



26th May 2016

2015-16
Patron

Lady Mrs. Regina Leung

The Legislative Council of the Hong Kong SAR
Panel on Welfare Services

“Discussions on mechanism for handling abuse cases relating to children from high risk families and follow-up to the Child Fatality Review Report”

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Dear Mr. Chairman,

**Position Statement on Child Protection and Care for
Children with Special Care Needs**

Every child is entitled to be cared and loved, to be given the same opportunity to enjoy his / her rights and to attain the full potential. This is simply the basic human right that we should respect for every child irrespective of his / her gender, race, social class or mentality.

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The recent death of YEUNG Chi Wai, a five-year old child with mental insufficiency and special care needs, was not just a tragedy but also a solid proof of the system failure of the Child Protection mechanism in Hong Kong. The Child had been identified as victim of child abuse and neglect by professionals in various sectors and yet he was not protected from further traumatization due to an unacceptable excuse of unavailability of urgent placement. A child, with no ability to defend himself, was sent home under the care of his drug abuse mother and finally died of drug overdose.

Hong Kong is an international city claimed to have the most advanced medical technology and lowest Infant Mortality Rate and Under-5 Mortality Rate and yet is unable to protect a child from being abused to death. Are we comfortable to accept the situation with simply an excuse of service gap? As responsible adults, have we fulfilled our duty to ensure the safety of our children?

This is not an isolated incidence but reflects total negligence of the Community to our children. The adults, child healthcare professionals and ultimately the HKSAR Government should be held responsible for this tragedy which is totally preventable. Zero tolerance should be the right attitude from the community. Proactive effort is therefore imminently needed in Hong Kong and active measures should be instituted to timely stop similar tragedies NOW AND IN THE FUTURE!

In fact, this is just the tip of the icebergs of many and many examples of avoidable children's deaths throughout the years. How many more cases should we see before a real action can be taken? The best definitive solution for this is to have a **“Child Health Policy for Hong Kong”**.



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According to the 2013 Report of United Nation Committee on the Right of the Child (UNCRC), the Committee strongly recommended Hong Kong government to set up a Children's Commission and to develop a comprehensive Child Health Policy for Hong Kong. Hong Kong, being a member of UNCRC under China, has committed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on paper but not in action.

The Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation (HKPF) is charitable organization wholly owned by the Hong Kong Paediatric Society (HKPS) and established in 1994 by a group of dedicated paediatricians and community celebrities with the missions on child health promotion and advocacy for children. HKPF and HKPS together with over 200 healthcare professionals have used more than 5000 man-hours to compose a **"Proposal on Child Health Policy for Hong Kong"** and submitted to the Chief Executive of the HKSAR government in Sep 2015. We are still waiting for the government's action along with our children and youth who are always powerless, voiceless and helpless at their own capacity.

It is our prime duty as adults and child health professionals to give them voices and cater for their needs. The Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation committed ourselves in the past, at present, and will continue to be the child advocate for all children and youth with all our possible capacities. We shall stand firm with all fellow child health partners in concerted effort for the protection of children. This is a life-long commitment of our Foundation, our members and all the child healthcare professionals en-bloc!

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Chan Chok Wan
Board Chairman
Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation
President (2007 to 2010) of the
International Pediatric Association

Dr. Lilian Wong
Board Secretary General
Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation

cc: Ms. Rebecca LEE, Administrator of HKPF,
Ms. Susanna LEE, Executive Committee Honorary Secretary