



The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing

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By email: sfhoffice@fhb.gov.hk

Professor Sophia CHAN
Secretary for Food and Health

21 January 2019

Dear Professor Chan,

Re: HKAN - Advanced and Specialised Nursing Practice

On behalf of The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (HKAN) and the 14 Academy Colleges it now represents, I would like to first of all thank you for instructing the Nursing Council of Hong Kong (NCHK) to formulate a voluntary scheme to pave the way for setting up of a statutory regime for advanced and specialised nursing practice in Hong Kong. The NCHK has formed a Working Group for the task and the HKAN is being represented among other voices. In fact, the HKAN is the only professional body in Hong Kong that has done the ground work in setting standards and building mechanisms for advanced nursing practice with the involvement of nurse leaders and clinical experts in both the public and private sectors. We have 14 Academy Colleges, with 2700 Fellows, representing essentially all nursing specialties in practice. The HKAN works closely and collaboratively with the universities, Hospital Authority and private hospitals to facilitate education and clinical training. We appeal to the Government and NCHK not to duplicate the efforts but to partner with HKAN to expedite the work in establishing a mechanism to register the specialised nurses at advanced practice level in Hong Kong.

It should be noted that the idea of establishing a HKAN was inceptioned as early as 2004 and a proposal was made to the then Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food in 2004. The then Secretary has indicated support in principle in 2006 in a reply letter addressed to Ms Adela LAI, the then Chairman of the NCHK copied to Dr Susie LUM, the then Chairperson of the HKAN Steering Committee. Since then, the HKAN has made tremendous efforts in setting and implementing accreditation and certification frameworks, engaging nurse leaders locally and internationally. We have also engaged stakeholders within nursing, and outside including patient groups, legislative councilors, medical and other healthcare professionals. In the current review of healthcare manpower planning and professional development by the Food & Health Bureau, the work of HKAN has been explicitly noted in the final report issued by the FHB in 2017. Under the section of 'Development of nursing practice specialisation', it wrote 'Specialisation in nursing is an important milestone in the professionalization of the nursing profession. The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing was established in 2011 to provide structured training and promote professional development of nurse specialist and advanced practice' (p. 78).



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We appreciate the indicated support of the Government to the HKAN all along. With the advancement of nursing and medical sciences as well as the increasing complexity of healthcare system, the advanced practice nurses need to be equipped with broad knowledge base and sophisticated skill set to be true partners with doctors and other healthcare professionals so as to make impacts on client care and service delivery. Manpower planning is about quantity as well as quality. We believe that we can retain talented nurses especially in the public hospital services, in combating the high attrition rate particularly among the younger nurses, if there are growth and development opportunities in the field.

The HKAN sets clear competence framework, education standards and assessment criteria for certifying nurses who are performing at the advanced practice level in specified specialty areas. We have been working closely with the universities that provide Master programs and the Hospital Authority and private hospitals to facilitate theoretical education and clinical training. We therefore urge the Government to consider formalizing the role of HKAN, such as enabling the statutory status of HKAN, to expedite the work of promoting advanced and specialised nursing practice in Hong Kong. We believe, with our experiences and critical mass of experts from both the public and private sectors, we can contribute greatly.

We are happy to discuss and provide more details on the work of HKAN if needed. We look forward to your reply!

Thank you!

Yours Sincerely,

Frances Kam Yuet WONG
RN PhD FAAN FHKAN (Education & Research)
President, The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing

c.c. Professor Agnes TIWARI, Chairman, The Nursing Council of Hong Kong
Members of the Advanced and Specialised Nursing Practice Workgroup, NCHK
All HKAN Fellows