



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局

Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

Our Ref : L/M to FHB/H/24/2 Pt.33
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12 June 2014

Ms Maisie LAM
Clerk to Panel
Legislative Council Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Hong Kong
(Fax : 2185 7845)

Dear Ms LAM,

Legislative Council Panel on Health Services
Ethical Approval for the
Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine Pilot Project

At the Panel meeting on 17 March 2014, the Chairman of the Panel raised the issue about subjecting the Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine (ICWM) Pilot Project (Pilot Project) under the Hospital Authority (HA) to ethical review, and requested the Administration to provide a copy of the relevant application for ethical approval for reference of the Panel when available. Our detailed response is as follows.

The HA has planned to implement in the third quarter of 2014 a two-year ICWM Pilot Project to provide HA patients of selected disease areas with ICWM in-patient treatment and follow-up Chinese medicine out-patient service. The implementation framework of the Pilot Project has been detailed out in the Administration's paper to the Panel (LC Paper No. CB(2)1020/13-14(05)) and presented to the Panel at its meeting on 17 March 2014. Through the Pilot Project, we hope to make use of the advantages of

ICWM to provide appropriate medical treatment for patients; gather experiences for the development of Chinese medicine in-patient services for the establishment of the Chinese medicine hospital; facilitate the training of Chinese medicine graduates; and explore the development of Chinese medicine specialisation.

The HA has drawn up a clinical plan for three selected disease areas to be covered under the Pilot Project. The criteria for selecting the disease areas include: (a) the disease areas where the treatment of Chinese medicine, or the synergy effect generated by treatment of ICWM, is effective with the support of scientific proof; (b) the disease areas that a certain number of patients is anticipated; and (c) the diseases that the inclusion and exclusion criteria can be clearly defined.

The clinical plan will clearly set out, among others, the entry and exit points of the Pilot Project, as well as the indications of Chinese and Western medicine treatments. After careful deliberation, the three disease areas to be covered by the Pilot Project are stroke rehabilitation, low back pain and palliative care for cancer. All medical treatments to be carried out under the Pilot Project will be protocol-driven, whereby medical doctors and Chinese medicine practitioners must follow the clinical protocol for carrying out medical treatments of each disease area. The clinical protocol is jointly developed by a working group comprising experts in Chinese medicine and Western medicine on the basis of scientific evidences available.

We would like to clarify that the primary goal of the Pilot Project is NOT to prove the effectiveness of ICWM treatment as there have already been ample of published scientific evidences demonstrating its effectiveness. Rather, the Pilot Project aims at deriving feasible administrative and operational models for providing ICWM treatment in an in-patient setting. As the Pilot Project is not a clinical research project, ethical approval is therefore considered unnecessary.

We thank the Chairman of the Panel for expressing his concerns about this matter.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Fiona CHAU)
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c. Hospital Authority (Attention to : Dr W L CHEUNG)