

5 January 2015

Clerk to Bills Committee on Electronic Health Record Sharing System

(Attn: Ms Louisa YU)

Legislative Council Secretariat

Legislative Council Complex

1 Legislative Council Road, Central, Hong Kong

Dear Madam,

**Re: Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHRSS)**

I write to comment on the recent discussion in the Bills Committee on the Bill on Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHRSS). I am an experienced healthcare executive and leader in health informatics.


In the past decade, there has been mounting evidence showing the importance of integrated healthcare delivery in improving the performance of health systems. In the context of Hong Kong's dual healthcare system, coordinated care between the public and private healthcare sectors is essential for a sustainable quality healthcare service. Such coordination is often hampered by the limited sharing of patient records in traditional paper form, leading to compromises in continuity of care which is especially important for patients with chronic illnesses. The success of various public-private partnership programmes initiated by the government in the past years has illustrated the indispensable role of electronic sharing of patient records. The demand of sharing patient records is evidenced by the active participation of the private doctors in the Hospital Authority's Electronic Patient Record Sharing Programme.

The recent development of eHRSS allows two-way data sharing between the public and private sectors. It will mark a new era in the history of Hong Kong and put Hong Kong in the forefront of health informatics development internationally. Patient conditions will be reflected in various types of patient records, e.g. medication records, investigation reports, treatment records, discharge summaries, etc. Doctors in both the public and the private sectors will be able to access a comprehensive set of eHRSS information which will greatly improve patient safety and clinical decision making. Any restriction in eHRSS access, e.g. proposal of developing Safe Deposit Box, will complicate healthcare delivery and doctor-patient relationship. Proposals on partial access to national based patient records in overseas countries, e.g. Australia, United Kingdom, met strong criticism from the professionals due to risks to patient care. Even in countries where such proposal is implemented, e.g. Canada, France, restricted record sharing only discourages professional participation to the national based record programs.



Healthcare industry is information driven. Free flow of patient information is of paramount importance to the efficiency and quality of healthcare services. We have waited long enough for record sharing. I sincerely hope that the Bills Committee could consider the eHRSS Bill favourably for the benefits of all citizens in Hong Kong.

Yours sincerely,



Professor FUNG Hong, JP

Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care

Chinese University of Hong Kong