

Ex-Dean of HKU's Faculty of Medicine admits misconduct

01.09.09

The former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong (HKU), charged by the ICAC, today (Tuesday) admitted misconduct in public office by pocketing donations intended for HKU and deceiving medical fees from private patients under his care at a public hospital.

Lam Shiu-kum, 66, pleaded guilty to an amended charge of misconduct in public office, which embraced the criminality of some of the 30 counts of fraud and the three counts of theft originally laid against him. District Court Judge Patrick Li Hon-leung ordered those fraud and theft charges be left on court file.

The judge adjourned the case to 2:30 pm on Thursday (September 3) for sentence. The defendant was granted cash bail of \$300,000, and was ordered not to leave Hong Kong.

The court heard that at the time of the offence, the defendant was the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of HKU.

Between September 2003 and January 2007, the defendant, in the course of or in relation to his public office, without reasonable excuse or justification, wilfully misconducted himself.

The defendant failed to declare a conflict of interest arising from his capacity as Dean of Faculty of Medicine of HKU and the Gastrointestinal Research (GR). The latter was a private company wholly controlled by him.

The court heard that the defendant procured or caused donations, totalling \$3.8 million, intended for HKU made by three persons, to be paid to the bank account of GR.

The defendant also falsely represented to 12 private patients under his care at the Queen Mary Hospital that GR was the organisation to whom medical fees owed by them should be paid, and induced the patients or their family members to make payments to GR.

As a result of the false representations, the defendant caused those private patients to pay medical fees totalling \$130,000 to GR.

The defendant also failed to account for the funds received by GR and made the funds available for his personal use, the court was told.

The prosecution was today represented by prosecuting counsel Newman Wong, assisted by ICAC officers Winnie Lee and Zoe Lau.