

SINGAPORE EXPANDS LIST OF U.S. MEDICAL SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED FOR REGISTRATION OF DOCTORS

April 2, 2003

S U M M A R Y

Singapore's Ministry of Health has liberalized limits on the recognition of foreign medical degrees, by expanding the list of foreign medical schools whose degrees are recognized for purposes of the registration of doctors to practice in Singapore. The revised list ("Schedule"), which took effect March 14, increases the number of medical schools recognized for registration from 24 to 71, including 20 U.S. medical schools (only four U.S. medical schools were on the previous list). The impact of the change is not expected to be dramatic, given that U.S. practitioners say Singapore has been flexible in allowing foreign doctors with degrees from medical schools not on the list to practice in Singapore under a conditional registration process. However, it may make the U.S. medical schools on the list more attractive to aspiring Singaporean medical students. The change will not affect Singapore's reservations on medical services under the US-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (USSFTA).

Shortages Lead to Liberalization

On March 7, the Ministry of Health unveiled an expanded list ("Schedule") of medical schools whose degrees are recognized in Singapore for purposes of registration of doctors by the Singapore Medical Council (SMC). The change follows concern about a looming shortage of doctors. In announcing the revision, MOH said "a limited expansion of the Schedule (of recognized schools) will allow our medical institutions to recruit sufficient numbers of good foreign-trained doctors to meet their needs, while avoiding an oversupply of doctors." In 1993, the Government adopted a very restrictive policy on the recognition of foreign medical degrees. Prior to that year, degrees from 176 medical schools had been recognized for registration in Singapore. The new Schedule is retroactive, so that those having obtained medical degrees from recognized schools before March 14, 2003 will be able to apply for recognition. Graduates from medical schools that are not on the revised schedule may still apply to the Singapore Medical Council to practice under a temporary registration.

The revised Schedule increases the number of recognized medical schools from 24 to 71, and includes schools from the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Canada, the UK, and Ireland. See Para. 4 for the names of all 20 U.S. medical schools included on the revised Schedule. MOH says that the SMC, in reviewing which foreign medical schools should be included on the revised Schedule, took into account many factors, including the medium of instruction in the schools, the schools' curriculum and training with Singapore's local system and practice, and feedback and recommendations from local professional associations and public healthcare institutions in Singapore.

U.S. Medical Schools on Revised Schedule

U.S. medical schools included in the revised Schedule include the following:

- Baylor College of Medicine
 - Los Angeles School of Medicines, University of California
 - School of Medicine, University of California at San Diego
 - San Francisco School of Medicine, University of California
 - Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago
 - *Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons
 - *Cornell University Medical College
 - Duke University School of Medicine
 - Emory University School of Medicine
 - Harvard Medical School
 - The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
 - Mayo Medical School
 - *University of Michigan Medical School (Ann Arbor)
 - University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
 - University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
 - Stanford University School of Medicine
 - University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas
 - Vanderbilt University School of Medicine
 - University of Washington School of Medicine (Seattle)
 - *Washington University School of Medicine (St. Louis)
 - Yale University Medical School
-
- *Medical schools recognized on previous Schedule*