

In response to "Healthcare Reform Consultation Document", Drug Education Resources Centre (DERC) has the following recommendations:

The background, mission and goals of Drug Education Resources Centre

Drug Education Resources Centre (DERC) was established in 2003 as an independent, nonprofit drug education service organization. It is a subsidiary of Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Hong Kong. Staff members consist of hospital pharmacists from public and private hospitals. The missions of DERC are to improve the drug knowledge of patients and public, to improve the safety, quality and cost-effectiveness of drug therapy in healthcare of Hong Kong.

Empower the Public

General public in Hong Kong is hardly obtained drug information in Chinese. In a territory-wide survey, it showed that 80% of patients consulting private practitioners had not been given any choice of drug. They are unaware that they have the right to select their drugs, and they do not know how to enforce that right. Patients should be encouraged to discuss the various drug treatment options available to them and be given the opportunity to select the most appropriate drugs with their doctors. Drug education should be promoted in order to improve the compliance of the patients to follow the therapeutic health care plan. If a patient is not sure the usage of a drug, they may not take it as prescribed, i.e. their drug taking compliance is reduced. This may have a direct impact on their medical condition.

Government should encourage general public to acquire more health information including drug knowledge to empower themselves in responding for their own health.

No other health professionals like Community Pharmacists, are so readily available and accessible in the community to help the citizens at large. At present, this untapped resource is underutilized. Pharmacists are in a good position to play an invaluable role in health promotion e.g. balanced diet, smoking cessation, oral health...etc.

In Conclusion,

We think the Reform is necessary especially as mentioned in chapter 2 "Enhance Primary Care" of the consultation document. Pharmacists can contribute in the preventive care by providing more health information.

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