



香港執業藥劑師協會
THE PRACTISING PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG

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Date: 19th Jan 2007

Dr. Hon Lee Kok Long, Joseph
Chairman
Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council
HKSAR

Dear Dr Lee,

Panel on Health Services Special Meeting January 23rd 2007
Agenda – I. Mode of supply of self-financed item drugs in public hospitals

This submission is prepared and written by the Practising Pharmacists Association of Hong Kong on behalf of its 500 pharmacist members the majority of whom work in the pharmacies in the community sector.

The Association would like to reiterate that we **oppose the proposal for HA to sell more SFIs through their own pharmacies, for the following reasons:**

The “dual pricing policy” means the HA has the economic incentive of (a) making its patients pay “retail prices” at its private dispensaries; and (b) re-classifying drugs to reduce the number that are eligible for subsidy. Consequently, the Hospital Authority patients who previously paid nothing for their drugs, and who now pay HK\$10, may in future have to pay “retail prices” for the same drugs.

The “dual role policy” means the HA has the advantages of (a) purchasing drugs at low costs as a public organization; and (b) selling drugs at high prices as a commercial entity. This would mean that the pharmaceutical industry and the general population would be subsidising the HA in their dispensing of SFIs as some form of health taxation imposed by the government in addition to the profit and sales taxes and personal income tax.

We strongly believe that the HA should focus on secondary and tertiary health care and adhere to existing government policy of moving more primary health care to the private sector, thereby reducing pressure on the public hospital system.

In fact, we urged that all outpatient prescriptions including SFIs should be dispensed at the community pharmacies. In this respect, you may wish to refer to the survey summary in this letter, conducted by a reputable and independent market research

company, which showed that over 80% of the respondents found community pharmacies more convenient than hospital pharmacies.

We strongly encourage the HA to adopt the Public Private Interface model to support the sale and dispensing of all the out-patient prescriptions at the community pharmacies by specifying the service standard requirements, the recommended retail drug price and the recommended sources of drug supplies to safe guard the quality of the drugs and the service standards. In this way, community pharmacies meeting these requirements can be accredited to provide the dispensing service. Routine audit and inspection can be conducted to ensure the compliance of the community pharmacies to the requirements.

We believe that this Public Private Partnership approach is the ultimate solution that would truly benefit the entire community. We also believe that with this solution, all patients would have convenient access for their dispensing service at reasonable prices and with assured drug quality.

Yours faithfully,
Billy Chung Wing-ming
President
The Practising Pharmacists Association of Hong Kong

Survey Summary

SFI Survey additional information

- Synovate Healthcare conducted a survey to capture public views on the SFI concept through computer aid telephone interview.
- Random sampling to ensure representation of the target universe.
- Fieldwork started on the 1st of June 2006 and completed by the 28th of June 2006.
- Total sample: 1010 members of the general public (Population aged from 15 – 64)

Age	Male	Female	Total
15-24 years	12.5%	12.5%	25%
25-34 years	15%	15%	30%
35-49 years	15%	15%	30%
50-64 years	7.5%	7.5%	15%
Total	50%	50%	100%

- Weighting - The data was weighted, to match the national Age : Sex ratios based on the most up-to-date government figures available.

Results

Source: Synovate Healthcare Survey on Self-Financed Items (SFI) Concept, June 2006 N=1010

Consumer preference of “Place of Purchase” for SFI

86% of respondents, who have sought for medical consultation from a clinic / hospital in past 12 months either their family member or themselves are diagnosed with chronic diseases, will go to a chain / independent pharmacy store for buying SFI.

Place of purchase for SFI	Respondents who have sought for medical consultation from a clinic / hospital in the past 12 months & either self / family have chronic disease/s	Self sick with chronic disease/s	Self healthy with chronic disease/s family member
Chain / independent pharmacy store	86%	85%	88%
Public hospital	79%	79%	79%
Private specialist clinic	56%	57%	54%
Private GP clinic	55%	53%	57%
Outside Hong Kong	24%	26%	21%

Comparison of Place of Purchase – Convenience and Reliable Drugs

Amongst different places where respondents can buy SFI , significantly higher number of respondents considered chain / independent pharmacy store (89%) is more convenient than public hospital (33%) to buy SFI; and over 60% of respondents considered either chain / independent pharmacy store or public hospital provides reliable drugs.

Place of purchase for SFI drugs	Convenience	Reliable Drugs
Chain / independent pharmacy store	89%	64%
Public hospital	33%	76%
Private specialist clinic	33%	46%
Private GP clinic	24%	53%
Outside Hong Kong	5%	8%