

Suggestions from nurses in North District Hospital on the HealthCare Reform

A open forum on the healthcare reform was conducted for nursing staff in NDH on 29.5.2008. Suggestions and opinions from 179 nurses were collected as follow:

Preference on the 6 proposed options:

1. Social health insurance: 10.61%(19)
2. Out of pocket: 2.23%(4)
3. Medical saving: 8.38%(15)
4. Voluntary medical insurance: 11.73%(21)
5. Mandatory health insurance: 21.23%(38)
6. Personal healthcare saving: 41.34%(74)
7. No idea: 1.22%(2)
8. Existing system: 3.35%(6)

Majority prefer Option 6, i.e. Personal Healthcare Saving.

Other Suggestions / Opinion:

- Increase charge for public healthcare services e.g. A&E service, in-patient services to minimize abuse use of service and reduce the cost.
- Implement goods and services tax to increase the government income.
- Provide incentive to public using private health care services.
- Minimise the variance of charges between public and private health care providers.
- Personal allowance for the tax payer could be a mechanism for providing financial relief for the pressure of contribution to the medical insurance.
- For personal healthacare saving , as the required age of retirement varies from different employers, the staffs worry about the cover for the gap. Co-payment could be a method to avoid abuse use of service. The unused savings of the deceased could be transferred to his/ her next of kin, or to the central pool for other people in need.
- For health insurance, the administartion cost should be maintained at a low level i.e. not higher than 1%, and government should have close monitoring on the operation.
- HKSAR government plays the role of medical insurace company. All eligible citizens should pay the premium.
- If there is a need for contribution from employee, they suggested ranging from 0-8% of their salary but most was 2-5%.
- A medical card (smart card) could faciliate retrival and transfer of medical record in turn more choice of medical treatment could be available and accessible.
- Some raise the concern on increase the amount of contribution years later on. It would pose a tremendous pressure on standard of living.
- It should be an Ordinance to protect the continuity of medical insurance even the protector is sick.