

'Bogus' online doctor to be probed

By [Katharine Child](#)

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The Government Employee Medical Scheme has launched an investigation into claims it allowed staff at public relations firm Martina Nicholson Associates to give medical advice on its online column titled Dr Joe.



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Dr Joe was an online service for members of the GEMS medical aid scheme who wanted to discuss health concerns with a doctor.

On September 26 The Times ran an article quoting former employees of Martina Nicholson Associates, who claimed that, with the help of Google, they answered questions sent to Dr Joe without a doctor's advice. The column is no longer available on the GEMS website.

This week GEMS sent a response saying it was investigating the veracity of the claims.

GEMS principal officer Gurnvant Goolab said: "GEMS is very concerned about this allegation and we have instituted an investigation and will respond as soon as the investigation has been concluded.

"GEMS takes the healthcare needs of our members seriously and will act without fear or favour against any conduct that places the scheme and industry in disrepute."

Source: The Times

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