

**GUIDELINES ON
TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY**

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH
1 April 2004**

MINISTRY OF HEALTH GUIDELINES ON TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

1 CARRYING OUT TREATMENT TO TERMINATE PREGNANCY

- 1.1 Every treatment for terminating pregnancy shall be carried out by an authorised medical practitioner in an approved institution.
- 1.2 Under the Termination of Pregnancy Act, an authorised medical practitioner shall not carry out treatment for the termination of pregnancy on any pregnant woman other than:
 - (a) a citizen of Singapore or the wife of a citizen of Singapore;
 - (b) a holder or the wife of a holder of a work permit pass or employment pass; or
 - (c) a person who has been resident in Singapore for at least 4 months

unless it is immediately necessary to save the life of the pregnant woman.

- 1.3 In relation to the holding of a work permit pass under paragraph (b), the holding of a temporary work permit by the pregnant woman or her husband is itself insufficient. The pregnant woman or her husband must be the holder of a work permit pass issued under the Immigration Act.
- 1.4 No treatment for terminating a pregnancy of more than 24 weeks can be carried out unless the treatment is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman.
- 1.5 The termination of a pregnancy must be at the request of the pregnant woman and with her consent.

2 APPLICATION AND QUALIFICATION AS APPROVED INSTITUTION

- 2.1 An application to the Minister for the approval of any institution, hospital, maternity home, clinic or other place as an approved institution shall be in the Form I set out in the Schedule to the Regulations or in the form set out in the electronic licensing system of the Ministry of Health at <https://www.moh-ela.gov.sg>

- 2.2 Minister may cancel the approval for the use of any place as an approved institution and the authorisation to carry out treatment to terminate pregnancy if any authorised medical practitioner contravenes or fails to comply with any of the provisions of the Regulations and any conditions specified by the Minister in authorising the medical practitioner to carry out treatment to terminate any pregnancy.

3 APPLICATION AND QUALIFICATION AS AUTHORISED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

- 3.1 An application to the Minister for authorisation to carry out treatment to terminate pregnancy shall be in the Form II set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.
- 3.2 Only specialists with Obstetrics & Gynaecology degrees will be given approval to terminate pregnancies that are up to 24 weeks duration.
- 3.3 Each medical practitioner in private practice who applies to the Minister for authorisation to carry out treatment to terminate pregnancy shall be approved to carry out treatment for the termination of pregnancy at only one specified private medical clinic. However, where such an authorised medical practitioner is also accredited to work in a hospital approved to carry out treatment for the termination of pregnancy, the medical practitioner may also perform such treatment at that approved hospital.

4 APPROVED INSTITUTIONS

- 4.1 A hospital which is an approved institution for the carrying out of treatment for termination of pregnancy must submit to the Ministry in Form I of the Schedule to the Regulations the names of the authorised medical practitioners accredited to carry out treatment for the termination of pregnancy in that hospital.
- 4.2 An approved institution must maintain its premises in a reasonable state of cleanliness and to provide a qualified medical practitioner, a nurse, a trained counsellor and, where general anaesthesia is to be induced, an anaesthetist during the termination of a pregnancy.
- 4.3 The hospital must inform the Ministry when any of its authorised doctors resign from the hospital.

5 MANDATORY COUNSELLING

5.1 Trained Abortion Counsellor

Every approved institution shall have amongst its personnel at least one doctor or nurse who have undergone a course of training in termination of pregnancy counselling conducted by the Director of Medical Services. If the trained counsellor leaves employment, the approved institution is required to inform Ministry of Health within 2 weeks. A maximum grace period of 6 months will be allowed for the approved institution to have a replacement or make arrangement to provide for the mandatory requirement, failing which the approval to the approved institution to carry out abortion will be cancelled.

5.2 Pre-abortion counselling¹ must be provided for a pregnant woman, regardless of her marital status, who:

- (a) is a Singapore citizen or permanent resident;
- (b) has passed the primary school leaving examination (PSLE);
- (c) has at least some secondary education, and
- (d) has less than three children.

5.3 Pre-abortion counselling for girls below 16 years of age(except for rape victims)

It is mandatory to refer an unmarried girl below 16 years of age for pre-abortion counselling at the Health Promotion Board Counselling Centre when she seeks treatment to terminate pregnancy. A Certificate of Attendance (COA) will be issued to her by Health Promotion Board Counselling Centre. No termination of pregnancy can be performed unless the COA is produced by the girl. The COA number should be recorded in Part III Column 19 of the Report on Request for Treatment to Terminate Pregnancy (Form VI set out in the Schedule to the Regulations). The steps for pre-abortion counselling are illustrated in Annex A.

5.4 Time Lapse

The Act requires the pregnant woman to sign a declaration that she has been counselled and that at least 48 hours should lapse after pre-abortion counselling before the pregnant woman can give her written consent to treatment (Form III set out in the Schedule to the Regulations).

¹ Contents of pre-abortion counselling may be adapted for women diagnosed with foetal abnormalities.

5.5 Declaration Form

The woman requiring treatment to terminate her pregnancy should also sign a declaration of her marital status, educational level and number of living children in Form IV set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.

5.6 Post-abortion counselling²

Every authorised medical practitioner shall provide counselling to a woman who has had her pregnancy terminated. Such counselling should be given on the day when the abortion procedure is carried out. The counsellor may have the flexibility to conduct the post-abortion counselling at any time during the admission for abortion, either before or after the procedure. The actual timing would best be determined by the doctor, based on his assessment of the patient, her condition and type of anaesthesia or sedation that she would be given. Where the counselling is conducted after the procedure, it should be given only after the woman has fully recovered from the effects of anaesthesia or sedation.

5.7 Every approved institution shall provide the following facilities for counselling and such facilities shall, where applicable, be in proper working condition:

- (a) television set
- (b) video cassette recorder / VCD player
- (c) video tapes / VCD on abortion produced by Health Promotion Board (refer to Annex B)
- (d) pamphlets produced by Health Promotion Board (refer to Annex B)

5.8 Pre- and post abortion counselling shall include personal counselling by a trained counsellor, the viewing of the video tape / VCD and reading of appropriate educational materials produced by the Health Promotion Board for this purpose. The procedure for counselling is illustrated in Annex C.

² Contents of post-abortion counselling may be adapted for women who have undergone sexual sterilization following abortion.

6 RETURNS / REPORTS

- 6.1 All authorised medical practitioners must complete and submit the Report on Request for Treatment to Terminate Pregnancy (in Form VI set out in the Schedule to the Regulations or in the electronic filing system of the Ministry of Health at <http://www.moh-topvsreturns.gov.sg>) to the Director of Medical Services within 30 days of the pre-termination of pregnancy counselling if no treatment to terminate pregnancy is carried out on a pregnant woman, or within 30 days of the post termination of pregnancy counselling if treatment to terminate pregnancy is carried out on a pregnant woman. The steps for completion of the report are illustrated in Annex D.
- 6.2 Every authorised medical practitioner shall submit to the Director of Medical Services annually a return on the personnel and facilities available for counselling in the Form V set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.

7 REGISTER

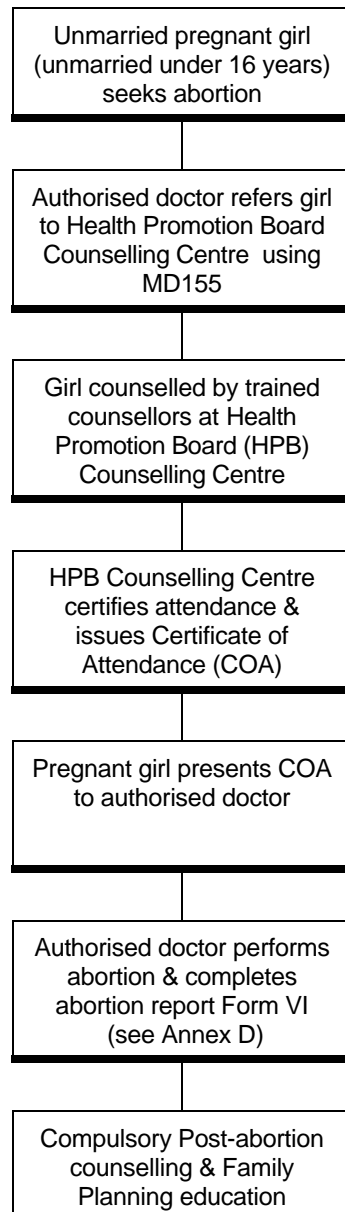
Every approved institution shall maintain a register solely for recording particulars of all treatments to terminate pregnancy carried out in the institution and such register shall contain the following particulars:

- (a) name of operating theatre
- (b) name of authorised medical practitioner who carried out the treatment
- (c) name of patient as indicated in her identity card or passport
- (d) identity card or passport number of patient
- (e) date of operation; and
- (f) method of termination of pregnancy.

8 **PHYSICAL FACILITIES / EQUIPMENT** used in the premises for carrying out the treatment to terminate pregnancy should be in accordance with the "Guidelines on Requirements for Premises to be used for the Treatment to Terminate Pregnancy".

9 **THE IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS** under the Termination of Pregnancy Act & Regulations are illustrated at Annex E.

**FLOW-CHART FOR PRE-ABORTION COUNSELLING
FOR UNMARRIED UNDER-16 GIRLS**



EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS FOR TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY COUNSELLING

The following are available from Health Information Centre at Level 3, Health Promotion Board, 3 Second Hospital Avenue, Singapore 168937.

1 ABORTION COUNSELLING VIDEO

Abortion counselling video/ CD entitled "Abortion-Consider with Care" available in 3 languages (English, Mandarin & Malay).

2 PAMPHLETS

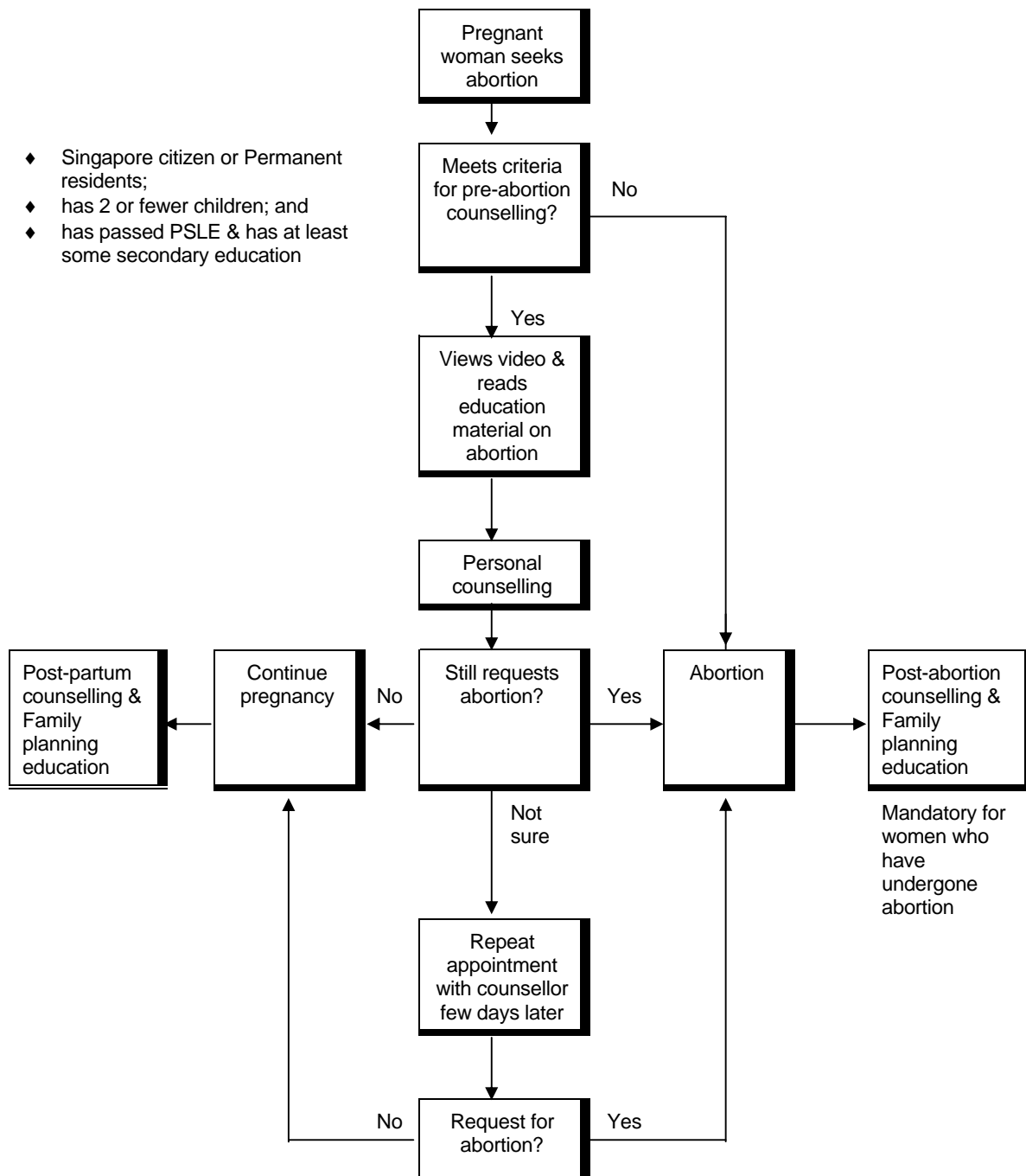
- a The Truth about Abortion**
- b Contraceptive Methods which one is best for me

For request of the above print materials, please contact Health Information Centre at Tel: 64353954 or Fax: 65361277.

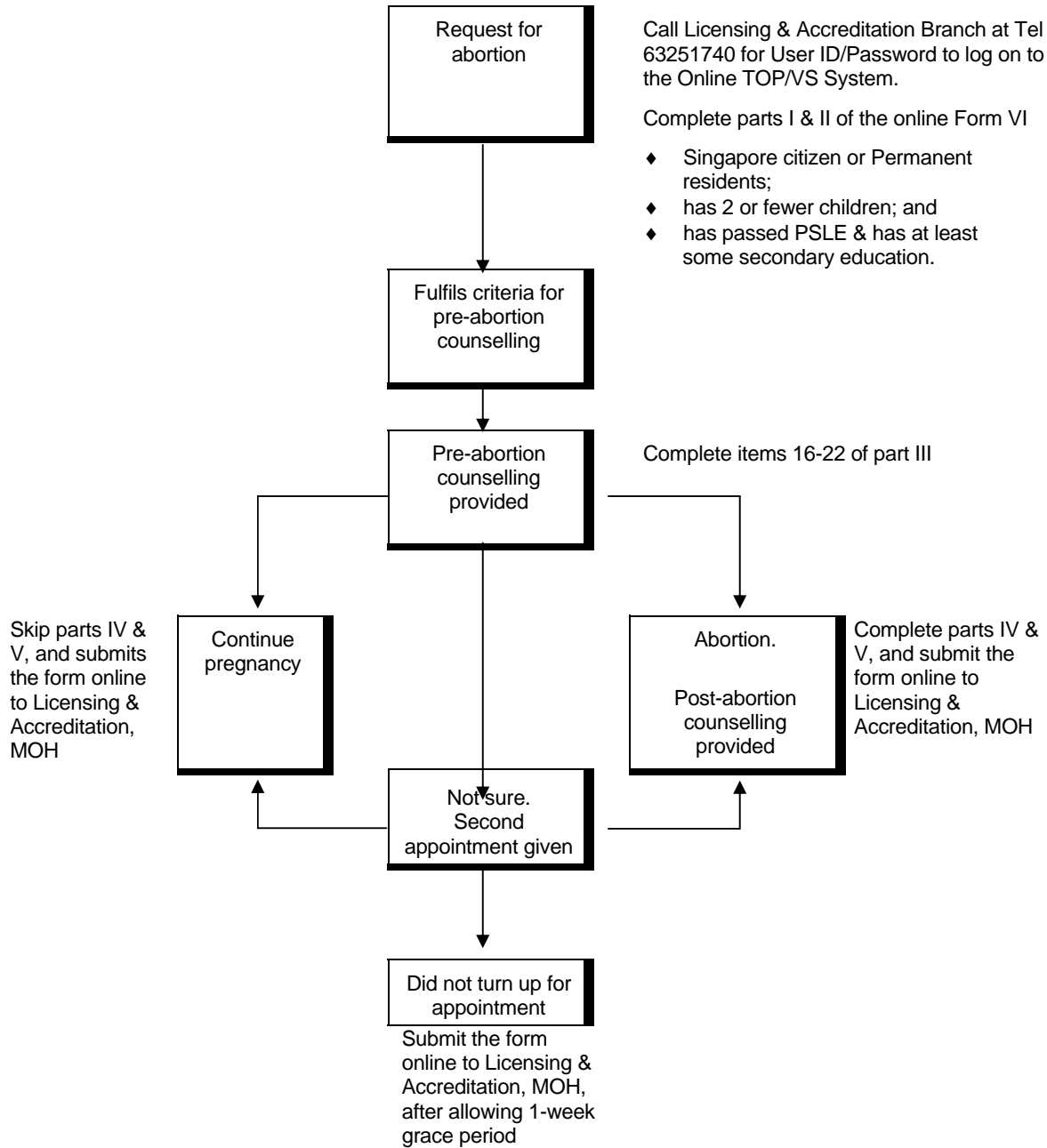
** must be given to the woman to read

PROCEDURE FOR ABORTION COUNSELLING

- ◆ Singapore citizen or Permanent residents;
- ◆ has 2 or fewer children; and
- ◆ has passed PSLE & has at least some secondary education



**STEPS FOR COMPLETION OF REPORT ON REQUEST
FOR TREATMENT TO TERMINATE PREGNANCY (FORM VI) ONLINE AT
WEBSITE: <https://www.moh-topvsreturns.gov.sg/login>**



IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT AND REGULATIONS

Termination of Pregnancy Act

- | | | |
|-----|---|--------------|
| (a) | Termination of pregnancy (TOP) must be done by an authorised doctor with the written consent of the woman | Section 3(1) |
| (b) | Women who are eligible to have TOP done in Singapore | Section 3(3) |
| (c) | TOP not to be carried out if pregnancy is of more than 24 weeks duration unless in special circumstances | Section 4 |

Termination of Pregnancy Regulations

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|
| (a) | Every approved institution must have a trained abortion counsellor | Regulation 4 |
| (b) | Mandatory counselling for women who request for TOP | Regulation 5(1) |
| (c) | Mandatory pre-abortion counselling for unmarried girls below 16 years. No TOP to be performed unless the girl produces a Certificate of Attendance (Form VII).
(See Flowchart at Annex A) | Regulation 5(2) & (3) |
| (d) | Time lapse of 48 hours before the women give written consent for TOP | Regulation 6(1) |
| (e) | Consent for TOP (Form III) | Regulation 6(2) |
| (f) | Declaration Form (Form IV) | Regulation 6(3) |
| (g) | Annual return on provision for TOP counselling facilities (Form V) | Regulation 8 |
| (h) | Report to the Director of Medical Services on request for TOP (Form VI) | Regulation 9 |
| (i) | Maintaining a <u>register</u> of treatment to terminate pregnancy | Regulation 10 |

Note: **The Termination of Pregnancy Act and Regulations** can be purchased from the SNP Corporation –Legal Publications #01-19 Valley Point, Singapore 248371 Tel 63339703

GUIDELINES ON REQUIREMENTS FOR PREMISES TO BE USED FOR THE TREATMENT TO TERMINATE PREGNANCY / SEXUAL STERILIZATION

1. Operating Room

a) Room Space

At least 3 metres x 4 metres in dimensions with sufficient space for free movement. Room should be used for operation and examination of patients.

b) Air-conditioning:

The room should be air-conditioned.

c) Lighting:

Sufficient lighting should be provided.

Angle-poised light source could be used for termination of pregnancy. Illumination level should not be less than 20,000 LUX at task with one metre clearance height. The colour temperature of the light should be between 3,000K and 6,000K. For sexual sterilization, proper operating theatre light should be used.

d) Wall & Ceiling:

For easy cleaning, the wall and ceiling should be of smooth surface. Wall should preferably be tiled.

Wall should be covered with durable washable paint or washable impervious material.

e) Door:

The width of the door should not be less than 1.2 metres.

f) Floor:

The floor should be covered with smooth washable material. Preferably tiled. Wooden flooring and carpets are not permitted.

g) Partition of Room:

Full partition is required for room used for treatment.

h) Cleanliness

Tidiness and cleanliness should be maintained at all times. Room should be thoroughly cleaned before and after each operation.

2. Equipment

- a) Proper operating table with facilities for tilting should be used.
- b) Adequate and appropriate equipment should be used for termination of pregnancy and sexual sterilization.
- c) Surgical instruments used for invasive procedures should be rendered sterile by the appropriate procedure of sterilisation such as steam autoclaving or alternatively use sterile disposable instruments.
- d) Hand brush and antiseptic preparations eg Chlorhexidine or providone-iodine should be used for hand washing before operation.
- e) Sterile gloves, gowns & hand towels should be used during the operation. The doctor should wear mask, goggles and surgical cap.
- f) Medical and surgical equipment, instruments, appliances and materials should be functional, effective and comply with established or recommended procedures for their maintenance and use.
- g) No unnecessary equipment/furniture should be kept in the operating room.

3. Emergency facilities

The following emergency drugs and equipment for resuscitation should be available at all times:

- a) Injection Atropine
- b) Injection Adrenaline
- c) Antihistamines - e.g. injection Phenergan or Piriton
- d) Injection Calcium Gluconate 10 %
- e) Steroids - e.g. injection Hydrocortisone or equivalent
- f) Injection Sodium Bicarbonate 8.4%
- g) Intravenous infusion set & cannulas
- h) Intravenous solutions - eg Hartman's
- i) Airviva & airways
- j) Motor suction apparatus