

Chairman
Health Panel
Legislative Council

6 March, 2008

Dear Sir,

Re: Submission by Public Consultant Doctors' Group on Doctor Work Reform by the Hospital Authority

Our doctors in the Hospital Authority (HA) have been working excessively hard for long hours over the years. It has been most fortunate for our colleagues to maintain quality service with a minimal degree of serious errors. The HA had finally agreed to rectify this problem after an arduous negotiation process and legal action by the Union. Our Group welcomes the recommendations by the Hospital Authority Steering Committee on Doctor Work Hour. We support the HA should shorten the work hours to 65 or less per week within three years and start to reduce the continuous work hours.

We firmly believe that in order to implement the recommendations by the HA Steering Committee the Government must provide the required additional funding, over and above the recent budget allocation. We are most concerned that without the necessary financial support, the HA management would cut corners and jeopardize patient care and outcome.

The Reform will partially improve the low staff morale and brain drain in HA. Our profession have been putting our patients' well being in the first place disregarding the working conditions. As a matter of fact, there are other important management and staff issues that need to be tackled e.g. cluster management structure, fair promotion and staff performance recognition, staff benefit and welfare etc. Empty slogan "Quality patient care through team work" bears no fruit. We are ready to work with the management to improve the public health services and we hope the HA management is as prepared as us.

The Reform is a correct yet small step in the right direction. We sincerely hope the HA management would continue her present effort out of genuine desire to improve the working hours of the public doctors.

Yours truly

Dr. Wong Tak Cheung
Public Consultant Doctors Group