



The Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists Ltd.
香港精神科醫學院
(Incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability)

19th December 2013

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林翠華教授

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Prof. Daniel Shek

Chairman

Action Committee Against Narcotics

Narcotics Division, Government Secretariat

Queensway Government Offices,

High Block, 30th Floor,

66 Queensway, HONG KONG

Dear Prof. Shek,

RESCUE Drug Testing Scheme Public Consultation

I refer to the public consultation exercise on the RESCUE Drug Testing (RDT) Scheme.

The Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists welcomes that the ACAN has raised the community's attention on the increasingly hidden nature of substance abuse in Hong Kong.

While we support in principle the use of any effective strategy to facilitate early identification and intervention of people with substance abuse, we find that the RDT may not be the most effective method in targeting the majority of hidden substance abusers, whose place of substance use is usually their homes or their friends' homes. On the other hand, the College is aware of a slightly different scheme, namely the Arrest Referral Service (ARS) in the UK, which has shown some promise of effectiveness in early identification of drug abusers. The key difference from the RDT is that the ARS is only triggered when a person is arrested for breaking the law and showing signs of drug and/or alcohol problems, admitting to such problems, or when the arresting officer perceives that he/she has a drugs and/or alcohol problem.

The consensus of the College is that this may be a more acceptable model for Hong Kong. We suggest the Government to consider adopting the ARS model from the UK with local modification as the first step and evaluate its outcome, instead of implementing the RDT scheme.



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Thanks for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. WH Cheung
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