

GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION OF TRADITIONAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN GHANA

Please read carefully.

- Registration fees paid are not refundable if application is not approved.
- Submission of application forms and payment of approved fees do not guarantee approval for registration and licensing if you do not qualify.

NOTE:

Applicants who practice Traditional Medicine (TM) related professions other than the practices as specified in 2.5 will require additional certificate/license from the designated Agencies of the Ministry of Health.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Traditional Medicine Practice Act, 2000 (Act 575) seeks to promote, regulate and control **TRADITIONAL MEDICINE / TRADITIONAL HEALTH PRACTICE** in Ghana through the Traditional Medicine Practice Council (TMPC). And one core function of the council is the registration of TMPs and licensing of their practice premises. This will facilitate mainly identification of the THPs and also help in the development of a credible data base on the practitioners.

There are two (2) broad groups of TMPs envisaged in Ghana currently. One group which we may refer to as the Local or Indigenous TMPs is made up of traditionally trained practitioners. This includes both Ghanaians and foreigners. And the other group comprises the Ghanaian citizens and non-citizens who have obtained a Degree or Diploma qualification in Traditional/Herbal Medicine.

As a result, the proposed modalities for the registration of all the identified groups are as indicated in the chart (**Fig.1**), attached to this document.

2.0 DEFINITION FOR TRADITIONAL MEDICINE PRACTITIONER (TMP) / MEDICAL HERBALIST (MH).

And for ease of reference and personal assessment for the practitioners as well as self-regulation in the case of practice groups and associations, it is necessary that the following words (terminologies) are appropriately defined as in the Act 575, WHO Documents etc.

2.1 Traditional Medicine (TM):

1. Is the sum total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness. (WHO1978).
2. Refers to health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal and mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illnesses or maintain well-being. (WHO, Fact Sheet No234, 2003)

3. Is the diverse health practices based on the traditional knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal, minerals based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises, applied singularly or in combination to maintain well-being, diagnose, treat or prevent illnesses or physical, mental, social and spiritual imbalances (MOH, Document, 2001).
4. Traditional Medicine in this context represents Complementary and Alternative Medicine practices.

2.2 Traditional Medicine Practitioner (TMP)

- a. Traditional Medicine Practitioner (TMP) is a person who practices Traditional Medicine (TM) and must:
 1. Meets the criteria as set out in Act 575, Section 10.
 2. Be recognized by the community in which he/she lives as a practitioner.

2.3 Medical Herbalists

Medical Herbalists are skilled general practitioners who have obtained diploma or degree by undergoing at least four (4)

years of training in recognized institutions in the medical sciences alongside the herbal science to attain the highest level of competence in the use of medical plants to treat a wide variety of diseases. *medicinal*

2.4 Target Group

The following persons involved in TM-related practices are the target of this guidelines and regulations. This includes:

- i. Indigenous herbalists, Diploma-holding Herbalists, Degree-holding herbalists, Certificate-holding Herbalists and Indigenous herbalists engaged in production/manufacturing of Traditional medicine products (TMs);
- ii. TBAs, Wanzams/Circumcisionists, Psychic spiritualists & Herbalists, Hawkers (Small-scale TMs raw materials dealers), TMs raw materials dealers; TMs Cultivators, Mebokas.⁷¹
- iii. Healing/Prayer Camps Operators and Religious Missions engaged in alternative health care.
- iv. Practitioners of foreign aspect of Traditional Medicine as specified in (I – iii) above.

- v. Practitioners and health care essentially alternative and/or complementary to western allopathic healthcare.

3.0 ORIENTATION PROGRAMMES

Orientation programmes will be organized by the Council for all applicants approved by the Registration Committees before Registration Certificates are issued.

4.0 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF PRACTITIONERS IN GHANA BY THE COUNCIL

The following minimum requirement shall be met by applicants for registration and licensing.

4.1 (A) Citizens

Application shall be in a form and manner prescribed by TMPC.

2. The applicant shall:-

a) Satisfy the council that he/she:

i is of good character;

ii holds a degree or diploma in traditional medicine; or

- iii holds a qualification equivalent to a degree that allows him/her to be registered as a practitioner in the country where the qualification was obtained and or
 - iv. holds a certificate/testimonial from a Master-craftsman, Traditional medicine related training School and
 - v. shows adequate proficiency in the practice of Traditional Medicine.
- b) Shows that she/he has participated in structured/standard training programmes designed by MOH/TMPC and its accredited institutions.
- c) Shows that she/he has passed a Professional Qualifying Examination and Interview (PQEI) or Proficiency Improvement Training and Assessment (PITA) organized by the Council for graduates or diplomats, and for the indigenous TMPs respectively.
- d) Application form has been endorsed by any two of the following:-
- i) District chairperson of the association.

- ii) Traditional ruler of the community;
In the areas where chieftaincy disputes or any other condition(s) could not permit acceptable endorsement of the form, the Chairman or Secretary of the Traditional Council where the TMP intends to practice shall endorse the application form.
- iii) District Coordinating Director.

N:B Not applicable to Degree / Diploma holders from accredited institutions.

- e) Proves that she/he has no records of conviction to a term of imprisonment for a criminal offence.
- f) Proves that she/he has paid the prescribed fee for the licensing of his/her practice premises where he/she will practice after registration.
- g) Proves that she/he has paid the prescribed fee for the registration and certification of practitioners.

4.2 (B) Non-Citizens

The law authorizes the registration of foreigners/non-citizens as well as their Practice Premises when the Council is satisfied that:

1. A non-citizen applies to the Council for a license to own or operate a practice premises through the nearest Office of the Council within the area in which the practice premises is to be located;
2. a) He / she possesses a valid work permit issued by the Minister of Interior.
b) He / she has evidence of that he has been trained in the practice of Traditional Medicine in his/her country of origin.
c) He / she has at least five years post qualification experience in a recognized institution of relevance to traditional medicine.
d) He / she has passed:
i) An English language proficiency test where English is not the language of communication during training as Traditional Health Practitioner, or a similar test in a Ghanaian language; and

- ii) A Professional Qualifying Test to be administered by the Council, where applicable;
- e) He/she has registered with the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, where appropriate; and
- f) He/she has fulfilled other conditions as stated in section 18(2) of the Act, and as the Council may determine.

Indigenous
3. An illiterate or semi-literate non-citizen TMP has successfully gone through a structured training programme of the TMPC.

4.3 Operation/Practice in Licensed Premises Only

In accordance with the TM practice Act 2000, Act 575, particularly S (9) (1) & S (17), S(39) (a & 2b) S(40) (f & g) Practice premises has to be licensed.

Since TMPs are required to practice from registered premises, prospective applicants for registration and certification must as a matter of necessity also seek for licensing of premises where he/she will practice after registration.

members, the document should bear or indicate the specific name(s) of the community, village or town where the Practice Premises would be located.

Therefore the secretariat, TMPC will demand acceptable proof/evidence or recognition by the Traditional Council, in addition to the filled up Declaration Form.

5.0 CONFIDENTIAL-REPORT

This is applicable to practitioners trained outside Ghana or in accredited institutions in Ghana and have undergone the rotation programme as required in (3.0) above. The confidential report should be written by the TMP-in-charge of the last place of work and directly submitted to the secretariat.

6.0 TEMPORARY REGISTRATION / CERTIFICATE AND A REGISTER

The names of graduates/diplomats preparing for internship programmes shall be given temporary registration and the names entered into a register to be called "TEMPORARY REGISTER".

7.0 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFYING EXAMS:

7.1 Post-Qualification Assessment

Persons graduating with certificates in Herbal medicine as Herbalists shall undertake Post-qualification assessment/ professional qualifying exams before registration at TMPC.

7.2 Professional Qualifying Exams / Interview (PQEI)

All non-citizens and Ghanaian practitioners trained abroad shall take the PQEI.

Similarly, graduates of accredited training institutions in Ghana will where necessary have completed the National Service Programme and internship in registered or accredited TM related set ups before taking the (PQEI).

7.3 Proficiency Improvement Training and Assessment (PITA) Programme

This training programme is suitably designed for illiterate and semiliterate Ghanaian TMPs and foreigners. The training and testing shall be a written or an oral examinations/testing, as the

case may be. Moreover, the language/medium of communication shall be the language of choice of the prospective applicant(s).

7.4 Continuing Education Programme (CEP)

To ensure continuous quality service provision by TMPs, the various groups of practitioners would be required to regularly participate in customized CEPs to be organized by TMPC and/or any other body accredited by TMPC. It would constitute a basis for continued retention of practitioners on the REGISTER OF PRACTITIONERS. In other words CEP constitutes the basis the basis for renewal of registration.

7.5 Failure in Pqei or Pita and Resit Exams / Interview (REI)

In the unlikely event that prospective applicants fail the above-mentioned tests (i.e. PQEI & PITA) the unfortunate candidate's registration shall be deferred.

A Resit Test/Examination will be conducted according to the terms/conditions specified by TMPC.

8.0 FULL / PERMANENT REGISTRATION / CERTIFICATE

As provided for in S(9) (2) of the law Act, the Secretariat shall permit full permanent registration of the prospective applicants, after all requirements or conditions set out have been satisfied. The registered names shall be entered into a register to be called "REGISTER OF PRACTITIONERS".

9.0 EXPIRY AND RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATE

Both temporary and permanent certificates shall be deemed expired after twelve (12) calendar months. Renewals are therefore expected to be affected on or before the last day of twelfth month. Failure to do so shall constitute an offence and appropriate sanctions shall be applied. A prescribed retention fee shall be paid by TMPs/MHs in respect of the renewal of the registration/certificate.

10.0 TYPES OF APPLICATION

The application forms have been designed for prospective applicants to indicate whether

the application is in respect of any of the following status:

- (a) New;
- (b) Renewal or Retention on the Register,
- (c) Temporary (Provisional)
- (d) Full (Permanent)

Basically, the details on the forms have been separated into the following:

- i. Personal information on the applicant.
- ii. Reference column where two (2) referees will attest to the credibility and proficiency of the Traditional Health Practitioner (THP)
- iii. For official use only, where the Secretariat would make inputs for perusal by the Registration Committee of the TMPC.

ATTACHMENTS: *All claims, especially academic qualifications and other relevant documentary evidence in respect of the applicant will be attached to the forms.*

11.0 ACQUISITION OF REFERENCE BOOKS

As part of moves to ensure competence and professionalism and compliance with the law and ethics, TMPs are obliged to own copies of Act 575, the code of ethics and other books the Council shall recommend.

12.0 TITLE OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE PRACTITIONERS (TMPS)

Pursuant to S (39) (k), various groups of TMPs are supposed to be identified with titles duly earned by their training and/or conferred on him/her traditionally etc.

A common title, "Native/Doctor" (N/Dr) has been prescribed in the Code of Ethics and Standards of practice for indigenous TMPs. University Degree holding practitioners would be allowed to use titles that the university prescribes.

For Doctorate, degree holders, the title "Dr" shall be permitted to be used, but the particular field of study must be indicated.

Examples of traditional titles permitted to be used

are Nana, Hunua, Togbe, Okomfo, Okyeame, Bokor, Amegashi, Torbokor, Nii, Nene, Naa, Alhaji and Mamishi. Others are MeBoka, Wansam, Osofo, Prophet, Midawo, etc.

Therefore it is an offence for an indigenous TMP to use titles such as Dr., Professor etc and it may attract concerns of other agencies.

13.0 CERTIFICATE OF DECLARATION

All TMPs, both citizens and non-citizens are expected to sincerely and faithfully give information that can stand any form of background investigations by TMPC officials. It is therefore important to give true relevant and verifiable information at all times, as stipulated in S (39) (d) of Act 575. False information will constitute an offence and even disqualify applicants.

14.0 POCKET ID CARD (PIDC)

In addition to the certificates, TMPs shall possess a pocket ID card issued by the TMPC for a prescribed fee. The PIDC shall in no way replace the ID card to be issued by the National Identification System (NIS).

15.0 TRANSFERS

Neither transfer of license from one location to another nor from one owner to another person without expressed approval shall be permitted by the Traditional Medicine Practice Council. Any such requests shall be treated as fresh applications and should conform to the criteria stated in this guideline and other rules and regulations made by the Council.

Miscellaneous

- a. Every practitioner registered under this Act shall have
 - The right to practice traditional medicine to the extent allowed under this act;
 - The right to recover in any court, with full costs of suit, reasonable charges for any medical services or for any medicine or appliance which the practitioner both prescribed and supplied;
 - The right to sign a certificate or other document required by law to be signed by medical service providers.

b. No practitioner shall be entitled to do any of the following unless he is registered to the extent only allowed by this Act;

- Practice traditional medicine;
- Recover in any court of law the charges or costs in respect of services rendered.
- Sign any certificate or document required by law to be signed by a medical service provider.

c. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act, the following things may be done by persons not registered as practitioner under this Act, that is to say:

- i. The application of dressings;
- ii. The practice of an indigenous system of healing by any person who;
 - Is indigenous inhabitant of Ghana;
 - Does not perform any act dangerous to life; and
 - Does not supply administer or prescribe any restricted drugs;

MODALITIES FOR REGISTRATION OF TRADITIONAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN GHANA

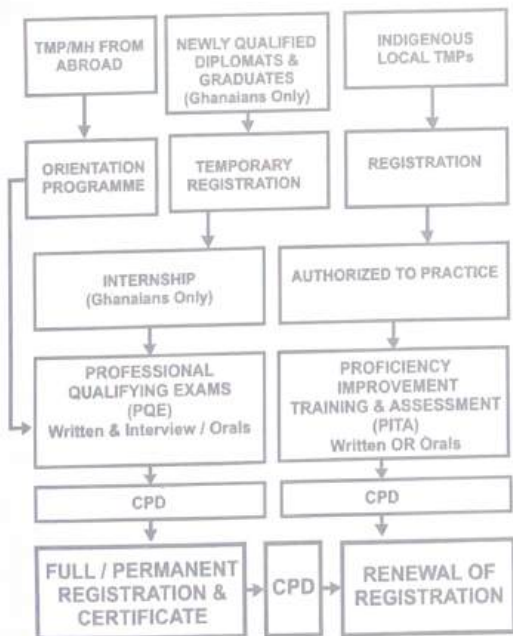


Fig. 1 – Chart on registration processes for Traditional Health Practitioners in Ghana.

GUIDELINES FOR THE REGISTRAITON / LICENSING OF TMs PRACTICE PREMISES TO BE OWNED & OPERATED BY TRADITIONAL MEDICINE PRACTITIONERS

Please Note:

1. Traditional medicinal products (TMs) sales and supplies facilities operated by **non-TMPs** will require the:
 - Services of a registered TMP as the Superintendent.

1.0 LICENSING OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE (TM) PRACTICE PREMISES

Pursuant to S (17) (a), S (22) (d) S 40 (g) of Act 575, it is only TM Practice premises licensed by TMPC, that are permitted to operate in Ghana.

By implication, no person(s), association(s), or institution(s) or agencies could issue Licenses, Certificates etc for services which involve the use of mainly Traditional medicines only. The said documents, when issued by any unauthorized body or bodies are not only illegal but also provide good evidence of fraud and hence attract criminal proceedings in court under Act 575 as well as the criminal code of Ghana.

2.0 WHAT IS PRACTICE PREMISES?

Practice premises within this context include SPECIFICALLY DESIGNATED VEHICLES, CLINICS, HOSPITALS, SALES & SUPPLIES FACILITIES (RAW MATERIALS & FINISHED PRODUCTS), SHRINES, TBA HOMES, HEALING/PRAYER CAMPS ETC

3.0 MANUFACTURING UNITS

Traditional Health Practitioners (THPs) are normally expected to prepare extemporaneous traditional medicines for their clients, and this has to be done within the licensed Practice premises. For practitioners who may wish to produce FDB-approved medicines for sale, the premises intended for use for the commercial business shall be licensed by the TMPC.

Please note that this process is completely independent of regulatory measures as operated by the FDA-Agency for approval of medicines for sale and use.

4.0 SALE OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINES (TMS) – PRODUCTS ON VEHICLES

In accordance with S (39) (1) & S (40) (g), sale of Traditional Medicine (TM) products on

vehicles without approval from the Traditional Medicine Practice Council (TMPC) is illegal and constitutes an offence unless the vehicle is registered solely for the purposes of sales and supplies of Traditional medicines, and designated as such..

5.0 RELOCATION, SUSPENSION AND REFUSAL TO LICENSE

Sections (22) of Act 575 spells out clearly circumstances under which the TMPC will revoke suspend or refuse to renew a license of a Practice premises.

6.0 POWER OF ENTRY & INSPECTION

S(26) & S (27) of Act 575 enjoin practitioners to co-operate with officials of the secretariat authorized to enter and inspect premises and any other items of interest. In addition, the police officer or officers of other security agencies, not below the rank of ASP could enter and inspect Traditional Medicine (TM) Practice premises or any items or activities therein.