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Honorary Legal Advisor
 榮譽法律顧問

楊世文律師
Mr. Simon Yeung

Dear Sir,

Re: Strategic review on healthcare manpower planning
 and professional development

We welcome the Government performed the Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development as it provides a better picture for the needs of manpower in the healthcare system. We also welcome the Government to start the preparation work in conducting the next manpower planning and projections in the 2nd half of 2017. It is because vast majority (over 90%) of optometrists are in private practice, the current availability of data for the manpower project may not be as reliable as those professions with significant proportion in public service.

From the manpower projection, there will be a shortage of manpower up to 497 in 2030. According to the figure of first-year-first-degree UGC-funded training places provided in the report, there was no a single increase in the training places from 2005/06 to 2015/16. Until 2016/17, the training places increased from 34 to 40. However, Optometrist still ranked the lowest and far more below among all other healthcare professions for the number of training places. Therefore, we would recommend the Government to increase the UGC-funded places for optometrist which has also been recommended by the Steering Committee in the report. Besides, the Steering Committee also recommended to have self-financing sector to offer optometry programmes. However, we worried that these kinds of self-financing programmes may not be able to provide comparable training given by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University which already meet the international standard in offering optometry degree program.

Besides, we welcome the recommendation of the Steering Committee that CPD should not be just an option but should be widely promoted and become a mandatory requirement for healthcare professionals under statutory registration. In addition, we agreed the views in the report that we should be given a presiding role in the Optometrist Board in order to promote the development the optometrists.

Yours faithfully,

Victoria Law
President of The Hong Kong Society of Professional Optometrists