

For information

**Legislative Council Panel on Health Services
Code of Practice for Private Hospitals**

Introduction

This paper reports on the development of the Code of Practice for private hospitals, nursing homes and maternity homes.

Background

2. The Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Homes Registration Ordinance (Cap. 165) requires private hospitals to be registered with the Director of Health, subject to conditions relating to accommodation, staffing or equipment. The Director is also empowered to inspect any hospital premises and records required to be kept under the Ordinance.

3. Each year for the purpose of application for re-registration, the private hospitals are required to submit a report on its organizational structure, staffing, facilities, equipment and services, staff development, education and training, and their future service and development plans. An inspection team consisting of a Principal Medical Officer, a Chief Nursing Officer and a Senior Hospital Administrator will make at least one inspection to each private hospital annually to check out on the actual operation of all the services. In addition, unannounced visits will be conducted to keep a close monitor on the standard of the hospitals.

4. A “Guide to Hospital Standards” endorsed by the then Medical Development Advisory Committee was issued to all private hospitals in 1990. Standards of hospital practices essential for the quality delivery of patients care services are described in this Guide.

Development of the Code of Practice

5. With the advancement of medical technology and rising community aspiration for quality services, there is growing public expectation for quality services provided by health care institutions. To enable private hospitals to have a more comprehensive guidance on the standards expected of them, the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

stated in his Policy Objective in 2001 that a “Code of Practice” on standards of good practice be developed for private hospitals in 2002-2003 and implemented in 2003-2004.

6. Drawing on references on similar standards and codes of practice in overseas countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and Singapore, a *Code of Practice for Private Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Home* has been developed in Hong Kong. A consultation exercise was conducted with all private hospitals and nursing homes on the draft Code in the end of 2002. After taking into account of comments received from these stakeholders, the Code was finalized and promulgated to all registered premises in August 2003 for implementation.

7. This Code of Practice sets out the standards of good practice for health care institutions to adopt in order to provide quality care to patients. Requirements to be adopted in the management of staff, management of the premises and services, setting out policies and procedures, and setting up a system to deal with complaints are set out. The Code also includes requirements on specific types of clinical and support services. The professional standards and regulatory standards are applicable to all private hospitals, nursing homes and maternity homes. Individual health care institution needs to observe requirements in relevant sections set out in the Code taking into account the scope and complexity of its services.

8. The Director of Health will take into account compliance with requirements of the Code in assessing the suitability for registration and re-registration of healthcare institutions under Cap. 165.

9. The English and Chinese version of the Code of Practice can be downloaded from the following addresses -

http://www.info.gov.hk/dh/useful/rphhi/Code_English.pdf and
http://www.info.gov.hk/dh/useful/rphhi/Code_Chinese.pdf

10. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Department of Health
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