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Written Submission for Panel on Health Services of the Legislative Council

The radiography business has been shortage of manpower for a long time. Aging of the manpower has become the second problem of this business after the economic downturn since 1998. The number of radiographers is always lower than the developed countries (see Table 1). As we all know, the public sector is caring 95% of the medical and health care of the Hong Kong population. Although we have around 1400 registered diagnostic radiographers in Hong Kong, about 600 of them are serving in the public health care system. These 49% radiographers have to handle 95% of the diagnostic imaging service in Hong Kong. Comparing the public to total registered ratio with other health care professions in Hong Kong (see Table 2), the work pressure of the radiographers in Hong Kong is not lower than them.

There are at least three reasons causing this situation.

1. The wrong orientation of the public health care service for a long time causes the imbalance between the public and private sectors.
2. The citizens cannot feel confidence to the high price private medical and health care because of no active enhancement of the private medical and health care standard.
3. Lack of long-term objective of professional education of the University and the poor prospect of the career in public sector are discouraging the youngsters to join the health care professions.

There are three suggestions for the Legislative Council members to consider.

1. We should re-define the roles of the public and private sectors of the health care system and find suitable resource to maintain the public health care service standard and protect the low-income families.
2. The resource allocation of the Hospital Authority and the hospitals should be reviewed and try to enhance the fringe benefit of the frontline health care workers for promoting the morale and the sense of belonging.
3. The medical and health care related ordinances should be updated and improved that can strengthen the confidence of the public to accept the private health care service (e.g. the ownership and operation of medical irradiating and imaging apparatus are restricted for the qualified and well training personnel only.)

Countries	Population to Radiographers Ratio (2005-2006)
UK	2518:1
Canada	2825:1
Australia	2171:1
USA	1164:1
Hong Kong	4900:1

Table 1

Health Care Professions	Public to Total Registrant Ratio (2004-2005)
Doctors	49% (4859:9905)
Nurses	58% (19500:33500)
Diagnostic Radiographers	49% (660:1341)

Table 2

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