

I appreciate the fact that with the government revenue surplus in recent years, that has led to the discussion and action of Health Care Reform. The main emphasis, though, should be on health promotion rather than illness treatment. The health authorities and dietitians are responsible to educate citizens on the Importance of health promotion, because at the end of the day, no one wants to be sick and take the suffer. You might have excellent health insurances, consultants and advance technology to treat the disease, but what about the suffering, the money spent?

So what we should be focusing is on comprehensive Primary Health Care, but not selective Primary Health Care, where the main focus is still on the "medical model". Comprehensive Primary Health Care is the gold standard for increasing the health status of a nation, according to the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) Comprehensive Primary Health Care acknowledges that health promotion works on a continuum, from socio-environmental approaches, to behavioral approaches, and right down to the medical approaches. There are also so many determinants of health and illnesses that needs to be addressed. Money need to be spent on all these. Although the effects are not eye-catching when it comes to health promotion compared to money spent in AED (where doctors save lives), but the long term benefits are significant. The citizens need to be educated fiercely on checking the long term vision: Do they want to be treated in AED or do they want to avoid going to the AED in the first place?

HK spends much less money (percentage wise) on health promotion/public health initiatives compared to Australia. Australia spends about 5.4% of total health revenue compared to three point something percent for HK. With ageing population so serious, if these people flood the hospital system because of ill-health, there is no way the system can cope with. The best solution is the improve their health when they are still young.

I would sincerely urge policy-makers to think of health promotion as one of the major focus when it comes to Health Care Reform. Surplus money should not be easily returned to the people, when it can be better leveraged to increase long term health outcomes of the people.

Hiring more people who can deliver health promotion is paramount.

Charles