

病人互助組織聯盟

Alliance for Patients' Mutual Help Organizations

By Fax and E-mail

Dr. P. Y. Lam,
Chairman,
Pharmacy and Poisons Board Hong Kong
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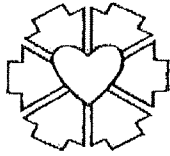
Dear Dr Lam and Members of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board,

Concerns on Inadequacies of Training Program at Schools of Pharmacy

The Alliance for Patients Mutual Help Organizations (APMHO) was founded in 1992. It has 43 member organizations crossing a variety of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, cancer, psychiatric disorders, etc. APMHO represents about 40,000 patients in Hong Kong. Our Vision is to advocate for Patient-Centered Healthcare and promote patient engagement in healthcare sector.

APMHO would like to express its concerns on the inadequacies of the training program at the local schools of pharmacy. It has been brought to our attention that the current clerkship programs for pharmacy students only provide practicum opportunities at the hospital, pharmaceutical industry, and chain pharmacy settings but not the independent pharmacy settings. This exclusion of independent pharmacy practical experience is unacceptable to patients because it fails to allow complete training program to be in operation to train future pharmacists in Hong Kong to provide life-saving pharmaceutical care services to patients.

As to our knowledge, the largest sector of the pharmacy profession is the community pharmacy sector with independent pharmacies composing of 80 % of all community pharmacy stores and with chain pharmacy stores making up the remaining 20%. It cannot be reasonable or sensible that the schools of pharmacy chose to offer clerkship experiences to students in the minority practice setting of chain pharmacies while neglecting to offer practicum training in the majority practice setting of independent pharmacies. Patients believe it is important for the members of the Board to perform due diligence to take immediate actions to rectify the flaw in the current training program of pharmacy school in Hong Kong to protect the interests of patients receiving care from pharmacists in independent pharmacies in the community. Otherwise, the only other alternative is to restrict the license of the pharmacist from local pharmacy schools to be able to



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practice in the settings where the pharmacy school has clerkship opportunities to obtain practicum training (i.e. hospital, chain pharmacy stores, and industry).

Patient's safety is in the hands of licensed pharmacists. The Pharmacy and Poisons Board is expected to protect the interests of the public while providing accreditation to local schools of pharmacy. Patients are of the view that if no opportunities are being provided to pharmacy students to practice in a setting that is one of the largest part of the profession (i.e. independent pharmacy stores), the pharmacy school program cannot be regarded as comprehensive enough to train pharmacists to serve patients in Hong Kong.

If the members of the Board allow a pharmacy school to operate with a training program that lacks the ability to provide practical training to pharmacists in one of the largest and most important sectors of pharmacy practice, then the members of the Board will need to be prepared to provide a logical and reasonable explanation to the public for this decision and members of the Board should be held accountable for any harm caused to patients as a result of insufficient training for new pharmacists to perform at the required standards in major pharmacy practice settings such as independent pharmacies.

We would like to hear your views regarding the above concerns. Thank you for your attention and we look forward to your kind reply by 1 December 2011.

Yours truly,

Tsang kin ping

Chairman

Alliance for Patients Mutual Help Organizations

cc:

Consumer Council

Legco Health Panel

The Practising Pharmacists Association of Hong Kong

Hong Kong Doctors Union