

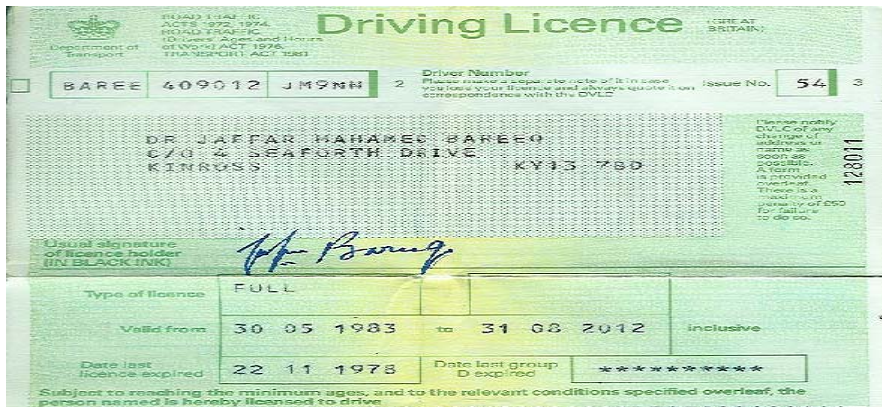
The Ministry of Health Is the Guardian of Patients' and Doctors' Rights - Doctors Deserve Their Title "Dr"

Jaffar M Al Bareeq, DLO, RCP, RCS (London)*

The CPR denies doctors their title in their CPR or smart card and their driving license while they grant some of the obtained and the inherited titles. It is time for the CPR to realize that doctors are dedicated and rare breed who do not grow on trees. No matter what they are paid, does not compensate for their dedication and their hard work. It is time to recognize these professionals by their titles and it is time to honor their dedication. Society progress depends on its recognition of their own dedicated, hard working and creative individuals not by denying them their rights. Is there another reason other than jealousy of doctors' achievement, which makes the CPR authority deny them their rights? The Ministry of Health needs to protect not only patients but doctors as well; protection means guaranteeing their rights.

The CPR would like to call doctors anything but doctors; sometimes they label them as business people because they have clinics. Consequently, the traffic directorate would not put their title in the driving license since it is not available in the CPR. My British driving license, renewed in 1983 has the title of a doctor (copy of it is included).

It is amazing to see that the inherited title is easily put in the CPR without any argument while the CPR great experts deny doctors their title. We are not against inherited title, those who have them deserve them but we are entitled for our title which we gained through hard work and suffering. We are not demanding the CPR to make our children inherit our title. We gained our title through medical schools and postgraduate training and the title was given to us by these institutions.



* Chief Editor
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Kingdom of Bahrain

Professionals of any community are the image of progress by which the community is judged. They are the cornerstones of advancement. They represent the crème de la crème of the society¹. Doctors are dedicated professionals who dedicate their lives to obtain their qualifications and thereafter they dedicate themselves to the service of humanity; these all come at the expense of their lives, their families and their social circles. Not infrequently, doctors will face family and social difficulties because of their relentless dedication to the service of the community.

Some people would argue that doctors are well paid and that is enough. They should know that no amount of payment compensate for their dedication and their hard work. Many doctors realized that many of their failed friends in school or university are getting better pay, but they (Doctors) labor on because they love their service to their fellow humans.

It is time to call spade a spade and it is time for the CPR to call these professionals by their title and time to honor them. The CPR authority should know that World Health Organization, the highest health authority in the world, calls these professional by their titles.

Western Europe had recognized the fact that their societies progress depended on creative and innovative people; they encouraged what they have and even encouraged and invited creative and innovative people from other societies to settle in Western Europe. It is time to encourage our professionals not denying them their rights. In the industrialized world, the community and the government protect these groups and are considered an asset by both; they should never live with fears of economic or other reprisal; otherwise, their creative ability is reduced to mere sustaining their daily living¹.

I kept thinking day and night, why would the CPR authority deny doctors their title, is there any fundamental or basic reason to deny them, and if there is, why the CPR does not say it. Why not, are they embarrassed with their own reasons? Why they grant the inherited title but deny doctors their title. I could not come up with any reason other than jealousy of doctors' achievements; there might be a hidden reason or agenda that I do not know. How would anyone know or speculate of what those big brains in the CPR think.

Reprisals against professionals had occurred and will continue because of envy. The extent of the reprisal is a measure of the deep hatred and jealousy to the productive group and effective way of degrading them. In fact, it is a way to harm the society at large.

When doctors are denied their right, the Ministry of Health should step in to amend the situation. Ministry of Health does not represent the patient only but it represents doctors whom they license. Doctors have not been only deprived of their rights but on several occasions have been subjected to physical abuse and on rare occasions been harassed sexually.

Three incidents I would like to recall for our readers. Two years ago, a female family physician was physically attacked in the health center by a female patient who tried to

strangulate her; hardly any action has been taken against the assailant, the family physician suffered for few days from neck injury, which included hoarseness. The second incident was a male physician who was attacked physically by a male patient; the doctor was hurt badly, the incident was reported in the local newspaper. The third incident has occurred recently, a female physician been harassed sexually by a female patient who was under psychiatrist treatment. When the family physician demanded protection from an authority in the Ministry of Health, the reply came back that the patient should be treated gently and the problem would be solved amicably. When the family physician refused to treat that patient, the patient complained against the physician in the Police station claiming that she has been abused physically. The physician has to be dragged to the police station for reporting without legal representation from the Ministry of Health. The problem could not be settled except after all those concerned realized that the patient needs psychiatric care and has to be admitted.

Doctors should not live in fear of aggressive or psychiatric patients. They should conduct their service to their patients in tranquility and in peace; they should have the feeling that they are protected from such aggressive behavior.

The Ministry of Health has done so much to provide fully comprehensive health care for the patients and in the way of employing doctors, but it is time for the Ministry to request that the community police to be represented in every health center to deter aggressive behavior against doctors and against other employees.

Doctors working in the Ministry of Health are public employees and should be protected. The Prime Minister and his cabinet have recently approved a law for the protection of public employees; hopefully, the law should be enforced as soon as possible.

Hats off to the doctors duty-bound,
Who wakes up from his slumber deep at night,
To tend to patient writhing in great pain,
But utters not a word that hurts him more!
Dr John celes

You are welcome to send your comments or contribution to jmab@batelco.com.bh

REFERENCE

1. Al-Bareeq JM, Professionals are Rare Breed. Bah Med Bull 2004; 26; 27-9.