



香港社會醫學學院
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Mrs Constance Li
Clerk to Panel
Legislative Council
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mrs Li,

Legislative Council
Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Special Meeting on 4 June 2004

Thank you for inviting our College to submit comments on the Government's consultation paper on "Prevention of avian influenza: Consultation on long term direction to minimize the risk of human infection."

The recent epidemic of highly pathogenic avian influenza caused by H5N1, which began in mid-December 2003 in the Republic of Korea and has subsequently spread to other Asian countries, is of particular public health concern. H5N1 variants demonstrated a capacity to directly infect humans in 1997, and have done so again in Viet Nam and Thailand in early 2004. The spread of infection in birds increases the opportunities for direct infection of humans.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), close contact with live infected poultry has been the principal means of transmission of avian influenza to humans. WHO has recommended that the practice of marketing live poultry directly to consumers should be discouraged.

Our College supports the proposed long term direction in separating humans from live poultry. From the perspective of prevention of avian influenza in humans, Approach A i.e. slaughtering process of chickens be conducted in one slaughterhouse, is preferred as it is more effective in reducing the risk of close contact between general public and live poultry. Although Approach B i.e. slaughtering process of chickens be conducted in a few slaughtering hubs, may give rise to a higher exposure of human contact, this approach is also considered a better alternative to the current live poultry market situation.

Our College will be represented by Dr Gabriel Leung at the special meeting to be held on 4 June 2004.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Su-vui LO
Vice-President