

Your Ref: CB2/PS/1/03

Paper No. CB(2)770/03-04(01)

15 December 2003

Clerk to Subcommittee
Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
of the People's Republic of China
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Hong Kong

Attn: Ms. Amy Lee

Dear Madam,

**Subcommittee to monitor the implementation
of the recommendations of the SARS Expert Committee and
the Hospital Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak**

We refer to your fax letter of 2 December 2003 to invite our hospital to submit views on the recommendations in the two SARS reports.

In general we agree to the views expressed in the two reports and support the measures to combat SARS or other infectious diseases proposed therein. In addition we would like to submit the following comments for your consideration:

1. Information transmission and communication

Public health services must see the private health services as partners in health care and work together in the interest of the community. Private hospitals and doctors attend to hundreds of thousands of patients everyday, 24 hours a day. They are the frontline gate-keepers. Any new knowledge, findings, diagnosis, treatment, laboratory tests, epidemiological information etc must be propagated electronically to the private health care workers as soon as possible.

The staged alert system should be widely publicized. Information sharing and prompt communication is vital to utilizing the health care network to cover and protect the whole community effectively.

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2. Support given to private sector

Individual doctors or private hospitals have limited resources at their disposal. It is essential that adequate and prompt support be given to them at all times. Rigid rules and policies must be dispensed with in the interest of public health. Specific examples include the receipt of patients with suspected infections, undertaking diagnostic or confirmatory tests, sending out personnel to assist, providing PPE and drugs, ambulance transport, etc.

3. Our Hospital IS prepared

The Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital has drawn up a contingency plan to combat SARS and other infectious diseases. In case of an outbreak in the community or a suspected case in the hospital, the Hospital Management will assume central control and command. A senior medical executive will liaise with and supervise the middle management and frontline staff on the strict implementation of infection control measures; he/she will report daily to the Hospital Management Committee on the current situation.

The Hospital has converted a new wing to provide an isolation unit with 4 single rooms. These rooms are provided with negative pressure and low level extraction, gowning and de-gowning areas, CCTV communication between patient and relatives, etc. These rooms will be used for admission of infectious diseases or suspected SARS cases.

The Hospital has drawn up operational plans and checklists for each of the following departments/services:

Hospital Management	Admission Office
Infection Control Committee/teams	Maternity Department
Wards/Isolation Unit	Intensive Care Unit
Outpatient Department	Operating Theatre
Radiology Department	Day Surgery
Haemodialysis Unit	

Protocols are updated regularly. Training is provided to all staff. 2-3 months supply of PPE are stocked in the hospital. A list of suppliers is available to replenish the stock if required.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Li Shu Pui
Medical Superintendent