

**The University of Hong Kong  
Department of Nursing Studies**

**Response to the Consultancy Report entitled  
“Improving Hong Kong’s Health Care System: Why and for Whom”  
by the Harvard Team 1999**

Hong Kong needs a health care system which is restructured and reoriented to provide quality, equitable, affordable, accessible, efficient cost-effective, user-friendly client-centered care to all residents of the SAR.

This should involve the creation of an integrated, client-centered health-care system which

- delivers primary health care based upon the present and predicted health care needs of individuals, families and communities, in community-based settings (homes, schools, workplaces)
- is directed by a Health Authority rather than a Hospital Authority
- emphasizes comprehensive, coordinated and integrated multidisciplinary care
- offers a full range of health services — promotive, preventive, curative, restorative and rehabilitative
- has the client as the center of the system and involves him/her as an active participant in health care
- fosters consumer responsibility for personal health, self care, and informed decision making in selecting health care providers and services
- uses the full range of complementary therapies which demonstrate effective health care outcomes
- uses traditional and non-traditional health care providers to effect high-level wellness in all populations; whose qualifications are known and standardized; whose roles, scope of practice, and reimbursement are explicit; and who meet continuing education requirements to maintain licensure to practice
- assures quality of care through an explicit accountable and transparent system of quality assurance involving all stakeholders
- guarantees universal accessibility to essential services through a financially sustainable system which emphasizes and allocates resources to the promotion and maintenance of health and the prevention of illness and disability in addition to providing ongoing support to the curative, restorative, and rehabilitative aspects of health care delivery.

Nurses, the largest percentage of health care providers internationally, are underused in our present health care system. Their professional role should be

expanded based on the best interests of the client. Advanced practice nurses, educated at the masters and doctoral level are key primary care providers and a critical component of health care reform. They have unique skills as practitioners, consultants, educators, researchers, and change agents. They have demonstrated that they enhance quality and efficiency of care through provision and coordination of health care in hospital and community settings. Consumers, and health care providers, need to be educated about the advanced practice skills, knowledge, expertise, cost effectiveness and services that advanced practice nurses are capable of providing in hospitals and the community so that these highly qualified nurses can be utilized to the fullest extent possible to effect positive changes in health care outcomes in a reformed health care system.

Respectfully submitted

---

P L Sullivan  
Professor and Head  
Department of Nursing Studies  
The University of Hong Kong

16 July 1999