



Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373 Nathan Road, Kowloon.
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Tel. No.: 2388 2728 Fax: 2385 5275

Our Ref.: HKDU/105/2014

3rd July 2014

By fax and email

Dear Legislative Council Members,

Re: Pharmacy & Poisons (Amendment) Bill 2014

Hong Kong Doctors Union (HKDU) is the unique trade union with doctor members in both public and private services. Registered with the Trade Union Registry to look after the interests and rights of doctors in their employer employee relationship, HKDU is committed to upgrade the standard of medical doctors to cater for the health of the Hong Kong community.

HKDU wish to make several clarifications regarding what were said by government officials and some Legislative Council members in the captioned Bills Committee meeting held on 17.6.2014 at 10:45 a.m. at Legislative Council Complex.

- i) When a doctor, on receipt of medicine delivered by the supplier, refuses to accept it, the courier is expected to contact his firm and the sales agent to clarify if possible. If the doctor still refuses the drugs, the courier normally will take the goods back and to later sort things out before bringing back the correct medicine if applicable. It is a fallacy to claim the unaccepted drugs need to be destroyed. These unaccepted drugs can be redistributed to other purchasers.
- ii) In the case of Dr. Lee Sai Lai, it is not because written order was not enforced that cause the mishap but because the nurse changed the container of the drugs. In fact, we usually forbid any clinic nurse to change the container of the drugs. As such, with or without written order the mistake would still happen.
- iii) When considering the drug delivery time involved in the case of verbal order versus such time used in written order: Time is wasted with writing out and signing an order. Time is wasted when the fax is not received for various reasons. Time is wasted when the receiving supplier's end is not manned by staff to closely monitor fax. Time is wasted due to errors in writing the order. Delay happens when there is need to clarify the correct dosage or form of the drug because of difficulty to decipher what is written. Delay happens in getting back to the doctor to confirm the overall accuracy of the order. Delay when the doctor needs to ring up afterwards to find out if the fax order is received.

In these modern days, fax alone is not fast or safe enough because it is one sided and any adjustment needs feedback and feedback by telephone is still the most efficient.

Furthermore, HKDU and pharmacists are angry with the high handedness which the government has been using in dealing with these issues and even more annoyed with Ms. Janice Tse, Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Health)¹, who has been willfully slandering the medical profession with invented stories of illegal drug peddling and who, when questioned about the delay induced by written orders, retorted irresponsibly that patients can use the Accident & Emergency Departments. The medical and pharmaceutical profession demonstrated our fury and frustration by taking part in the July 1st demonstration and called for the resignation of Ms. Tse and retraction of this bill. (Photos of our activity enclosed) Please note the excuse of demanding written form of ordering that this provides a complete set of record is not acceptable because we have already a written record of orders on receiving the ordered drugs which is always a source to trace what was ordered and to justify payment.

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Yours truly,



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

cc: Ms. Iris Chang, President, The Practising Pharmacists Association of Hong Kong
Mr. Kevin Cheung, Chairman, Hong Kong Pharmacists Union

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