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Subject views about reform

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Hi,

Here are my views on reforming our healthcare system:

I feel that public service should be reserved for the low-income and less-privileged, the rich or the people who can afford to go private should go private instead. That way, we can increase the efficiency in serving the people who really need medical attention but cannot afford to see a doctor by other means and conserve on public resources. Private doctors who lack patients probably feel that it's unfair how people are going to public doctors because the visit fee there is so cheap. The private doctors cannot compete with the public clinics because they need to cover their overhead expenses on top of making a living. I think the government should issue each individual a medical card which stores digital information regarding his income in the previous year. Depending on which bracket the individual belongs to, they will pay a certain visit fee. In other words, for people who earn more income, they need to pay a greater visit charge, and for people who do not earn a lot, they will pay a lesser visit charge. As a result, the government will not have to subsidize so much for every individual but only for the ones cannot afford to pay more. I understand that some citizens will feel that it's unfair if they have to pay more to see doctors at the public hospitals because they feel that it's a benefit they are entitled to as a tax payer. They feel that they pay so much tax and they don't get any benefits in return whereas the poor pay no tax yet they get all the benefits. However, they need to understand that if they are unwilling to be responsible for their own medical expenses, they are continually adding pressure to the healthcare system by exhausting the government's resources. The current model for financing of our healthcare system is not sustainable. If we do not reform our model, in the near future, the government will have to drastically increase the taxes and due to the lack of resources and overuse, the quality of the medical services provided to decrease inevitably. Hence, if these tax payers don't want to pay more taxes and jeopardize the quality of the healthcare they receive, they should support this reform. I understand that people have the right to see whichever doctor they prefer. By adjusting the prices we are not taking away people's options but only making the financing of our healthcare system more efficient and sustainable.

However, some patients refuse to see private doctors not only because they are more expensive, they also have the fear that private doctors are less trustworthy, less skillful and have less accumulated experience. Some patients feel that it's safer to see doctors at public hospitals because the hospitals are more adequately equipped and they can provide them with quality assurance. Hence, I suggest public-private partnership. Sometimes it could be difficult for new doctors to accumulate enough patients because patients don't have faith in new doctors. However, if these doctors obtain some form of accreditation from the public hospitals, patients might be more willing to give these doctors a try. I think maybe the hospitals can offer workshops for these doctors to give them valuable insights, review with

them the practicing guidelines and offer them any other useful information. The doctors can also work part-time at the hospitals to gain experience and expose themselves to patients. More patients will know them and if the patients like the doctor, in the future they may choose to see him at his clinic instead. After a period of time the hospital can offer some kind of accreditation to the doctor so that when patients see that they will have more faith in the private doctor. The doctor can also remain affiliated with the hospitals so that maybe he can charge the hospital fees and the hospital reimburses the doctor partly. The hospitals can provide a list of doctors who have been accredited and encourage some of the patients who can afford to see private doctors to go private; the quality of service is guaranteed and the waiting time is shorter, also making the healthcare system more efficient and sustainable.

Lastly, I'm for the medical savings account. If people start saving up now for their future medical expenses, we can lessen the burden of the future working population who will have to pay for the expenses of the expanding elderly population. That way, with people being responsible for their own medical expenses the government resources will be more readily available to serve those who really require it.

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Annie Wing Chi Chan

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