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17 December 2003

Clerk to Subcommittee  
LegCo Panel on Health Services  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road  
Central, Hong Kong

(Attn: Ms. Amy LEE)

Dear Ms. Lee,

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

Thank you for the invitation to provide views on the recommendations included in the above reports.

The Consumer Council notes that both of the above reports raised the issue of improving communication with the public as a matter of priority. For example, the SARS Expert Committee, at Recommendation 30, noted that the Government should develop partnerships with the media, and the Hospital Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak, at Recommendation 22, noted that there should be a campaign to educate the community on the importance of strict compliance with isolation or quarantine measures.

The Council has a statutory function of disseminating information to consumers, and during the SARS outbreak it undertook a campaign to inform consumers with regard to products that were in high demand as protective measures against the disease.

For example, when the Government began its commendable public announcements on ways to ensure proper cleaning methods through the '1:99' campaign, the Council undertook relevant product testing and research, and made the results available to the public through its regular 'Choice' magazine press conferences, that were widely reported in the press. Council resources were also devoted to answering significant numbers of inquiries from consumers who were seeking information on the products that were in demand.

The Council supports the recommendations made with regard to communications with the public, and was pleased to be able to play its part during the outbreak. The lessons learned from the experience will assist the Council in responding to similar demands for information from the community, and to assist generally in communicating with the public, should related circumstances arise in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. CHAN WONG Shui  
Chief Executive