



# MALAYSIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION

*Promoting the Art and Science of Dentistry*

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## **Fake Dentistry: Looks similar but NOT the same**

Kelana Jaya, 8th October 2017.

The Malaysian Dental Association (MDA), together with her stakeholders, Malaysian Private Dental Practitioners Association (MPDPA), Malaysian Association of Oral Maxillofacial Surgeons (MAOMS), Malaysian Endodontic Society (MES), Malaysian Association of Aesthetic Dentistry (MAAD), Malaysian Oral Implant Association (MOIA), Malaysian Association for Prosthodontics (MAP), Malaysian Association of Paediatric Dentistry (MAPD), Malaysian Orthodontic Practitioners' Association (MOPA), and Islamic Dental Association of Malaysia (IDAM), have been following closely all the events and news related to the issue of "quack dentists", practising "fake dentistry" on Malaysian citizens.

The dental profession as a whole is saddened by the apparent lack of awareness on the part of the general public regarding the seriousness of this matter, with some still resorting to seeking dental care from these unregistered (illegal) practitioners. MDA would like to take this opportunity to inform the general public that the practice of dentistry is regulated by the Dental Act 1971 (Act 51), to ensure the safety of patients in this country. The general public needs to carefully select a dental practitioner who is legally registered with the Malaysian Dental Council (MDC). Any form of dental procedures should be carried out by a registered dental practitioner either in public healthcare facilities or under a clinical environment in a premise that is duly registered under the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act (PHFSA) 1998. Hence, the general public has a constitutional right to seek safe dental treatment in this country, and MDA views this matter with utmost seriousness and is obliged to continuously enlighten the general public in line with the objectives of the association, which is to promote the arts and science of Dentistry for the benefit of the public.

Under Section 2 Subsection 2 of the Dental Act 1971, a person shall be deemed to practise dentistry within the meaning of the Act if he/she performs the following:

- (a) treats or attempts to treat or professes to treat, cure, relieve or prevent any disease, deficiency or lesion or pain of the human teeth or jaws;
- (b) performs or attempts to perform any operation on human teeth or jaws;
- (c) inserts or attempts to insert any artificial teeth or appliances for the restoration, regulation or improvement of the teeth or accessory structures;
- (d) performs any radiographic work in connection with human teeth or jaws or the oral cavity;

- (e) gives any treatment, advice or attendance on or to any person in connection with the fitting or insertion for the purpose of fitting or fixing of artificial teeth or of a crown or bridge or an appliance for the restoration or regulation of the human teeth or jaws;
- (f) gives any anaesthetic in connection with any such operation or treatment as abovementioned under this subsection; or
- (g) holds himself out whether directly or indirectly as practising dentistry

Hence, it shall deemed a violation of the Act, and an offence punishable under the Law, if an unregistered individual, including “beauticians”, performs the aforesaid.

On the same note, the Malaysian Orthodontic Practitioners Association (MOPA), is also extremely concerned with the general public seeking treatment of their mal-aligned teeth from these fake dentists. MOPA advises not to subject oneself to unnecessary risks by undergoing procedures for Fake Braces and to ensure that proper Orthodontic treatment is provided by duly registered dental practitioners in Malaysia.

Among the many negative impacts of seeking services from Fake Dentists includes complications arising from wrongful procedures that are not only unmanageable by these Fake Dentists but which render the disease even more complicated to treat and thereby incurring higher costs. Infection control is often compromised and risks of contracting dangerous infections such HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and probably airborne diseases such as Tuberculosis not only poses a threat to the “patients” but also to the Fake Dentists themselves. The lack of medical knowledge among these Fake Dentists also subjects these “patients” to increased risk of morbidity and even mortality (death). Affected individuals who have been duped by these irresponsible “fake dentists” not only have to pay a substantial amount for the fake or wrongful treatment, they also suffer greatly from procedures which may leave irreparable damage.

MDA in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders are in the process of heightening public awareness through direct public engagement to educate the public on the issue of Fake Dentistry.

Plans are afoot for a community social responsibility project pertaining to this subject and the general public are invited to attend the public talk scheduled to be held in conjunction with the **25th MDA SCIENTIFIC CONVENTION AND TRADE EXHIBITION** in January 2018.

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