

香 港 西 醫 工 會
HONG KONG DOCTORS UNION

Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373, Nathan Road, Kowloon
E-mail: hkdu@hkdu.org Home Page: <http://www.hkdu.org> Tel. no.: 2388 2728 Fax no.: 2385 5275

Our ref.: HKDU/267/2003

24th December 2003

By fax and mail

Hon. Ms. Cyd Ho Sau Lan
Chairman
Subcommittee to monitor the implementation of the
recommendations of the SARS Expert Committee and
the Hospital Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak
Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Hong Kong

Dear Hon. Ms. Ho,

**Submission of HKDU on the Recommendations of the SARS Expert Committee
and the Hospital Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak**

SARS has shaken the world particularly Hong Kong. But the life threatening epidemic should not now throw us out of perspective and forget the crux of the matter. The core of the present trend of rushing to the hospitals for the slightest sneeze was the philosophy of Hospital Authority to offer all services free or nearly free to all which has gradually killed the private sector except for what remains of primary care. The transfer of Outpatient clinics of both primary and specialist care by the Department of Health to the Hospital Authority have sparked fear that the public may be further tempted to regard the hospital as the proper place to go to for whatever illness. Where then is the place of private practitioners? Do we want complete socialized medicine too? The role of the government is to provide prompt, coordinated and decisive actions in combating epidemics and does not mean drawing private patients towards the hospitals by renaming Hospital Authority as Health Services Authority which will mean overseeing even private services. Again is Hong Kong going to have National Health Service similar to that of the United Kingdom here? It is totally wrong to mislead the public by such renaming. If this renaming is done then the already overburdened public healthcare workers will be even worse hit. Do we want a collapse of the public healthcare system as well as that of the private sector by aggravating the existing imbalance of the two systems with undue emphasis on the public sector?

Cont.../P. 2

香 港 西 醫 工 會
HONG KONG DOCTORS UNION

Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373, Nathan Road, Kowloon
E-mail: hkdu@hkdu.org Home Page: <http://www.hkdu.org> Tel. no.: 2388 2728 Fax no.: 2385 5275

Our ref.: HKDU/267/2003

P. 2

Our Union agrees with the setting up of a Centre for Health Protection, which would integrate the manpower of private and public medical sectors in combating future epidemics of caliber such as SARS. The "War Cabinet" as recommended in the Report of the Hospital Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak would be effective in management of crisis if it is vested with the appropriate authority. During an epidemic, communication within Hong Kong and between Hong Kong and countries around the world are important. Improvement should be aimed at better collaboration with health authorities of surrounding areas and worldwide.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Ho Ock Ling
Hon. Secretary
Hong Kong Doctors Union

outgoing (13)