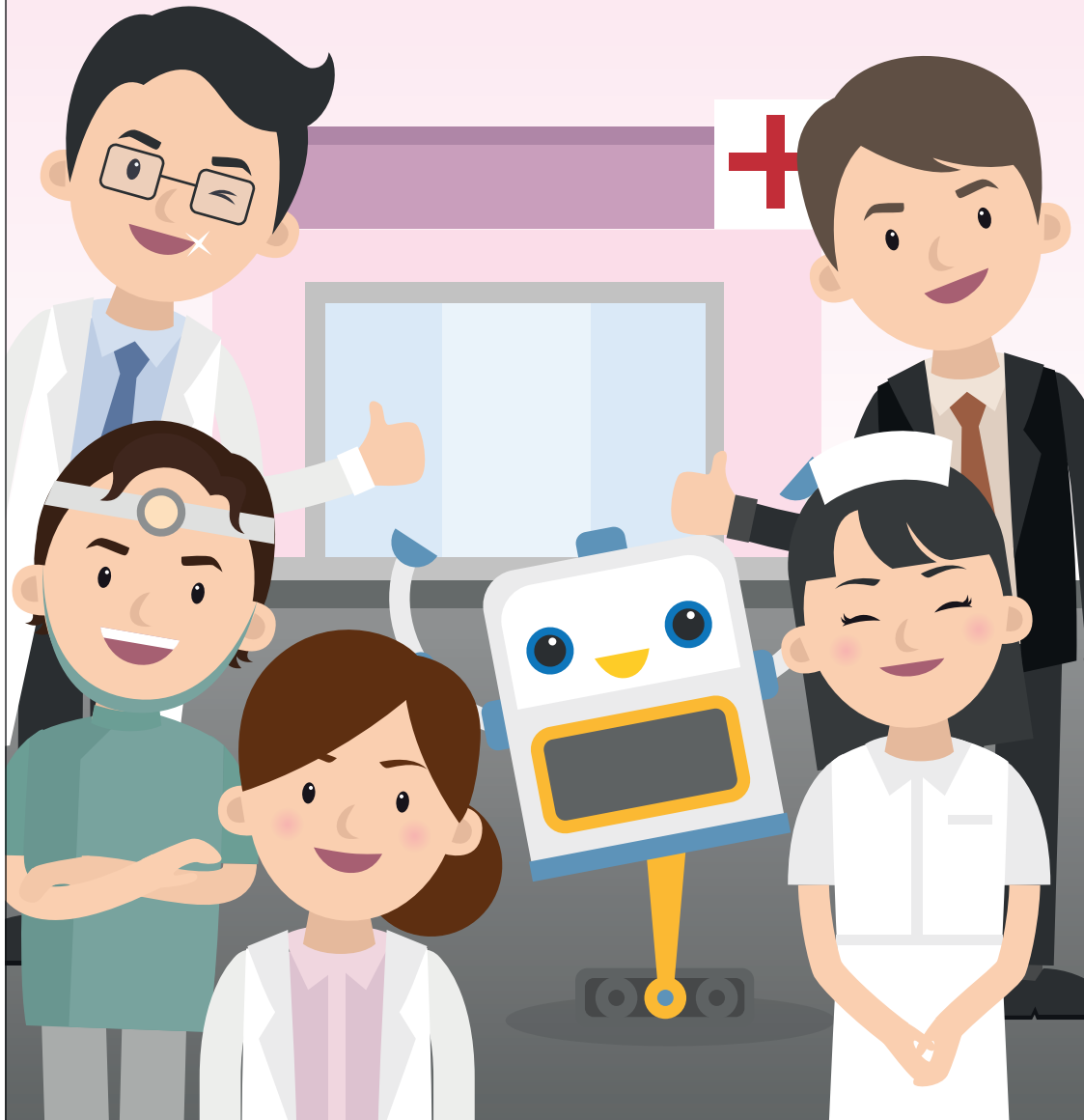


# Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance

## Small Practice Clinics



### Small Practice Clinic (SPC)

- Under the “Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance” (Cap. 633) (PHFO), an SPC may request for exemption from licensing. An SPC is a clinic operated only by registered medical practitioner(s) or by registered dentist(s). Whether they are operated under sole proprietorship, partnership or a company, except for the sole proprietor, partners or directors, no other registered medical practitioners or registered dentists serve the clinic.
- In addition, to meet the definition of an SPC, the following three conditions, including the number of registered medical practitioners or registered dentists, the right to use the premises and the locum arrangement must also be met. Please refer to the following table for details:

	Number of registered medical practitioner or registered dentist	The person having the exclusive right to use the premises	Locum arrangement
A sole proprietorship clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operated by one registered medical practitioner or registered dentist</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The sole proprietor</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not exceeding 60 days in a calendar year</li></ul>
Clinic operating as a partnership or company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operated by a partnership of up to five partners or a company of up to five company directors</li><li>• All partners or company directors must be registered medical practitioners or registered dentists</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least one partner or one company director</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not exceeding 60 days in a calendar year per registered medical practitioner/ registered dentist</li><li>• Not exceeding 180 days for all partners or company directors in a calendar year</li></ul>

- Under the PHFO, an SPC is also a clinic and could not provide medical services with lodging. Patient should not be continuously confined within the premises exceeding 12 hours. Furthermore, clinics cannot receive pregnant women for childbirth or women immediately after childbirth. Clinics also cannot provide the scheduled medical procedures under the PHFO or the hospital-only medical procedures stipulated in the “Code of Practice for Day Procedure Centres”.

### Request for Letter of Exemption

- The operator of an SPC may request for a letter of exemption from licensing.
- Whether operating an SPC under a sole proprietorship, a partnership or a company, each registered medical practitioner or registered dentist may request for exemption for up to 3 SPCs at the same time. The operator is required to apply for a licence for the 4th and each of the subsequent clinics.
- All scheduled clinics listed in Schedule 6 to the PHFO are required to apply for a licence. There is no exemption arrangement.
- The Department of Health will start to accept requests for letters of exemption for small practice clinics on 13 October 2025.

### Responsibilities of the Operator of an SPC

- Operators of exempted clinics must comply with all relevant requirements for an SPC and its operation under the PHFO. If there are any intended changes of the clinic, or intended cessation of the clinic’s operation, the operator(s) must give the Director of Health not less than 14 days’ advance notice in writing. The operator(s) may have to request for another exemption or apply for a licence because of the changes.
- To comply with the “distinct and separate premises” and “separate entrance” requirements under the PHFO. The operator of an SPC must ensure that the premises of the SPC is separated from any premises in which the services provided therein are not “reasonably incidental to the purpose of the medical/dental practice”, for example haircut, manicure, etc. The SPC is also required to have its own direct entrances. Please refer to the information on requirements for governance and premises of private healthcare facilities for details.

### Validity Period of the Letter of Exemption

- Unless the clinic is relocated, cease operation, no longer falls under the meaning of an SPC, or the exemption is revoked by the Director of Health, the letter of exemption for an exempted clinic will remain valid.

### Other Information

- Materials on the following subjects under the PHFO are available:
  - Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance
  - Day Procedure Centres
  - Clinics
  - Requirements for governance and premises of private healthcare facilities
- Details are available at [www.orphf.gov.hk](http://www.orphf.gov.hk) (accessible by scanning this QR code).

