



香港醫務委員會  
The Medical Council of Hong Kong

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(Total 2 pages)

8 March 2006

Ms Doris CHAN  
Clerk to Panel  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms CHAN,

**Panel on Health Services Special Meeting on 30 March 2006**

Thank you for your letter of 1 March 2006 inviting the Medical Council of Hong Kong to send representatives to attend a special meeting of the Panel on Health Services on 30 March 2006 to discuss regulation of health maintenance organizations (HMOs). On behalf of the Medical Council, I shall attend the meeting and would like to take this opportunity to state the Council's position on the issue of regulation of HMOs.

At previous Policy Meetings of the Medical Council, Members were concerned about the standard of medical services provided by HMOs and considered that new legislation was required to regulate the development and operation of HMOs so as to protect the public. In this regard, the Council wrote to the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food in April 2005 expressing the Council's concern on this matter and suggested how HMOs should be regulated and monitored. Please see the Annex on the measures suggested by the Medical Council. In August 2005, the Medical Council wrote to the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and urged the Administration to accord higher priority in this matter.

While a formal reply from the Administration is still awaited, the Council is of the view that any further delay in regulating the development and operation of HMOs is not in the best interests of the community at large.

With best regards,

(Prof. Felice LIEH-MAK, CBE, JP)  
Chairman, Medical Council of Hong Kong

**Suggestions of the Medical Council on regulation of Health Maintenance Organizations**

The Medical Council sees the urgency to take a proactive approach to deal with the regulation of health maintenance organizations (HMOs). It is suggested that new laws should provide for control over these organizations to the effect that they should have the following in place –

- A Quality Assurance System and Procedures:-
1. a medical committee for standard and compliance
  2. continued medical education requirements
  3. peer review and medical audit
  4. treatment protocols and clinical guidelines
  5. consent protocols
  6. risk management review
  7. compliance with the Medical Registration Ordinance, Cap. 161, Laws of Hong Kong
  8. compliance with the Medical Council Guidelines on ethical practice.
- B. Financial provision for people enrolled in its plans and panel doctors in the event the HMO goes bankrupt.
- C. Deliverables are clearly spelt out and made available to the public.