



Hong Kong Women Doctors Association
香港女醫生協會

HA's Doctor Work Reform Team
Hospital Authority
Room 106N,
1/F, Hospital Authority Building,
147B Argyle Street, Kowloon
(Your Fax: 2194-6897)

20th June, 2007

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Response Statement on Hospital Authority's Doctors Work Reform

The **Hong Kong Women Doctors Association (HKWDA)** is aware that the Hospital Authority is taking the initiative to review the current working system for doctors in the public sector and has drafted the **Doctor Work Reform (DWR)** consultation paper for open discussion and comments.

In response to this consultation exercise, the **Current Affairs Committee of the Hong Kong Women Doctors Association** has been encouraging our members to express their views on this, and we have a few comments on some of the key recommendations:

1. We support the principles of capping of work hours per week, but the exact total number of work hours per week needs further discussion and could be arbitrary.
2. We support the principles of capping the maximum hours of continuous work, but the proposed maximum number of 12-15 hours may not be applicable for weekends and public holidays since the work intensity for these special days is normally not high. The capping at 12-15 hours might mean more doctors need to be on-duty to comply with the maximum number of work hours for weekends or public holidays.
3. We support the proposed night shift duty system provided if there are adequate number of competent doctors with good handover of patients, together with adequate clinical support from nursing staff and allied health care workers.

4. We also support the proposed new part-time employment package and this needs more flexibility to cater for the personal need of the doctor and the need of the respective specialty or department.

Furthermore, we have recently conducted a **Questionnaire on Flexible Employment and Working Hours for Doctors, soliciting views of both male and female public doctors**. We have just completed the collection of the questionnaires and so far we have collected about 250 questionnaires from our respondents. The Committee is now doing further analysis of the data. Hopefully we will have the final results available at the end of July. However, preliminary analysis has already showed some useful comments from our colleagues working in the public sector :

1. Disregard training requirement, preliminary data showed that the majority of our respondents agreed to have the option to decide the amount of on-call duty at work, and the option to decide not working overnight or on public holidays.
2. Most agreed that their current working hour is too demanding and if part-time work is allowed, they would prefer the option to work only weekdays, work 6 months in a year or half the total number of sessions of their current work.
3. Most agreed that due to the current demanding work hours, they are not spending enough quality time with their family or closed ones.
4. The questionnaire has revealed that among the respondents, the main reasons for having the option to work flexible hours include spending more quality time with family and friends, and looking after family members. This is followed by self-learning or development and community service.

Therefore, we hope that the above would provide useful recommendation, and our final results of the questionnaire will give us further insights into current attitudes of doctors towards work and other personal goals in life. We hope that the HA Doctors Work Reform could achieve a more family-friendly environment, help both male and women doctors to balance the demands of work and family, allow them time to pursue personal goals and objectives, while attaining even better quality patient care, thus contributing to a more harmonious and healthy society.

As promoting well-rounded life among women doctors is one of the mission of the HKWDA, we support the HA taking the initiative to introduce the Doctors Work Reform and we will continue to play an active role in this review.

Yours faithfully,



Janice Tsang (Dr.)
Current Affairs Committee
Hong Kong Women Doctors Association