



THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
LI KA SHING FACULTY OF MEDICINE

香港大學李嘉誠醫學院

Faculty Office, 6/F, William MW Mong Block
21 Sassoon Road, Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2819-9175 Fax: (852) 2855-9742
E-mail: (Faculty Office) medfac@hkucc.hku.hk
(Dean) deanmed@hkucc.hku.hk
Website: <http://www.hku.hk/facmed>

June 21, 2011

Doctor the Honourable KL Leung
Chairman, Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central
Hong Kong

Dear Dr Leung,

Implementation of Hospital Accreditation
in the Hospital Authority (HA) and Hong Kong

As the Dean of Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, the University of Hong Kong, a member of the HA Board, and a member of the Hospital Governing Committee of Queen Mary Hospital (QMH), I am writing to express my strong support for the implementation of hospital accreditation programme led by the Food and Health Bureau in both public and private hospitals.

With rapid advances in medical sciences and technologies and rising community expectations, the provision and delivery of healthcare in a hospital setting is an increasingly complex and challenging process. Against the backdrop of heavy clinical service load and high admission and discharge rates characteristic of hospitals in the local community, it is the responsibility of healthcare providers to examine, in an objective and systematic manner, the organization and the delivery process of our hospital service to ensure both the quality of patient care and the safety of our hospitals to patients, healthcare providers, and the general public. Hospital accreditation is a means increasingly adopted by the international healthcare community to continually assure and promote service quality and safety.

Hospital accreditation encompasses both self assessment and external peer review to assess the performance of a hospital in relation to established standards and to implement measures for continuous improvement. Over the past two decades, I have witnessed the development, evolution and growth of hospital accreditation in the United States, and its positive impact on the quality and standard of healthcare services. Indeed formal accreditation by an external accrediting organization is now a prerequisite before a hospital can claim service excellence. Since my return to Hong Kong three years ago, I am pleased to note the high standard of clinical service and the professionalism of staff in HA hospitals. It is evident that HA has put in a lot of effort to establish policies, systems and structures to enhance service quality and safety. However, I was somewhat surprised that QMH, as a teaching hospital and tertiary referral centre aiming for excellence in many clinical areas, had not taken up external accreditation except for its laboratory services. Therefore, when the Government decided to launch the pilot scheme for hospital

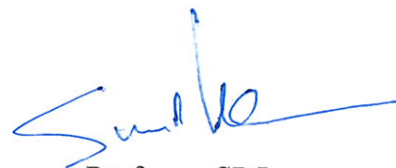
accreditation, I unreservedly rendered my and the Faculty's full support to QMH's participation as one of the five pilot hospitals.

With a history that spans over seven decades, and a service profile that is both comprehensive and specialized, the accreditation process for QMH was understandably a major undertaking and a significant amount of work was required of staff at all levels. The comprehensive review of its systems and services against an internationally recognized standards framework, conducted by an independent team of qualified surveyors, has brought about improvements in policies, systems and services in both clinical and non-clinical areas in QMH. Examples included the standardization and quality enhancement of clinical documentation, the establishment of new clinical pathways and care plans, and the re-organization and streamlining of sterilization and other supporting services. The accreditation exercise has also brought about welcoming changes and improvements in inter-departmental and inter-disciplinary collaboration, staff solidarity in striving towards a common goal, and a culture of continuous quality improvement.

The desire and increasing demand for quality healthcare is a universal phenomenon. By promoting quality and safety in the healthcare setting, hospital accreditation increases the confidence and ownership of the public in our healthcare system. It is my firm belief that HA and the Government is on the right path with the accreditation scheme. Leadership and support from the Government and the HA central administration are required for the successful implementation of accreditation in all hospitals. There is thus a pressing need to address the issues of manpower shortage and staff sentiment.

To conclude, the benefits of hospital accreditation are beyond doubt, and I would strongly support the Government to implement hospital accreditation and to provide the necessary policy and administrative support and resources. Only in this way can we continue to be proud of the healthcare service in Hong Kong.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SP Lee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Professor SP Lee
Dean