



The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing
香港護理專科學院

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By email: kops@ha.org.hk

Dr. Tony KO
Chief Executive
Hospital Authority

13 May 2020

Dear Dr. Ko,

RE: Specialty Nurse Allowance and Advanced Practice Nursing

The Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (HKAN) and the 14 Academy Colleges welcome the announcement by the Hospital Authority (HA) on 4 May 2020 for introducing a fixed monthly allowance of \$2,000 to the Registered Nurses (RN) who possess recognized specialty qualification serving in relevant clinical service areas. This fixed monthly allowance serves as a recognition of nurses who pursue specialty training. However, at the same time, it may send a misleading message that undermines the standards of advanced practice nursing on par with international standards.

In the global professional community, Advanced Practice Nursing is viewed as ‘advanced nursing interventions that influence clinical healthcare outcomes for individuals, families and diverse populations. It is based on graduate education and preparation along with the specification of central criteria and core competencies for practice’ (International Council of Nurses, Guidelines on Advanced Practice Nursing 2020, p.6). This brief definition has highlighted the need for a set of competencies to govern the practice involved, in producing impacts on clinical and healthcare outcomes.

To acknowledge the accumulated talents of the nursing profession, we ask HA to build a clear *career pathway* for RNs to develop from specialty nurses to advanced practice nurses, with *continued education development* supported by HA and specified *remuneration package differentiated by professional qualifications and work responsibilities*. The existing numbers of Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) and Nurse Consultant (NC) need to be reviewed. Particularly for the NCs, they assume leadership to drive best practice in the related specialty within nursing and the interdisciplinary team to facilitate effective care and achieve desired health outcomes. The number of 120 NCs in leading over 27,000 nurses to fulfill the demand of multiple



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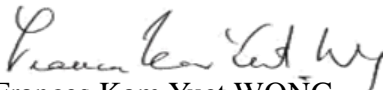
specialty services in HA is an impossible task. An important role of the APNs and NCs is to nurture the younger generation, so that the less experienced nurses can be mentored over an adequate period of time and be equipped with competencies in delivering safe specialty care. We urge HA to establish the number of APNs and NCs in proportion to the overall nursing strength, patient number and complexities, and range of specialty services provided to ensure safe and quality care.

The HKAN and the 14 Academy Colleges set standards for advanced nursing practice in different specialties and has a system in place in certifying nurses who meet the stipulated requirements. We reckon that the HA will take into account of the Nursing Council of Hong Kong's future Voluntary Scheme on Advanced/ Specialised Nursing Practice when implementing the scheme at HA in the future. I must say, the professional regulatory bodies merely admit the entrants who meet essential requirements. For the benefit of the patients and their families, it is important that nurses equipped with different levels of competencies are used to the optimal in serving the community at large. We ask HA to ***acknowledge the status of the Fellowship of HKAN*** and make best use of these outstanding nurses to support the quality services in HA.

The HKAN would be happy to engage in further dialogue to support HA in motivating and retaining talented staff in different specialty areas of nursing to provide quality service to people in Hong Kong. We look forward to learning your views on our deliberations.

Thank you!

Yours Sincerely,


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

c.c. Mr Henry Fan, Chairman, Hospital Authority
Mr Lawrence Poon, Chief Manager (Nursing), HAHO