

# AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN HONG KONG

## Position Paper

---

### HEALTH CARE IN HONG KONG

---

#### Issue

In the current political and economic climate, the HKSAR Government's continuous support of the escalating cost of the healthcare system cannot be sustained indefinitely. We understand public resources are limited and we support the government's efforts to reform the healthcare system in Hong Kong. However, the limited public resources should not be allowed to limit the patient's access to care and the patient's right to choose among the best available treatments.

#### Position

The financial burden of healthcare should be shared between the taxpayer and private medical insurance providers. The government needs to provide a clear statement to this effect.

#### Recommendations

Prior to the formulation of comprehensive healthcare reform, there are actions the Government can take to significantly improve the situation.

1. Educate the public to understand which types of healthcare services will or will not be subsidized. Public understanding of this issue will lead to a rapid expansion in private insurance cover. With incomplete information, as is the case today, the public cannot adequately plan for its future healthcare needs.
2. Use a means test (or indigence test) to channel more public resources to citizens in true economic need, and less public resources to persons with the economic means to purchase private medical insurance themselves.
3. We encourage the Government to take effective measures to improve the quality and vitality of the private medical sector in Hong Kong.

July 9, 2003