



Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373 Nathan Road, Kowloon.
Email: hkdu@hkdu.org Home page: <http://www.hkdu.org>
Tel. No.: 2388 2728 Fax: 2385 5275

Our Ref.: HKDU/152/2014

26th September 2014

By fax & mail

Mr. the Honourable Leung Chun Ying
Chief Executive of HKSAR
Office of the Chief Executive
Tamar, Hong Kong.

Dear Mr. Leung,

Re: Hong Kong Doctors Union (HKDU) Ask Ms. Janice Tse to step down from her Office

Thank you for your reply through Food & Health Bureau, to our call for the resignation of Ms. Janice Tse of Food & Health Bureau. HKDU is amazed that the rusty, overused but totally unfounded slogan of "enhancing patient's drug safety" is again used by another senior government official without any evidence to support. Please be rest assured patient safety is our utmost concern.

Written order does not prevent dispensing mishaps

The only case cited in your letter concerns 153 patients wrongly given unwanted drugs in 2005, the doctor was found guilty by the Medical Council for failing to verify if the drugs received corresponded with his order. Signing for the receipt of the drugs without verification was his problem. By accepting the drugs he implied he wanted them and willing to pay. However **whether this corresponded to his orders be it verbal or written is immaterial**. His another fatal mistake was to allow his staff to take the drugs from the original container and transfer to other containers so that original label was not traceable, definitely not because his order was verbal.

Drug Recall

The Review Committee recommended written order and your letter claimed this was because it helped tracing the origin. Yet the origin is clearly written on the invoice and a written order is superfluous. Without this invoice and its signature no doctor would pay for any undelivered drugs. Recall can only occur if drugs are received and therefore signed for in the receipt. **Recall is not facilitated therefore by written order. Since signing however is not put down by law as a requirement, we recommend putting this into law so that verification and signing will be done by pharmacists and doctors instead of their staff, which will dispel any concern as to failure to verify.**

Using written order to form a complete set of records

Again for the same reason that we have practiced signing for invoices and poison forms, the invoice having clearly stating the ordering doctor, the salesman, the date and the drugs all of which are written record of the orders, making it superfluous to have a so called written order.

Cont.../P. 2



HONG KONG
DOCTORS UNION
香港西醫工會

Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373 Nathan Road, Kowloon.
Email: hkdu@hkdu.org Home page: <http://www.hkdu.org>
Tel. No.: 2388 2728 Fax: 2385 5275

Our Ref.: HKDU/152/2014

P. 2

Once more the verification of drugs by doctors is most important and if carried out would have prevented this mishap of 153 cases whereas verification will not be affected by whether the order is verbal or written.

Hong Kong Medical Association's recommendation

The promulgated Good Dispensing Practice Manual serves as a guide and **does not compel** doctors to use written orders using the word "recommended". As far as we know only about ten doctors in Hong Kong are doing written orders.

Claims of written orders efficacy

Quoted claims of support in your letter are without basis and said to be from four organizations but **they do not represent the great majority of patients, pharmacists and doctors**. As far as we know the membership of the Alliance for Renal Patient's Mutual Help Association is small while Mr. Alex Lam, the Vice-president of another much bigger patient organization which consists of 43 member patient mutual help associations, Hong Kong Alliance for Patients' Organization Limited, voiced his strong objection against mandatory Written Order for drug purchase on 20 May 2014 in Legislative Council Bills Committee meeting on Pharmacy and Poisons (Amendment) Bill 2014. The Federation of Medical Societies and Hong Kong Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association did not have opinion survey among their members. The former is a loosely linked group as a social club for doctors and pharmacists etc and does not hold meetings for members.

Written orders cause delay endangering patient safety

The claim by the Hong Kong Association of Pharmaceutical Industry (HKAPI) that written order does not cause delay is unfounded as Sabrina Chan, Executive Director of HKAPI, in her letter (Annex 1) claimed "*since delivery occur after ordering and verification and so does not cause delay...*" She does not make sense. **The steps prior to verification involve several communication procedures** of fax and checking for fax/s reception and ascertaining details verbally or other means which involve time and manpower. Electronic means do not simplify these procedures at all.

Unregistered drugs and unregistered traders

Unsubstantiated claims that Written Orders will deter illegal ordering unregistered drugs or from unregistered traders. If such do exist we like to ask how written orders by these people can actually occur in place of verbal orders. We cannot envisage if such a doctor does exist that he will be deterred by this requirement. Yet he can be convicted still for possession even without proof of ordering.

It is strange that written orders can be made for so called unregistered drugs. We like to ask Mr. Yuen or Ms. Janice Tse of the Food & Health Bureau where these unregistered drugs can be ordered. If they do not know we doctors do not know too; and those who manage to get them, we

Cont'd...P.3

同心展關懷

caringorganisation

Awarded by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
香港社會服務聯會頒發



HONG KONG
DOCTORS UNION
香港西醫工會

Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373 Nathan Road, Kowloon.

Email: hkdu@hkdu.org Home page: <http://www.hkdu.org>

Tel. No.: 2388 2728

Fax: 2385 5275

Our Ref.: HKDU/152/2014

P. 3

are sure will not have written orders. The officials are speaking fibs. Once again you talk of purchase from unregistered traders, so please do tell us these people's names and their phone and fax numbers just in case some doctors out of their minds dare to order from them verbally or in written form. Requirement to use written order therefore will not affect the rest of us who will do neither illegal acts mentioned and as for those infringing the law this requirement will not deter them. They can just carry on verbally.

Dodging the real issue

Once more, our Hon Mr. Leung, the letters by Food & Health Bureau did not answer our call for the resignation of Ms. Janice Tse of Food & Health Bureau. The Bureau mentioned 11 cases of dangerous drugs record impropriety are not Ketamine tablets claimed openly by Ms. Janice Tse. The outcome of these cases could not have been altered by written orders because the invoices issued by delivering drug firms are sufficient to show who order them and when. Ms. Janice Tse is still guilty of confabulating the Ketamine story and guilty of slandering the medical profession for which she should step down.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Ho Ouk Ling
Hon. Secretary
Hong Kong Doctors Union

Encl.

c.c. Dr. Ko Wing Man, Secretary for Food & Health
Legislative Council Members

同心展關懷

caring organisation

Awarded by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
香港社會服務聯會頒發



HONG KONG
DOCTORS UNION
香港西醫工會

Room 901, Hang Shing Bldg., 363-373 Nathan Road, Kowloon.
Email: hkdu@hkdu.org Home page: <http://www.hkdu.org>
Tel. No.: 2388 2728 Fax: 2385 5275

Our Ref.: HKDU/153/2014

26th September 2014

By fax & mail

Ms. Sabrina Chan
Executive Director
The Hong Kong Association of The Pharmaceutical Industry
Unit A, 20/F., Times Media Centre
133 Wanchai Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong

Dear Ms. Chan,

Re: Proposed changes in requirements for drug ordering

We refer to your letter dated 14th July 2014 on the captioned.

To say a fax or letter or email as being more fault proof and causes no delay is a wild claim and is easily shot down by simple common sense. The former group of communication tools is one sided and definitely not interactive. The time lapse before a response is beyond doubt whereas a verbal communication is a direct mutual exchange of ideas and can be verified instantly. The verification cited by you takes various forms and at least means a phone conversation. So proponents of written order are still talking about a phone order in the form of verification. If this verbal communication is still needed then, why the need for the initial fax? Ascertaining the correct name, dose and form of drugs ordered and more importantly its availability happens instantly in a conversation, but this will not happen in a fax. Along the line of your rationale then, should not countries stop all meetings by officials and send fax or emails to each other and later verify the communications by phone?

Obviously a direct meeting or phone conversation is more effective, accurate and efficient. Efficiency means cost saving and we doubt all CEOs of manufacturers or importers agree with Ms Sabrina Chan.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Ho Ooi Ling
Hon. Secretary
Hong Kong Doctors Union

c.c. Ms Linda Woo, Assistant Director (Drug), Drug Office, Department of Health
Legislative Council Members
Country Manager - 40 HKAPI member international companies

同心展關懷

caringorganisation 2008/13

Awarded by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
香港社會服務聯會頒發

**The Hong Kong Association of The Pharmaceutical Industry**UNIT A, 20/F, TIMES MEDIA CENTRE, 133 WANCHAI ROAD, WANCHAI, HONG KONG.
TEL: (852) 2528 3081/2 FAX: (852) 2866 6283 WEBSITE: www.hkapi.hk14th July, 2014

Dr. Yeung Chiu Fat, Henry
President
Hong Kong Doctors Union
Room 901, Hang Shing Building,
363-373 Nathan Road,
Kowloon

Dear Dr. Yeung,

Re: Proposed changes in requirements for drug ordering

It has been brought to my attention that your association together with Hong Kong Pharmacists Union, Pharmaceutical Trade Alliance and Hong Kong General Chamber of Pharmacy are requesting information from our members regarding drug delivery timeline and arrangement when the requirement of written order is implemented.

Members of the Hong Kong Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry, including 40 international companies engaged in the R&D of pharmaceuticals as well as regional distribution of pharmaceutical products, currently provide over 70% of the prescription medicines and distribute over 80% of imported pharmaceutical products in Hong Kong. Drug and patient safety has always been our first priority. Our members have been following Good Distribution Practice developed under the WHO and European Commission and we support the proposed requirement on written order as we believe that it can minimize errors arisen as a result of miscommunication when placing verbal orders and reduce wastage due to wrong delivery.

...../2



UNITA, 20/F, TIMES MEDIA CENTRE,
133 WANCHAI ROAD, WANCHAI, HONG KONG.
TEL: (852) 2528 3081/2
FAX: (852) 2885 8283
WEBSITE: www.hkapi.hk

2.

We also receive written order now. Orders received from clinics and pharmacies will be processed after verification and thus the drug delivery time would not be delayed.

Yours sincerely,

Sabrina Chan
Executive Director

c.c. Ms Linda Woo, Assistant Director (Drug), Drug Office, Department of Health