regulation relies on voluntary compliance by our APAS members. Hence its effectiveness depends on the ability of the professional association such as APAS to enforce disciplinary measures. A practitioner's voluntary membership of a professional association (APAS) may be the only indicator for consumers that a practitioner is suitably qualified and safe to practice, and subject to a disciplinary scheme if he or she does not hold a valid membership registration under APAS. (Can be better explained after our discussion)

The below framework was conceptualised by APAS based on the following:

- The educational qualifications, training and experience of therapists
- The categories of therapists
- The evidence base for each therapy
- The scope of practice involved
- The protection of the public and promotion of a quality service, including the efficacy of the therapies offered
- Regulations governing alternative therapists in other countries

### APAS Self-Regulation Framework



## **1. Professionalism & Accreditation of Physician & Therapist Employment**

- 1.1 All Ayurvedic practitioners are required to be registered under the Indian Medical Council
- 1.2 Ayurvedic therapist are to reach any certain educational standard and professionalism, they should possess the required treatment/ therapy knowledge and experience.
- 1.3 APAS would establish criteria for the evaluation of qualification of both physicians and therapists.
- 1.4 APAS is intended to be self-sufficient, with all costs of the regulatory body funded by registration fees.

### **The registration fee is as follows:**

Physicians: SGD 300/year (Not confirmed)

Therapists: SGD 150/year

Clinics: SGD 200/year

## **2. Developing & Ensuring High Standards of Practice**

- 2.1 Physicians and therapist should manage and maintain good customer relationships at all time.
- 2.2 The customer/ patient should be provided with a maximum level of protection by prohibiting unregistered and unqualified persons from practicing certain Ayurvedic treatments. Untrained practitioners would be prevented from entering the profession in Singapore.
- 2.3 Practitioners and therapists have to be polite, cordial and professional with customers/patients at all time.
- 2.4 Customers/ Patients concerns and feedback are to be received in a written form, proposed actions taken and incident report needs to be documented depending on the type of feedback.

- 2.5 Therapists are to abstain from hard selling during the treatment sessions.
- 2.6 Therapists must ensure the privacy of customers with uninterrupted treatments.
- 2.7 Therapist have to refrain from the usage of mobile phone/PDA or any other recording devices during treatment sessions.
- 2.8 No cross treatments (between genders) are allowed in any Ayurveda clinic registered with APAS, clinic owners are to ensure the purity of Ayurveda is strictly followed and no modification of the traditional Ayurveda teachings are to be induced into the treatments.
- 2.9 Clinics are responsible to their customers and should adopt a fair and ethical business practice as well as accurate marketing communications at all times. Hard selling is prohibited.
- 2.10 Staff must be well-groomed and professional in appearance and etiquette.
- 2.11 Therapists are to wear uniform and name tag when on duty, the physician is to wear a nametag during operational hours.

### **3. Maintaining & Ensuring Internal Unity among APAS members**

It is recognized by APAS that its existence is only through the cohesiveness of its members. In accordance the following roles and responsibilities of members is expected by APAS:

#### **General Members**

1. Financially support and promote APAS
2. Attend monthly meetings.
3. Attend any events/ talks or functions organized by APAS
4. Become familiar with the requirements expected of a member.

## **Executive Committee Members (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-Treasurer)**

1. Represent APAS at community functions.
2. Identify problems, address and resolve them.
3. Review if clinics are adhering to the self-regulation framework periodically.

### **4. Ensure utmost professionalism in maintaining Medical Records**

- 4.1 Customer's particulars are strictly for the purpose of rendering services requirements information or for other legitimate purposes made known to the Customer to obtaining such particulars. APAS will not approve the usage of customer personal information for any unauthorized usage.
- 4.2 If the clinic wishes to use Customers' particulars for purposes other than internal marketing and billing, we make this known to the Customer before obtaining their particulars and obtain the consent of the Customer using Consent Form For Using Customers' Particulars. They will have to follow PDPA rules and regulations.
- 4.3 Clinics should have a legitimate system for maintaining confidentiality of customer data, for example, files and folders are to be in a locked cabinet accessed by authorized personnel only. Soft copy information are to be password protected.

### **5. Continuing Professional Education (CPE) in Ayurveda**

APAS is looking into making CPS compulsory, the plan is to have Ayurvedic practitioners acquire 30 points over a two-year period. For example one hour as a speaker or and instructor would give the practitioner 2/3 points. The board will also look into accepting self-declaration of attendance at overseas conferences.

## Conclusion

The strategies outlined above influences one another and should not be viewed in isolation. APAS recognizes that there is no single linear path to self-regulation.

The Self-Regulation Framework by APAS aim to ensure that there is professionalism, integrity and standards within the Ayurvedic community. This framework will form a yardstick for existing and new ayurvedic establishments to follow. APAS will validate the accreditation of Ayurvedic Physicians and Therapists. This is to ensure that only genuine Physicians and Therapists are brought in by various Ayurvedic establishments in Singapore. APAS will not hesitate to take any form of action against errant establishments that flout the framework. APAS will always remain impartial, transparent and uphold a professional approach in handling complaints against any of their members and registered establishments.

