

Dear LegCo Panel on Health Services,

I am writing to you to ask for help to maintain a vital service to English speaking citizens living and working in Hong Kong. I provide psychotherapeutic treatment to the many English speaking residents and their families. Current proposals from the Hong Kong Food and Health Bureau, if enacted without significant changes, will potentially disable those of us who practice psychology and deny critical services to the English speaking clients we serve.

According to the current proposal, clinical psychologists trained in other parts of the world will most likely be unable to meet criteria for registry in the Accredited Register for Clinical Psychologists. For example, I hold a BSc (Hons) from the University of Western Australia, arguably one of the top level universities in Australia. I have a master's and a doctorate in psychology. I graduated with my Doctor in Psychology (DPsych) from the California School of Professional Psychology, which has trained and licensed close to half of the practicing psychologists in California. While the proposal is supposed to be inclusive and supposedly allows for automatic registration to clinical psychologists from Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, I would not meet criteria for the proposed Accredited Register of Clinical Psychologists.

Regardless of my specific circumstances, whilst the current proposal does include provisions for remedial arrangements to gain registration, these are deeply flawed and effectively act to exclude non-Cantonese speakers. Being unable to practice under a protected title will create serious difficulties including:

1. limiting access to work visas,
2. difficulty procuring professional indemnity insurance,
3. render insurance payments unlikely,
4. limit ability to participate in EAP schemes or to become preferred supplier,
5. limit opportunities to work in business, organisations such as schools, NGOs, charities and government,
6. finally, will effectively relegate English speaking citizens to psychological services only from Hong Kong trained clinical psychologists.

Psychotherapeutic treatment largely relies on verbal exchange. If the current proposal is enacted without change, English speakers in Hong Kong will likely find it much more difficult to access support from native English speakers, if that is their preference.

Warm regards,



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