



香港西醫工會

HONG KONG DOCTORS UNION

Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373, Nathan Road, Kowloon.
E-mail: hkdu@hkdu.org Home Page: <http://www.hkdu.org>
Tel. no.: 2388 2728 Fax no.: 2385 5275

Our ref.: HKDU/079/2007

10th May 2007

By fax & mail

Chairman
Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council, Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central, Hong Kong

Dear Sir,

Re : Linking Continuing Medical Education (CME) with Annual Practising Certificate in the Medical Profession

We learnt of the Medical Council's (MCHK) recent public announcement (Annex 1) of claiming after further consulting the medical profession, she has decided to pursue mandatory CME for all doctors and to link it with annual relicensing.

We are most disappointed as we are conscious that many doctors including some professors from the Academics do not think that this is the right way forward in Hong Kong. And definitely the Medical Council is reluctant to hold a referendum requested by the profession on such an important matter with far reaching effects to the Medical Profession.

All previous surveys and forums organized by Hong Kong Doctors Union (HKDU) and other medical bodies have indicated strong objection to linking CME to annual relicensing of doctors' practising certificates.

In a forum on CME organized by the Hong Kong Medical Association and attended by a representative of MCHK in May 2004, the overall sentiments were against such linkage, while the representative of the Health, Welfare & Food Bureau had indicated that the whole profession and not just the MCHK would be consulted before legislation to enact compulsory CME. We repeatedly requested for a named referendum by the MCHK but to no avail. In two surveys conducted by three medical bodies in the past seven years, doctors had demonstrated strong objection to linking compulsory CME to annual relicensing of doctors' practising certificates. Please refer to the table below: -

Date of survey	Name of organizer	Response	Against CME linked with annual practising license	For CME linked with annual practising license	Abstain or No answer
31.7.2002	Hong Kong Medical Association	616	89.3%	10.7%	0%
11.4.2000	Estate Doctors Association & The Association of Licentiate of Medical Council of Hong Kong	1,029	76.4%	20.3%	3.3%

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In October 2002, HKDU conducted a survey on the Medical Profession and received replies from 1,354 doctors (response rate is 13.83%) and the majority of them (94.46%) requested the MCHK to conduct a named referendum to decide on whether CME should be linked with annual relicensing.

The responses of the 1,354 doctors are listed below for your information: -

No. of Doctors	Response
1,279 (94.46%)	I strongly request the Medical Council of Hong Kong to conduct a Named Referendum in the Medical Profession to decide if CME should be linked with renewal of annual practising certificate.
56 (4.14%)	I am in favour of CME linking with renewal of annual practising certificate and no Named Referendum is necessary.
19 (1.40%)	I have no comment on linking CME with renewal of annual practising certificate.
1,354 (100%)	

Instead of the controversial linking CME with annual relicensing, HKDU had all along advocated the compulsory display of CME status. In our previous submission to the MCHK and our letter to the previous Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food, Dr. E.K. Yeoh, we suggested the annual practising certificate should bear a symbol and caption to disclose the adequacy of CME and all doctors must display this certificate by legislation in a prominent place in their clinics or working place. For example a golden symbol with annotation: "Adequate CME undertaken" and a white symbol with annotation: "CME Inadequate" can be printed on the certificate. We think such a compulsory display of CME status will have the following beneficial effects so that a win-win situation is achieved for everyone:-

- (1) The public can now clearly know whether their doctors pursue the formal CME adequately;
- (2) The doctor realizes his CME status may affect the respect and trust of his patients and he may stand to lose business if CME inadequacy should appear in his licence. He would make extra effort to improve. He accepts CME as he knows now he is not forced to or being punished in an unfair way like losing his licence;
- (3) The public now appreciate that the government and the Medical Council are doing enough to ensure the doctors improve their standard and that they are doing this in a fair and persuasive manner, winning the hearts of both doctors and patients.

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To make this method known to the public and effective, this requirement should be legislated and gazetted and the status of all doctors can be checked by the public via the Medical Council's website and publications.

We were initially heartened by the Council's assent to our request to allow usage of the annotation "CME certified" by the relevant doctors, but we are most disappointed that no named referendum was ever held though requested by the profession. We do hope the Council will rethink and hold the requested referendum first.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Ho Ock Ling
Hon. Secretary
Hong Kong Doctors Union

Encl.

cc: Mr. Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of HKSAR
Dr. Hon. Kwok Ka Ki, Legislative Councillor
Dr. York Chow, Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Dr. Choi Kin, President, Hong Kong Medical Association
Dr. Ling Chui Pui, Chairman, Practising Estate Doctors' Association Ltd.
Dr. Li Sum Wo, Chairman, The Association of Licentiates of Medical Council of Hong Kong
Dr. Shea Tat Ming, President, Hong Kong Public Doctors' Association
Dr. Chan Sai Kwing, Chairman, The Government Doctors' Association
Dr. Charles S.K. Cheng, President, Association of Private Medical Specialists
Dr. Li Kai Yan, President, Association of Medical Practitioners of Societies' Clinics
Dr. Leung Siu Foon, President, Sun Yat Sen University of Medical Sciences Hong Kong Alumni Association
Dr. Benjamin S.T. Lau, Chairman, Hong Kong Public Hospitals, Department of Health and Universities Doctors Association
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ANNEX 1

Mandatory Continuing Medical Education

To follow up on the discussion of the Legislative Council Panel on Health Services on mandatory Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme, the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) has requested the Medical Council of Hong Kong (the Council) to continue its dialogue with the profession and to explore how the mandatory CME programme could be further refined to address the profession's concern.

In response to HWFB's request, the Council discussed the further recommendations of the Education and Accreditation Committee (the Committee) on mandatory CME programme at its Policy Meeting held in February 2006 and adopted the Committee's further recommendations at the said meeting. The Council also decided to consult 11 medical associations/institutions on the Committee's recommendations.

At its Policy Meeting held on 4 April 2007, the Council continued its consideration of the matter taking into account the views expressed by the medical associations/institutions consulted. After deliberations, the Council decided to stand by its previous decision on mandatory CME, i.e. failure to comply with mandatory CME requirements would lead to non-renewal of the practising certificate. The Council also decided to forward the further recommendations on mandatory CME programme to HWFB for consideration.

The Medical Council of Hong Kong
2 May 2007

強制延續醫學教育

為跟進立法會衛生事務委員會有關強制延續醫學教育計劃的討論，衛生福利及食物局(衛福局)要求香港醫務委員會(醫委會)繼續與醫生保持對話，並研究如何進一步修訂強制延續醫學教育計劃，以消除醫生的疑慮。

應衛福局的要求，醫委會在2006年2月舉行的政策會議上，討論教育及評審委員會(委員會)對強制延續醫學教育計劃的進一步建議，並在該會議上採納委員會的進一步建議。醫委會亦決定就委員會的建議，諮詢11個醫學組織／機構的意見。

在2007年4月4日的政策會議上，醫委會因應醫學組織／機構提出的意見繼續考慮有關事宜。經商議後，醫委會決定維持以往就強制延續醫學教育所作的決定，即未能符合強制延續醫學教育的要求，會導致執業證明書不獲續期。醫委會亦決定把有關強制延續醫學教育計劃的進一步建議，提交衛福局考慮。

香港醫務委員會
2007年5月2日