

Ms Amy Lee

your ref. CB2/PS/1/03

Subcommittee to monitor the implementation of the
recommendations of the SARS Expert Committee and the HA
Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak, Panel on Health Services

By fax 2415 6767

23 December, 2003

Dear Madam,

Views on the recommendations of the SARS Expert Committee and the Hospital
Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak

Thank you for your letter dated 2 December 2003 inviting the views of my hospital on the recommendations of the captioned reports. The Expert Committee made a much broader perspective and a comprehensive approach in its recommendations. It covered the aspects on healthcare system, health protection, collaboration within Hong Kong, the Region and International Community.

The report has a superior view that it recommended the government to establish a Centre for Health Protection (CHP) which have the responsibility, authority and accountability for the prevention and control of communicable diseases. While the government adopted the proposal of establishing a CHP, it announced on the 18 December 2003 that "a CHP will be opened in the middle of next year as an agency within the Department of Health. (The head of the CHP) will report to the Director of Health" (South China Morning Post 19 Dec. 2003). It will be desirable that the CHP can be an independent agency, so it can be more impartial in the event of a crisis and have the autonomy to fulfil its functions and responsibility.

The government had accepted the report of the SARS Expert Committee. It should make known to the healthcare colleagues including the private hospitals the details of the implementation of the recommendations especially the points as follows:

1. Improving the working relationship amongst the Department of Health, the Hospital Authority, the private sector, universities and primary care.

2. rotate staff through the different systems.
3. setting up a web-based system for electronic notification by private practitioners and providing regular updates of surveillance results to private practitioners.
4. putting in place a comprehensive package of occupational health services.

As for the recommendations in the report by the Hospital Authority Review Panel, there should be more coverage on continuous education and supports provided to staff and patients. The infectious disease expert may conduct seminar in private hospital to increase awareness of various infectious diseases and precautions to be taken.

For any further information, please do not hesitate to call Ms Isabella To at telephone number 2276 7352.

Yours sincerely,

Yew-chong Wong

President / CEO

Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital